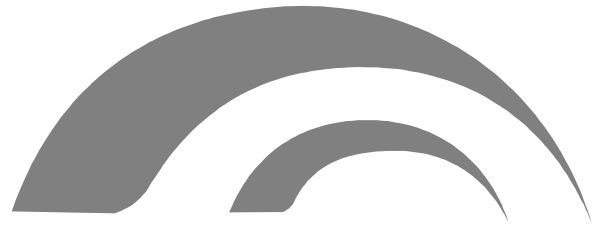




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Rural Bulletin



March 2004

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Have Your Say on Work-Life Balance

The Government's work-life balance project has begun public consultation. The aim is to gather the ideas and views of as many NZers as possible about work-life balance. The project looks at the pressures faced by businesses as well as by individuals. This is because businesses need to attract and retain the best people, and it is believed that quality of life is a point of international difference the nation cannot afford to overlook.

The project will look at what people have to say, and work will be done with key organisations towards developing some practical ways to ease pressure while boosting productivity. These solutions cannot be pre-judged – already it is clear the issues are broad and a one-size-fits-all approach is not realistic.

Over the last six months a steering group led by the Department of Labour has been talking to different groups around the country and has set up a website at www.worklife.govt.nz. The group's case studies indicate that some of the benefits of work-life balance policies are improved recruitment and retention rates with the associated cost savings, reduced absenteeism and sick leave usage, and improved productivity.

Employers see work-life balance initiatives as a way of retaining and attracting quality staff, particularly in the current labour market. However, they often do not have the time, resources or expertise to put them in place. Employees say the demands of their jobs can contribute to work-life imbalances, but there are many other factors outside the workplace that come into play. Unsurprisingly, childcare is a major issue. Less talked about are the concerns NZers have about caring for ageing parents.

Paid Parental Leave Extended

From December people who qualify for parental leave will be able to take 13 weeks leave, and by the end of next year they will be able to take 14 weeks leave. The length of time a person has to work for a firm before qualifying for paid parental leave will be halved to six months. The Government will undertake further work on the feasibility of extending the scheme to self employed mothers.

It is estimated that around 26,000 employed women have babies each year. Latest figures now confirm that 19,000 parents accessed paid parental leave in its first year. A further 3,400 women are expected to benefit from the extensions to the scheme. The combined cost of the new proposals for a full year is \$17.3 million. This adds to the current annual expenditure for the scheme of \$51 million.

The project is seeking the views and ideas of a wide audience, including small business people trying to juggle their time with just a few staff, people in rural areas, where home is often their workplace, the experience of older workers, and young people just starting their working lives.



To get the public consultation off the ground, 5000 discussion packs containing 12 information sheets targeted at different audiences have been distributed. The packs contain response forms for organisations and individuals to register their ideas. The discussion packs will be available through Citizens Advice Bureaux and on the project website at www.worklife.govt.nz. Individuals can have their say online or by writing in to the project.

Drinking Survey Results

The Alcohol Advisory Council (ALAC) has recently released the results of a survey on NZers' drinking habits. The survey was done by BRC Marketing and Social Research and is called "The Way We Drink: A Profile of Drinking Culture In New Zealand." The results, to say the least, are sobering.

The research segments all NZ adults (18 + years) into people who:

- don't drink at all – "non-drinkers" (19 percent of the population);
- consciously limit their intake – "conscious moderators" (29 percent of the population);
- are unable to drink as much as they would like to, for a range of reasons – "constrained binge drinkers" (23 percent of the population); and
- have no restrictions on their drinking – "uninhibited binge drinkers" (29 percent of the population).

The survey showed that "uninhibited binge drinkers" tend to drink two or three times a week, with 14 percent drinking between seven and 10 drinks the last time they drank and an extremely high 11 percent drinking more than 11 drinks. Uninhibited binge drinkers are most likely to be able to afford as much alcohol as they want. They are the group least likely to identify any reasons to modify their drinking behaviour or attitudes.

"Constrained binge drinkers" tend to drink five or more cans of beer once a week, at home or at a friend's place. Despite identifying reasons why they would constrain their drinking, they are still drinking heavily. In fact constrained binge drinkers are more likely to have had nine or more average glasses of alcohol (20 percent) than "uninhibited binge drinkers" (15 percent). Of concern is evidence that constrained binge drinkers would join the uninhibited binge drinkers if they could afford more alcohol and had fewer responsibilities.

The survey shows that drinking in a risky way is not just the behaviour of the very young or the dependent drinker. NZers in all walks of life, all ethnicities, urban and rural, men and women, told the surveyors that getting drunk is okay, with the majority reporting they drink in a risky way. These are some of the survey's main findings.

White Collar Workers the Real Binge Drinkers. The NZ binge drinker is most likely to be a Pakeha, urban, male of 30 years or older, with a household income over \$70,000. Basically, the wealthier we are, the more we drink; and those who can't afford to drink as much, would if they could.

Women Match Men in Binge Drinking. In NZ shows that 650,000 women accept drunkenness as socially acceptable with 17 percent of adult women saying they drank more than seven average drinks "on their last drinking occasion".

Adult women who binge drink tend to be Pakeha, in full time employment and have a personal or household income between \$30,000 and \$70,000. They are usually 25 years of age and over, have children between the ages of five and 15 years and live in a large town or city. They usually drink at home between one and three times a week, and over a third have more than five drinks at any one time.

Although women's drinking habits are matching men, women are concerned about the long-term effects of alcohol on their physical well-being and worry that they forget what they were doing when they are drunk. What concerns ALAC is that these inhibitors are not having a significant impact on women's drinking behaviours.

Young People Drink Like Adults. Young people, aged 12 to 17 years, are 20 percent more likely than adults, aged 18 and over, to believe that it is okay to get drunk, as long as it is not every day. A quarter of young people say they drink to get drunk. They are, however, 20 percent less likely than adults to be supportive of drinking a small amount of alcohol every day.

Compared with adults, young people are more likely to consume larger amounts of liquor in one sitting. Young people are more likely than adults to have had five or six average glasses (10 percent compared with six percent of adults) or had more than 10 average glasses the last time they drank (12 percent compared with eight percent of adults).

