



STAFF REPORT

TO: Environment & Planning Committee

FROM: Jean Hodson - Regulatory Manager

REFERENCE: C651

SUBJECT: **REGULATORY MANAGER'S REPORT - REPORT EP08/07/06 -**
Report prepared for 17 July 2008 Meeting

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide a quarterly summary of the key issues / items of interest in relation to the Regulatory section of the Environment & Planning Department. The quarterly statistical report on workload and timeframes has not been provided with this report but a six month cumulative report will be provided in October.

2. KEY ISSUES/ ITEMS OF INTEREST

2.1 Building

2.1.1 Accreditation Update

I am pleased to advise that IANZ advised us on 11 June that all our corrective actions have been cleared and the next step in the completion of the accreditation process is for the file to be reviewed by a "professional advisory committee". We have not heard back from IANZ as yet regarding this outcome. We anticipate that the final steps will be completed in the near future.

2.1.2 Staff vacancies

We have recently completed a re-advertising programme for the positions of Co-ordinator Building Control and Building Consent Officer (Wastewater).

2.1.3 Training

There have been a good number of training events involving both individuals and groups of staff including:

- Building Officials Institute of NZ (BOINZ) courses on "Getting Started in Building Controls"- three modules being Building Controls, Plan Processing and Building Inspection plus the "Getting Started in Plumbing Inspection" course. At present six staff have been attending this series as part of their basic training.
- Home Heating Association of NZ- Installing Solid Fuel Burners

- Weekly in-house training for new staff on the Building Act and Building Code (on-going). This will soon be augmented by similar sessions for more experienced staff.
- Various product related short sessions from the trade including; Rock-cote (Flexi-crete and Resene products), Winstones-(gib and bracing elements), Tasman Insulations (Pink Batts) and Colour-cote (metal cladding, durability.)

Comment:

The cost and energy put into staff training has increased due to both the need to advance new staff and to keep up with Accreditation requirements. BOINZ courses are fairly expensive but currently they are the only recognised training provider. There is a need for on-going training, both in-house and externally provided for all staff. Eventually all technical staff must achieve a “recognised qualification” under the Act requirements, but the exact form of such qualification is not clear yet.

2.1.4 Earthquake Prone, Dangerous and Insanitary Buildings Policy

Council adopted the above policy (as per the requirements of the Building Act) in May 2006.

To comply with the policy, Council must identify all “earthquake-prone” buildings which would have post-event functions (such as hospitals, fire and police stations, Council Offices) by December 2008 and liaise with owners advising them that they need to commission a report to confirm whether or not their building is “earthquake-prone” and if it is, they have 15 years to undertake the necessary upgrading as determined by the specialist’s recommendations.

This will be a special project which will be developed in the coming months.

2.1.5 New Infringement Provisions

As of 1 July 2008 the Building (Infringement Offences, Fees and Forms) Regulations 2007 came into force. This provides Council with the powers to issue infringement notices for various offences with prescribed fines. In order to progress this, it is first appropriate for a policy to be developed and endorsed by the Council prior to the provisions being utilised. Administrative aspects involved in the issuing, reminder notices and letters will also need to be set up. This work will commence in the near future.

2.1.6 Dam Policy

The Building Act 2004 requires all regional councils to adopt a policy on “dangerous dams” (earthquake-prone or flood-prone) by 31 May 2007. The policy must state the approach that the regional authority will take in performing its functions, its priorities in performing those functions and how the policy will apply to heritage dams. The policy must be adopted after complying with the special consultative procedure under the LGA 2002. In addition, Council is required to maintain a register of dams. In October 2006 the Council decided not to approve the Dangerous Dam Policy until the accompanying Regulation was passed.

2.1.7 Building Amendment Act 2008.

The above has not only extended the timeframe for BCA Accreditation but also the timeframes around practitioner licensing, to November 2010 instead of 2009.

Regulations are awaited which may exempt buildings below a certain size or design threshold from the requirement that a “licensed building practitioner” (LBP) oversee the work.

A definition of “large” dams has been inserted (a dam that retains over 3 metres in depth and holds 20,000 m³ or more) and thus only “large” dams require a building consent.

Follow-up work in relation to these matters is required.

2.1.8 Other Possible Changes affecting Building

There is a proposal in the consultation phase which would exempt “owner builders” from the restricted work regime, if this goes ahead a change to the Building Act will result.

The DBH have commenced consultation on a Proposed Compliance Document for Simple Housing. The consultation period ends 29 August 2008.

In addition, the standards for the fencing of swimming pools is being reviewed.

2.2 Animal Control

2.2.1 Proposed New Dog Pound

Council has approved the funding mechanism to allow the new pound project to proceed. The next step will be to scope the project and move towards gaining the necessary resource consents and building consents. This will be undertaken by Council’s Property Manager in conjunction with other staff.

2.2.2 Dog Registration Update

The Dog Registration renewal forms were mailed out on 3 June and to date the response has been fairly good. At the end of June more than 50% of dogs had been registered. The policy is to apply a 50% penalty at the beginning of August for all dogs that remain unregistered. The registration requirements have been well publicised on radio and in Newsline. The registration processes have run much smoother and efficiently than previously due to having a dedicated Administration Officer for the Animal Control function. The successful integration of TDC dog data base with the National Dog Data base is an important factor in the registration process running smoothly.

2.3 Environmental Health / Maritime

2.3.1 New Environmental Health Officer

Tracey Waddington will be introduced to the Committee.

2.3.2 Food Safety

Council has agreed to participate in the NZ Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) voluntary food safety programme. We anticipate some specialised training to be offered to us in the next few months, once that is completed Council will write to certain classes of registered food premises inviting them to participate in the voluntary implementation programme.

2.3.3 Liquor- Controlled Purchase Operation (CPO)

A CPO was undertaken on 23 May involving Police, TDC staff, Public Health staff and a 15 year old volunteer. Licensed premises in our rural area were targeted and it is very pleasing to report that for the first time, no successful purchases were made.

2.3.4 Harbourmaster Role

An independent review has been undertaken by the Wellington Regional Council Harbourmaster with regards to the resource requirements for the function and the operation of the office of the Harbourmaster. We will shortly be advertising for a new Harbourmaster.

2.3.5 Maritime Oil Spill Response

Council is obliged to have one "On-Scene Commander" and one "alternate ROSC" plus oil spill managers and equipment operators. Council's trained oil spill responders recently exercised with staff from NCC and Port Nelson.

Graham Caradus – Co-ordinator Regulatory Services, recently undertook a week of training to revalidate the qualification of "Regional On-Scene Commander" (ROSC) with Maritime NZ. The future Harbourmaster will receive training to become similarly qualified.

3. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received.



Jean Hodson
Regulatory Manager