Only Half of Parents Know When Their Children Drink. In NZ over half the young people, 12 to 17 years of age, who binge drink socially say it is their parents who gave them the alcohol to drink. Yet, worryingly, 48 percent of young people reported they are not supervised by an adult when they drink.

There is a strong perception among young people that their parents are okay with their drinking habits. Eighty percent of all young people, including 80 percent of binge drinkers, said that their parents know they drink and are okay about it. They cite their parents' supplying them with alcohol as proof of this.

Maori Drink Less Often but More Heavily than Most NZers. Survey results show that Maori are:

- less likely to be regular drinkers – 39 percent of Maori drank at least once a week compared with 56 percent of all NZ adults; and
- more likely to have drunk more than 10 glasses on the last drinking occasion – 22 percent of Maori compared with eight percent all NZ adults.

NZ's adult Maori population (18+ years) can be divided into people who:

- don't drink at all – "non-drinkers" (18 percent of Maori adults compared with 19 percent of all NZ adults);
- are aware of how much they are drinking – "conscious moderators" (19 percent of Maori adults compared with 29 percent of all NZ adults);
- are unable to drink as much as they would like to for a variety of reasons – "constrained binge drinkers" (38 percent of Maori adults compared with 23 percent of NZ adults); and
- have no restrictions on their drinking – "uninhibited binge drinkers" (25 percent of Maori adults compared with 29 percent of NZ adults).

Pacific People Highest Non-drinkers in NZ, But.... Pacific people are less likely to drink at all but when they do drink, they drink heavily, the survey shows. Other findings show that Pacific people are:

- more likely to be non-drinkers – 46 percent of Pacific people compared with 19 percent of all NZ adults;
- less likely to have been early starters – 32 percent of Pacific people did not start drinking more than the occasional sip until they were 20 years compared with 28 percent of all adult NZers;
- less likely to be regular drinkers – 33 percent of Pacific people drink at least once a week compared with 56 percent of all adult NZers; and
- more likely to have drunk more than 10 glasses on the last drinking occasion – 22 percent of Pacific people compared with eight percent of all adult NZers.

On the basis of their beliefs, attitudes and behaviours towards alcohol, NZ's adult Pacific population (18+ years) can be divided into people who:

- don't drink at all – “non-drinkers” (46 percent of Pacific adults compared with 19 percent of all NZ adults);
- are aware of how much they are drinking. – “conscious moderators” (14 percent of Pacific adults compared with 29 percent of all NZ adults);
- are unable to drink as much as they would like to for a variety of reasons – “constrained binge drinkers” (10 percent of Pacific adults compared with 23 percent of NZ adults); and
- have no restrictions on their drinking – “uninhibited binge drinkers” (31 percent of Pacific adults compared with 29 percent of NZ adults).

A copy of the survey findings can be accessed from: <http://www.alcohol.org.nz/resources/publications/index.html>
Thanks to ALAC

Charities Commission a Step Closer

Another milestone towards the creation of a Charities Commission is about to be reached, with the Charities Bill expected to be introduced into Parliament soon.

The Government announced its decision to establish a Charities Commission in 2002. The Bill, providing for the creation of the Commission, has been drafted and is expected to be tabled in the House within the next month.

The intent behind the decision to establish the Commission is to increase public confidence in the charitable sector by making it more transparent and accountable. The Commission will do this through establishing a registration, reporting and monitoring system for charities. Registration with the Commission will be voluntary; however, charities wishing to be exempt from tax will need to register.

On registration, charities would receive an identification number that they would then need to display on fundraising and other written material, for example, letterhead. This would allow

the public to easily identify charities that have registered. Charities would then need to file annual returns with the Commission and meet other compliance obligations to maintain their registration.

The register would allow the Commission to provide information to government on the sector, including who benefits, and how, from tax assistance. The information would allow a greater insight into the contribution of the charitable sector and could also aid social policy development.

Once the Bill is tabled in the House, Parliament will refer it to a Select Committee for consideration. The committee will call for submissions from the public and sector.

The Association of Non-Governmental Organisations of Aotearoa is partnering with community trusts to plan a roadshow providing information and answering questions on the Bill. Meetings are expected to be held in about 22 locations nationwide. Ministry of Economic Development staff will also speak at these meetings. After the Bill's tabling, the Ministry of Economic Development will launch a website and freephone number, and distribute a brochure containing summary information on the Bill and how to make a submission.

More details on these communication initiatives will be provided at www.med.govt.nz after the Bill has been introduced to the House. You can have your details put on a database to receive updates on this project by emailing info@charities.govt.nz. More background on the Charities Commission project can be found at www.med.govt.nz

Thanks to Ministry of Economic Development

Climate Summary: February 2004

According to the National Institute of Water and Atmosphere (NIWA), February was characterised by:

- **Rainfall:** Extremely wet, with devastating floods in the centre, south and west of the North Island;
- **Wind:** Much windier than usual, especially over the North Island;
- **Temperatures:** Below average overall, especially in the South Island;
- **Soil moisture:** Significant deficits persist in central Marlborough, Canterbury, and Otago, but surpluses in some North Island areas; and
- **Sunshine:** Extremely low in the south and west of the North Island.

Thirty monthly historical rainfall records were swept aside in a number of NZ regions during February. Rainfall was very much above average in the south and west of the North Island from Waikato to Wellington, including Wairarapa. It was a month of climate extremes, with seven heavy rainfall and at least three damaging high wind events. The reason for the exceptional climate pattern was an unusually high number of depressions (“lows”) to the south of the South Island, which often intensified as they passed over NZ. There were very few of the typical late summer anticyclones (“highs”). This pattern produced the

strongest westerlies in over 60 years of records for February over the North Island, and south-westerlies over the South Island.

More than 1000 mm of rain was recorded in the Tararua Ranges for the month. This was due to a number of high rainfall-flood producing events, on 1 February, and especially between the 14th and 18th. The latter produced the most disastrous floods in the Wanganui and Manawatu/Rangitikei region for many decades, as well as flooding in southern Hawkes' Bay, Wairarapa, Lower Hutt, and Picton. Hundreds of people were left homeless, considerable areas of farmland were inundated by silt and floodwaters, many rivers breached their banks, sheep and cattle were drowned or were swept away by floodwaters, many bridges were damaged, and numerous roads closed, along with power, gas and water supply outages to tens of thousands of people.

Further flood-producing rainfall occurred in parts of Northland, Auckland, Coromandel, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, King Country, and Taranaki on the 28th. Rainfall was also above average in most other regions of NZ. Many locations experienced 7 to 10 more wet days than average for the time of year, some more.

Unusually, soil moisture surpluses exist in some North Island areas, and the west of the South Island. However, soil moisture deficits remain high in parts of central Marlborough, Canterbury, and Otago.

Temperatures were below normal. Sunshine totals were well below normal throughout the south and west of the North Island. However, sunshine was near normal in Canterbury and coastal Otago. The highest February 2004 temperature was 31.0°C, recorded at Alexandra on the 2nd. The lowest temperature for the month was -1.1°C, recorded at Manapouri on the 26th.

Of the four main centres, Dunedin was the driest. It was very wet in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Temperatures were below average in all four centres. Sunshine hours were below normal in Auckland and Wellington, and near normal in Christchurch, and Dunedin.

Rainfall was four to six times of average February totals in much of the south and west of the North Island from Waikato to Wellington, including Wairarapa, and two to three times the monthly average in most other North Island regions, as well as Buller, north Westland, Marlborough and Nelson. Totals were also above average over much of the South Island.

Mean temperatures were as much as 2.5°C below normal in the Southern Lakes, Central Otago, and inland Canterbury, and below normal in most other regions. However, Hawke's Bay temperatures were above average. The February national average temperature of 16.1°C was 1.1°C below normal.

Thanks to NIWA

Agency for Boosting Organ Donor Numbers

The Government is to set up a national agency, "Organ Donation NZ", to try to lift the number of organs being donated for transplant operations. This is because NZ has one of the lowest organ donation rates in the world. The new agency will start in the next financial year and will be responsible for educating health professionals about organ donation and for co-ordinating the donation process. It will also work with health professionals,

particularly in the intensive care setting, on developing greater understanding of issues.

However, a national register of organ donors is not on the cards yet, with the Government saying more investigation is needed. The Government, though, does give its in-principle support for developing a system to encourage active discussion about organ and tissue donation within families (although it also thinks such initiatives should be considered by the national organ donation agency).

The Government also supports, in principle, an ongoing national public awareness campaign, which should be undertaken following the establishment of the national organ donation agency. It also supports the development of nationally consistent protocols for the consent process for organ donations, particularly within families.

What if Your Car Becomes a Lemon After You Buy It?

Now that the Motor Vehicle Sales Act has come into force, Supplier Information Notices (SINs) must now be displayed on all used motor vehicles being sold by motor vehicle traders. The new SINs replace the old window cards that appeared on vehicles. These new SINs give consumers better information about the used cars they are buying from motor vehicle traders.

Other provisions of the Act mean that:

- motor vehicle traders must register on the Motor Vehicle Traders Register – including car market operators and auctioneers, even if their business is transacted online;
- SINs must be displayed on all used vehicles for sale by a motor vehicle trader whether the trader is registered or not (and private sellers at car markets);
- notices make it easier for consumers to see whether a trader is registered or not;
- notices will also tell consumers if there is money owing on the vehicle and give them a summary of their rights as a buyer; and
- consumers will be able to check if traders are registered (or banned) through the online Motor Vehicle Traders Register that will be available free of charge 24 hours a day, seven days a week at the Motor Traders Register website.

But, what if something goes wrong with your vehicle after you've bought it?

The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal (MVDT)

If you can't sort the problem out with the trader, you can now approach the MVDT directly - previously claims had to be filed through a Motor Vehicle Dealers Institute branch closest to the dealer. The MVDT can now also hear claims under a wider range of laws, including the Consumer Guarantees Act, Fair Trading Act, and Sale of Goods Act.

If you bought a vehicle from a registered motor vehicle trader on or after 15 December 2003, you can take a claim to this tribunal. You can even take a claim against a vehicle trader who is not registered, if you can show they were in the business of selling motor vehicles. Claims can now be heard for both new and used

vehicles – previously the MVDT could only hear claims about used vehicles. The MVDT can hear claims up to \$50,000.

You can take a claim to the MVDT for:

- quality issues and faults with the vehicle;
- misleading and deceptive conduct or false representations; and
- if you were sold a vehicle by an unregistered motor vehicle trader that was subject to an undisclosed security interest.

How Do You Make a Claim?

You can get claim forms from the MVDT. You can contact the MVDT by phone on 0800 FOR MVDT (0800 367 6838), write to PO Box 6848, Wellesley Street, Auckland, or visit Level 10, Auckland District Court Building, 3 Kingston Street, Auckland. You must complete and file the claim form with the MVDT together with a filing fee of \$50. If you are unsure as to whether you can make a claim in the MVDT, contact the MVDT staff for information. Claims will be heard at a venue closest to the place where you bought your vehicle.

At the MVDT you can claim for:

- the MVDT to order that the trader repair your vehicle;
- the money you have paid or will need to pay someone else to repair your vehicle;
- a refund of all of the money you paid for the vehicle, if it is a serious fault or a serious false representation;
- compensation for the loss you have suffered as a result of the fault, the problem, or the false representations. This can be the cost of any repairs or any loss in the value of the vehicle (e.g., if the vehicle was represented as a 1998 model and you found out that it was actually a 1996 model); and
- any extra losses or costs to you that directly resulted from the problem with the vehicle (e.g., the cost of renting a vehicle or hiring taxis while your vehicle was being repaired).

To check your rights after you've bought a motor vehicle, take a look at the booklet "Back on the Right Road – Consumers' rights AFTER buying a motor vehicle". The booklet is available from your local Citizens Advice Bureau or visit www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz. For help preparing your claim, contact either your local Citizens Advice Bureau or Community Law Centre. The Ministry of Justice also has information on the MVDT available at www.justice.govt.nz

Thanks to Ministry of Consumer Affairs

Is Your Farming Equipment Likely to Cause Interference ?

Making sure that everyone gets maximum benefit from wireless communication technologies and services in part depends on electrical and radio products complying with electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) standards. These exist to reduce the potential for interference to both radio and non-radio equipment.

The Radio Spectrum Management Group (RSM), a business unit of the Ministry of Economic Development, works to prevent interference and maintain a clean radio spectrum. Recent cases of interference investigated by RSM Radio Inspectors were caused by:

- VFD (variable frequency drives) or VSD (variable speed drives) used to control high power motors, which are sometimes installed without the required suppression;
- pressure switches on water pumps;
- electric fences;
- motor controller on rotary cow sheds;
- water pumps; and
- chiller equipment (dairy sheds, cool stores, etc).

When investing in electrical equipment for the farm, look for the C-tick. Non-compliant products may interfere with radio and television reception, phone line, Internet access and, potentially, the communication systems of emergency services such as fire, police and ambulance. Non-compliant equipment can impose costs in terms of both time and money and prevention is better than cure.

The Ministry of Economic Development has published several information brochures to assist you in reducing the potential of interference:

- "Buying an electrical or electronic product? Look for the C-tick": <http://www.med.govt.nz/rsm/standards/ctick/emc-brochure.html> and
- "Is an electric fence causing a problem with your phone line or Internet connection?": <http://www.med.govt.nz/pbt/telecom/electric-fence/electric-fence.html>

For more information on electro-magnetic compliance and standards, click on www.rsm.govt.nz/c-tick, or dial 0508RSMINFO

Thanks to Ministry of Economic Development

NZ Large Herds Conference

The 35th Annual NZ Large Herds Conference is to be held in the Hawke's Bay for the first time this year (from 28-31 March). The theme for this year's Conference is "Taking Care of Business" and will focus on managing growth and change, and environmental issues.

In addition to presentations from a wide range of people involved in NZ's agribusiness, the keynote speakers at the Conference will be:

- Dr Doug Powell, University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada "Guess What's Coming to Dinner" – food safety post mad cow disease in North America; and
- Glenn Capelli, author "Leadership and Dynamic Thinking".

Initially a "large herd" was defined as 300 or more cows. Now with improved management techniques, increased knowledge, greater efficiencies and sophisticated plants and equipment that number has risen to 700. However, farmers do not need to have over 700 cows to attend the conference.

Details regarding the Conference can be found at www.nzlargeherds.co.nz

Dairy Women Conferences

The Network for Women in Dairying is organising two conferences in Invercargill on 12 May and New Plymouth on 19 May with the theme "Dairy Women Adding Value". The conference theme is in keeping with the network's mission of dairy women adding value to their business and aim to inform, educate, support and mentor women in dairying. A total of 450 women attended the two conferences held in Hamilton and Ashburton last year, and a similar number are expected to attend this year's conferences, organised in association with the National Bank.

Fonterra Chairman Henry van der Heyden will open the Invercargill conference and Fonterra Chief Executive Andrew Ferrier will open the New Plymouth conference. Three workshops at the conference cover the topics adding value to the vat, valuing yourself, and valuing employer/employee relationships.

Registrations close on 30 April. Further information on the conferences is available on the Network for Women in Dairying website, www.womenindairying.org.nz, or by contacting Sue van der Poel on (07) 825 2823

Internet Items

Public Sector Websites to be More Accessible. An approved set of web guidelines across the public sector has been released. The main focus of the guidelines is to ensure that government websites take into consideration older technology and software, slow connections to the Internet, and people with disabilities. They also promote consistent use of Maori language and sensible approaches to website design. The Government has directed public service departments to comply with the guidelines. State sector organisations are strongly encouraged to follow suit, and local government and private sector are also invited to adopt the guidelines.

View the Guidelines at: <http://www.e-government.govt.nz/web-guidelines/>

Internet Erosion of TV Viewing Habits Deepens. That's the main result from a recent University of California (UCLA) study. For four years, UCLA has undertaken a 16-country study of more than 10,000 youths on how the Internet is affecting society. It has found that of the 11.8 hours the average Internet user spends online weekly, more than half is coming from TV viewing and almost none from sleep or socialisation. The Internet caused the number of hours children 14 and under spend watching TV to decline for the first time in 1998, a trend that has continued in recent years. But only in 2002 did Internet usage begin to affect time spent with print media, and then only modestly. Internet users watch 28 percent less TV than non-Internet users, though Internet users still spend more time watching TV than they spend on the Internet.

2003 Survey of Agriculture, Horticulture and Forestry: Provisional Results. These figures cover livestock, cropping, horticulture and forestry and are available at a national level. Final figures, including regional information, are due for release on 28 May.

Access these statistics at: [http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/pasfull/pasfull.nsf/web/Hot+Off+The+Press+Agricultural+Production+Statistics+\(Provisional\)+June+2003?open](http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/pasfull/pasfull.nsf/web/Hot+Off+The+Press+Agricultural+Production+Statistics+(Provisional)+June+2003?open).
A series of additional tables containing further details can be found at: http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/web/Prod_Serv.nsf/htmldocs/2003+Agricultural+Production+Survey:+Provisional+results+-+additional+tables

Crowding Report: Household Crowding and Health Chapter Available. Towards the end of 2003, the report "What is the Extent of Crowding in New Zealand?" was released. However, at that time, chapter 5 "Household Crowding and Health" was still being finalised. This chapter is now available. It reviews some of the evidence that demonstrates a linkage between crowding and health. It then presents descriptive data on three infectious diseases (meningococcal disease, acute rheumatic fever, and tuberculosis) and explores how these are related to crowding at the neighbourhood level. A number of GIS maps summarise these results.

Link to this chapter at [http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/web/prod_serv.nsf/874ea91c142289384c2567a80081308e/f713dacbb5e8cd4ccc256d8d0083015b/\\$FILE/Chapter%205.PDF](http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/web/prod_serv.nsf/874ea91c142289384c2567a80081308e/f713dacbb5e8cd4ccc256d8d0083015b/$FILE/Chapter%205.PDF). Access the complete report at: http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/web/prod_serv.nsf/htmldocs/Housing+Statistics+-+Crowding+Analytical+Report

Labour Market Statistics 2003. "Labour Market Statistics 2003" is Statistics NZ's main reference publication of NZ's labour market-related statistics. Information covered includes people employed, unemployed and not in the labour force, education and training, labour income and labour costs, hours of work and industrial relations. Some international comparisons are also provided.

Link to this publication at: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/pasfull/pasfull.nsf/sitesearchview/Reference+Reports+Labour+Market+Statistics+2003>. Printed copies priced at \$30.00 can be ordered from publications@stats.govt.nz

Labour Market Overview 2003: Article. This article gives an overview of the NZ labour market using data from a range of Statistics NZ surveys. The topics covered include: the working age population and migration; employment and job growth; unemployment; the labour force; hours of work; earnings and income; and industrial relations.

Read this article at: http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/web/prod_serv.nsf/htmldocs/Labour+market+overview+2003+--+article

Demographic Trends 2003. This annual publication contains commentaries, diagrams and tables on the major demographic indicators. Topics covered include population change and structure, fertility, marriage, divorce, mortality, external migration, induced abortions, population estimates and projections. Each of these topics includes a series of detailed statistical tables, which are contained in an attached Excel file.

Link to this publication at: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/pasfull/pasfull.nsf/sitesearchview/Reference+Reports+Demographic+Trends+2003>. Printed copies priced at \$40.00 can be ordered from publications@stats.govt.nz

Minutes From Land Access Public Meetings Published. Minutes from the public meetings on walking access to land have been made public. The written record of the stakeholder and public meetings held in September to November 2003 and a report summarising those meetings are available on the MAF website.

The minutes can be accessed from <http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/people-and-their-issues/access/meeting-notes/>. The report summary of meetings can be accessed from <http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/people-and-their-issues/access/consultation-summary>

Bird Flu Resource. The Ministry of Health webpage on avian influenza can be found at www.moh.govt.nz/birdflu.

Online Purchasing Soars in US. Americans are continuing to use the Internet as a buying channel. Retail sales over the Internet and other electronic networks surged in the fourth quarter of 2003, making up a record share – almost 2 percent – of total retail sales. The Commerce Department said online sales (purchases over the Internet, by email, or other electronic networks) rose 29.7 percent to \$17.2 billion in the final three months of 2003, versus the fourth quarter of 2002. Overall retail sales rose 5.2 percent in the fourth quarter.

Update

More Eligible for Kiwibank Home Loans

More people will be eligible for a Kiwibank “In Reach” home loan as a result of changes to eligibility criteria. Kiwibank In Reach is a two-year mortgage insurance trial, in partnership with Housing NZ Corporation, to make access to home ownership easier for low to modest income earners.

Changes just approved to the eligibility criteria mean that no-deposit mortgages can now be approved for homes valued at \$150,000 (up from \$100,000) and the income threshold for one or two people in the same household has been increased from \$50,000 to \$55,000. Applications are subject to Kiwibank’s lending criteria.

To date, 320 In Reach applications have been approved. The average loan value is \$104,000. Kiwibank is expected to approve about 1,800 loans as part of the trial. People who had previously missed out on the Kiwibank In Reach home loan may now be eligible and should contact Kiwibank on freephone 0800 272 278.

Population Growth Remains High

NZ’s resident population was estimated to be 4,038,900 at 31 December 2003. The estimated population growth in the December 2003 year remained high at 63,000 and was marginally lower than the growth of 63,700 recorded in the December 2002

year. (Both increases represent a rise of 1.6 percent for the respective years.) This compares with an average annual increase of 43,400 (or 1.2 percent) in the December years from 1991 onwards.

Fifty-five percent of the growth in the December 2003 year was due to a net migration gain, with permanent and long-term arrivals exceeding departures by 34,900. This net gain was slightly lower than the net gain of 38,200 during the December 2002 year. The remaining 45 percent of the population growth was due to natural increase (excess of births over deaths). Natural increase was 28,100 in the December 2003 year, an increase of 2,600 when compared with the December 2002 year (25,500).

The NZ resident population of just over four million can be split into four “single million” groups by age. In round terms, the youngest one million NZers are aged 0 to 16, one million are aged 17 to 34, one million are aged 35 to 51 and the oldest one million are 52 years and over. Overall, half of all NZers are now aged over 35 years, compared with a median age of 32 years a decade earlier in 1993.

Births Continue to Rise

There were 56,130 live births registered in NZ in the December 2003 year, 2,110 more than in the December 2002 year (54,020) and the highest number since the December 2000 year (56,600). Annual birth rates for the December 2003 year suggest that NZ

women average 1.96 births per woman. This is about 7 percent below the level required for the population to replace itself without migration (2.10 births per woman). However, our fertility rate is at least 15 percent higher than the fertility rate for Canada, Sweden (both 1.6 births per woman), England and Wales, and Australia (both 1.7 births per woman).

The trend toward delayed motherhood is continuing. The median age (half are older than this age, and half younger) of NZ women giving birth is now 30.2 years, compared with 28.3 years in 1993, and 24.9 years in the early 1970s.

A newborn girl can expect to live, on average, 80.9 years, and a newborn boy 76.0 years. This represents a gain of 2.2 years for females and 3.1 years for males since 1990-1992.

During the December 2003 year, Emma was the most popular baby girl's name in NZ, and Joshua the most popular baby boy's name. Other popular girls' names in 2003 included Sophie, Ella, Emily, Jessica, Hannah, Olivia, Grace, Charlotte and Georgia, while for boys, Jack, Benjamin, Samuel, Daniel, Jacob, Ethan, James, Thomas and Matthew completed the top 10.

Smoke-free Environments Regulation Review

NZ's Smoke-free Environments Regulations (1999) are being reviewed. The Ministry of Health-coordinated review is aimed at ensuring domestic regulations meet the requirements of the World Health Organisation's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which NZ has ratified.

The review could result in bigger warnings on tobacco products (30 percent or more of the principal display area) and pictorial warnings showing damage caused by smoking. It would also determine what information should be displayed on tobacco products and whether the use of certain terms should be banned, as they have been in the UK, to protect consumers from being misled. Options for reducing tobacco-related harm, such as regulating cigarette ingredients, would also be covered.

Public consultation on the review will start in July and run to mid-September.

Breast Screening Programme Widened

Younger women from the age of 45 and those up to the age of 70 will be eligible for free screening for breast cancer from July. The programme previously was limited to women aged 50 to 64. However, because screening and treatment services are already struggling to have enough resources to meet current demand, the extended breast screening programme will be rolled out rather than fully implemented at once.

Thanks to NewsRoom

NZ Women in Senior Management: A Global Perspective

NZ businesses rank well ahead of Australia and the global average in the proportion of women in senior management positions, according to new findings released from the Grant Thornton International Business Owners Survey (IBOS). Even so, although 70 percent of NZ businesses have women in senior management, women occupy less than one-third (31 percent) of senior management posts on average.

Although 70 percent of Australian businesses also have women in senior management, the proportion of women in senior management posts is only 22 percent in that country. Globally, 59

percent of businesses include women in senior management, but women occupy less than a fifth (19 percent) of the senior management positions available.

Russia has the highest proportion (89 percent) of companies where women occupy a management role, followed by the Philippines (85 percent). Three quarters of businesses in the US, Mexico and South Africa (each 75 percent) and Hong Kong (74 percent) have women in management positions. Bottom of the pack are The Netherlands and Pakistan (both 27 percent), Japan (29 percent), and Germany (33 percent).

IBOS is a survey of 6,900 medium-sized businesses from 26 countries worldwide. The NZ sample of 150 businesses has been included in survey for the first time. Other findings include:

- NZ ranks ninth equal with Australia in the proportion of companies that have at least one woman in senior management;
- NZ ranks fourth equal, alongside Taiwan, in terms of women as a percentage of the total in senior management (ahead of it are Russia, the Philippines and Poland, and Australia is 11th equal);
- Asia-Pacific countries rate well in both measures, with the exception of Japan, where only 29 percent of companies have women in senior management and, on average, women make up only 8 percent of the senior management team; and
- at the other end of the scale, Russia has 89 percent of companies saying they have women in senior management, and on average 42 percent of management posts held by women.

Cabinet Reshuffle

Following the exit of Lianne Dalziel:

- Paul Swain became the Immigration Minister;
- Attorney-General Margaret Wilson took over the commerce portfolio;
- Paul Swain also became Minister of Labour instead of Ms Wilson, and his transport job went to former Fisheries Minister Pete Hodgson;
- David Benson-Pope (up to then Chief Government Whip) became Fisheries Minister, associate Justice Minister, and associate Environment Minister; and
- Education Minister Trevor Mallard takes on a new position as Co-ordinating Minister For Race Relations.
- Finally, Jill Pettis took over as senior whip and Labour backbencher Darren Hughes took over her role as junior whip.

Domestic Postage Rates Rising in April

The price of the standard domestic postage stamp will rise by 5 cents to 45 cents from 5 April. The increase is the first since 1991, when the price was originally moved from 40 cents to 45 cents. It was subsequently decreased in 1995. The changes will also involve FastPost, which will increase for the first time since 1989, from 80 cents to 90 cents, while Postage Included Envelopes, BrandPost and FreePost are also affected.

Minimum Wage Increase

NZ's lowest paid workers will receive a 5.9 percent pay increase from 1 April, following changes to the minimum wage. The minimum adult wage will move from \$8.50 an hour to \$9.00 an

hour. The minimum adult wage applies to all workers aged 18 and over. The minimum youth wage will also increase, to keep it at 80 percent of the adult minimum wage. The minimum hourly rate for workers aged 16 and 17 will move from \$6.80 to \$7.20. The minimum training wage, which is set at the level of the minimum youth wage, will move at the same rate. The increases will directly affect just under 20,000 adult workers. Around 7,000 young workers will be directly affected by the increase in the minimum youth wage.

Solar Water Heating Grants

The Government, through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA), is making grants of \$450 available for loans taken out by purchasers of solar water heating units. A total of \$200,000 has been made available to support this incentive for solar water heating. The grants are available on a first-come first-served basis, with each supplier having a maximum number available.

The grants are intended to provide an interest free period on a loan to purchase and install a solar water heater. The grants are available only through suppliers that have met solar water heating accreditation standards. Individual suppliers have established relationships with their own loan providers and consequently loan terms may be different for each supplier.

The grants are only available for units installed before 30 June 2004, and must be associated with a loan with a minimum term of 12 months, and a minimum value of \$2,500.

Further information is available on www.solarsmarter.org.nz or by phoning 0800 SMARTER (0800 762 7837)

Survey Shows GPs Dissatisfied

A survey of doctors in general practice is suggesting full time independent GPs may be a declining breed. About half the 268 GPs who responded to the recent survey carried out by the Royal College of General Practice, report being full-time and self-employed now. However, only 73 intend to be working this way in four years' time.

Many of the respondents say what happens with their annual income will influence their workforce intentions, while others are unhappy with their working conditions. Nearly half of the respondents plan to change their working arrangements in some way in the next four years with most wanting to reduce their working hours, retire, or leave general practice.

Thanks to "NewsRoom"

New HIV Cases in NZ

One hundred and eighty-eight new cases of HIV were reported in 2003. This exceeds 1985 as the highest year ever in the epidemic in NZ. There have been increases in all categories with the largest group being men who have sex with men (MSM). Of the new reports, 71 were men who have sex with men (MSM), and 46 of these men thought they were infected in NZ. Their average age is 39. Fifty-two of the new cases were from heterosexual contact, and in most cases it was contracted overseas.

The Ministry of Health is starting to plan for a safer sex media campaign for the Summer of 2004/05, and this follows the release of the HIV/AIDS Action Plan as part of the Ministry's Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy in December 2003.

Health Screening Net for Migrants Widened

Overseas students will be the first to face tougher health screening designed to disqualify people with tuberculosis and costly conditions like HIV-Aids, severe kidney disease, haemophilia and disabilities from staying in NZ. From March all foreign students from high-risk countries wanting to stay in NZ for six months or longer must be tested for Tb, and by the end of the year the new rule will extend to all visitors from high-risk countries wanting to stay six months or longer. At the moment, Tb testing is only required for people staying two years or more. As well, full health and disability examinations will be extended to visitors staying 12 months or more, instead of the current two years.

Thanks to "NewsRoom"

Boarding Bursaries to Increase for Rural Students

The Ministry of Education provides boarding assistance to school pupils who need to live away from home in order to receive their education. A living allowance is available to primary and secondary school pupils who live beyond a certain distance from the nearest state school or school bus stop. Boarding bursaries may also be awarded to assist students who are seriously at risk due to unsatisfactory conditions in their home or social environment.

Currently 2,650 students receive this bursary. The bursaries are to increase by 17 percent (\$350) to \$2,340 annually per student. The increase is the first since 1994. The new funding level is seen as an interim contribution, and the Minister has promised a review to investigate how effective it is.

Students' Drinking Habits

A study of Otago University students has shown that some 84 percent of those surveyed had experienced a negative effect from other students' drinking. A tenth of the women surveyed and a fifth of the men were assaulted at least once in the four weeks preceding the survey, and one fifth of the students had their property damaged.

As part of the ongoing study into hazardous drinking by the Injury Prevention Research Unit (IPRU) of Otago University researchers estimated the incidence of second hand effects of alcohol consumption among tertiary students. The survey invited 1910 students aged 16 to 24 to complete an Internet based questionnaire. Eighty two percent responded. The research was partially funded by ALAC. Second hand effects are the negative experiences that result from someone else's drinking.

Privy Council Judgment: Crown Forestry Rental Trust

The Privy Council has delivered its judgment that the Crown Forestry Rental Trust is a charitable trust, thus upholding the Trust's appeal. The effect of the decision is that the Trust is exempt from paying income tax for the past and future. Over \$40 million of the tax that the Trust has paid since the dispute arose should be returned to it shortly, enabling it to further assist claimants in their Treaty claims. This decision ends a lengthy legal dispute between the Trust and the IRD that began nearly a decade ago when the IRD changed the tax status it had originally given the Trust.

Fund to Underwrite Chinese Cultural Projects

The Government has acted on its 2002 apology to the NZ Chinese community for the way it treated their forebears by launching a \$5 million fund to underwrite Chinese cultural projects. Early Chinese immigrants had to pay a 100-pound poll tax to enter the country, then faced regulations that other immigrants did not. The trust will pay for the restoration of historic sites in Otago, programmes to promote the Chinese language, and school resources to teach about the hardships faced by Chinese settlers.

Thanks to "NewsRoom"

Arrivals/Departures: 2003

In the year ended December 2003, there were 2.106 million visitor arrivals, up 61,300 or 3 percent on the previous December year. This is the 2nd year that NZ has passed the 2 million milestone. Holidaymakers accounted for 51 percent of the overseas visitors, while 27 percent came to visit friends and relatives and 10 percent came for business reasons. There were more visitors from Australia (up 69,700), the UK (up 27,800), the US (up 6,300), Germany (up 3,600) and Korea (up 2,700), compared with the year ended December 2002.

In the year ended December 2003, there was a net migration gain of 34,900 – 9 percent lower than the net inflow of 38,200 people in the previous December year. Compared with the December 2002 year, NZ citizen arrivals were up 2,300 and NZ citizen departures were down 3,300. In contrast, non-NZ citizen arrivals were down 5,600 and non-NZ citizen departures were up 3,300.

There were net inflows from China (11,300), India (4,900), Japan (2,200), Fiji (1,900), South Africa (1,600) and the United States (1,200) in the year ended December 2003. There was also a substantial net inflow from the UK (10,100), up 71 percent on the December 2002 year figure (5,900). Conversely, there was a net outflow to Australia of 10,200 in the December 2003 year, compared with net outflows of 12,100 in the December 2002 year and 23,800 in the December 2001 year.

The 2003 Tourism Year

2003 was a year of considerable uncertainty for the NZ tourism industry. SARS, weak economic performance of key markets, terrorism, the Iraq war and an appreciating NZ currency were a significant set of negative influences to be grappled with by the industry during the course of the year. Opposing these negative influences has been NZ's very positive position in international markets.

As it has turned out, 2003 was another successful year with international arrivals increasing by 3 percent to 2.1 million. By comparison, preliminary figures indicate that total world international travel in 2003 was 1.2 percent down on the previous year, and Australia arrivals were down 2 percent. In this context, a 3 percent increase is a very good result for NZ.

The pattern of international arrivals during the course of the year provides an indication of the impact of SARS in particular. There was a strong start and finish to the year, but a marked decline in the height of the SARS period as Asian markets contracted sharply.

One thing that the yearly figures do show is that NZ's diverse market base insulates the industry from major regional swings in demand. For instance, over the year Asian arrivals fell signi-

ficantly (down 10.1 percent), but Australia (up 11 percent) and the UK (up 11.7 percent) performed very well, and so resulting in the net gain.

The outlook for 2004 is encouraging. The World Tourism Organisation, in its "World Tourism Barometer", sets out a positive outlook for world tourism and for tourism in the Asia/Pacific region. Specifically, it comments that Australia and NZ can expect to catch some pent-up demand from Asian source markets and to benefit from the emergence of several new low-cost carriers in the region. Potential risk factors are clearly the value of the NZ dollar in relation to origin markets and continued unrest in parts of the world.

Thanks to "Tourism Monitor"

Redeployment of Troops to Middle East

Around fifty NZ Special Air Service (NZSAS) personnel are being redeployed to Afghanistan. The main body of this contingent will be deployed for up to 180 days from 1 April. They will specialise in the planning and execution of long-range reconnaissance and direct action missions inside Afghanistan and will operate with other special forces from countries contributing to coalition forces in Afghanistan. In addition:

- the commitment of two NZDF non-commissioned officers to provide command and leadership training to the Afghan National Army will be extended to June 2005;
- one Navy frigate is to be redeployed to the Maritime Interdiction Operation for four months from April 2004 (the frigate will operate within the Gulf region as far west as the Horn of Africa); and
- if required, re-deploy one Air Force P-3 Orion aircraft will be redeployed to the Maritime Interdiction Operation for six months, from July 2005 (the Orion will operate in the same region as the RNZN frigate).

Dead Employment Zones Announced

A list of low-employment zones, where unemployment beneficiaries will not be able to move without losing the dole, has been released. The Ministry of Social Development named 259 localities deemed limited employment locations – ranging from Spirits Bay and Cape Reinga in the Far North, to Ohai and Nightcaps in Southland. To keep their benefit, people moving to the named areas will have to have a job lined up, or be able to commute to a place not on the list.

If people need to care for sick relatives, other benefits such as care and assistance payments will be available. Unemployment beneficiaries already living in the no-go zones will not lose their dole.

The list of locations, downloadable as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, can be accessed from <http://www.msd.govt.nz/media-information/jobs-jolt-update-2004-fact-sheets/limited-employment-locations.html>

Agreement on Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Research

The Government and agricultural sector groups have signed a partnership agreement on research into agricultural greenhouse gas emissions. The agreement is underpinned by an industry-led

research strategy, which aims to develop safe, cost-effective greenhouse gas abatement technologies that will seek to reduce methane and nitrous oxide emissions from livestock by at least 20 percent by 2012.

Consistent with its climate change policy, the Government will bear the cost under the Kyoto Protocol of the agricultural sector's non-carbon dioxide emissions. It will also maintain at least its current level of investment in agricultural greenhouse gas abatement research. In return the sector will undertake and fund its research strategy, coordinated by the Pastoral Greenhouse Gas Research Consortium. The research will seek to identify, establish and develop practical on-farm technologies for reducing emissions, with particular emphasis on technologies that will also improve productivity.

The agricultural sector parties to the partnership agreement are the Pastoral Greenhouse Gas Research Consortium, Fonterra, Dairy InSight, DEEResearch, Meat NZ, the NZ Fertiliser Manufacturers Association and Wrightson. AgResearch is a member and science provider to the consortium.

Pilot Scheme to Cut Court Waiting Times

A one-year pilot scheme aimed at reducing waiting times started at the Wellington District Court recently. About 150,000 people nation-wide attend the District Court each year to respond to charges ranging from disorderly behaviour, to excess breath alcohol and murder. They enter the court system through what is known as the "criminal list" court, and the Wellington pilot will test a new way of streamlining this part of the legal process.

The pilot will involve the Court Registrar, Duty Solicitors and Solicitors, Police Prosecutor, Legal Services Agency and the Community Probation Service working closer together to speed up the flow and management of defendants at their first appearance. Matters such as receiving legal advice from a duty solicitor or solicitor, making an application for legal aid, or getting bail conditions agreed by consent will all be taken care of on the spot, so defendants get the right information at the right time from the right people. They will then appear before a judge, with all the preliminary issues completed.

The current practice of remanding most defendants after their first appearance to appear before a judge on another day to allow time for their issues to be dealt with will end. The few people unable to be dealt with on the same day will be given appointment times to attend court at a specific time on another day.

New Fines Payment Campaign

A campaign targeting one of the worst groups of fines defaulters in the country started recently. The campaign is targeted at the about 50,000 young men aged 20 to 30 who owe in the region of \$150 million of overdue reparation and fines. If someone fails to pay overdue fines, their car can be seized to pay the outstanding amount

The greatest proportion of overdue fines is for driving and vehicle licence offences, but enforcement will also target unpaid Court-ordered reparation owed to victims. Young men aged 20 to 30 owe around half of overdue reparation by value and make up half of all those owing it.

People can check if they have a fine or arrange to pay one by calling 0800 4 FINES (0800 434 637) or by visiting Fines Online at www.fines.govt.nz

Workplace Productivity Working Group Formed

A Workplace Productivity Working Group (WPWG) has been formed to advise the Government. The group aims to raise awareness and debate on workplace productivity. It will look at successful methods already developed by businesses, and find ways to promote the issue to government and the community.

Dr James Buwalda, Chief Executive of the Department of Labour, will sponsor the working group. The members are:

- a representative from Business NZ;
- Peter Conway, NZ Council of Trade Unions;
- Owen Harvey, Director, Innovation and Systems Limited;
- George Lafferty, Professor of Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations, Victoria University;
- Jan Mottram, HR Director, Vodafone;
- Katherine Percy, Chief Executive, Workbase;
- Craig Ellison, Deputy Chair, Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission; and
- Greg Miller, Chief Executive, TranzLink.

Officials from the Department of Labour, Treasury, Ministry of Economic Development, and NZ Trade and Enterprise will also be included. The WPWG will report to a Ministerial Reference Group of the Ministers of Labour, Finance and Economic Development by the end of July 2004.

Trans-Tasman Building Council Formed

A recently announced Trans-Tasman Building Regulatory Reform Council aims to improve building control systems in both countries. The Council has been formed in recognition of the increasing Trans-Tasman trade in building related products and services and a growing number of building-related firms operating on both sides of the Tasman.

Council members will be drawn from the Australian Building Codes Board and the NZ Building Industry Authority, the Australian Government Department of Industry Tourism and Resources and the NZ Ministry of Economic Development.

The Council's activities will include:

- developing and putting in place consistent product certification and appraisal schemes in Australia and NZ;
- promoting consistency in the education, training and accreditation of industry professionals to uphold the building regulatory regimes;
- where appropriate, pooling of resources to aid research and development of components of performance-based building regulatory systems;
- promoting a common understanding of, and a framework for, further development of performance-based building regulatory systems; and
- promoting closer trade in goods and services within the building and construction industry.

"Letter From America" Signs Off

Legendary BBC broadcaster Alistair Cooke has retired after 58 years of his revered radio programme "Letter from America". The BBC says the 95-year-old has decided to quit the show on advice from his doctors. "Letter from America" is the world's longest-

running speech radio programme. Cooke joined the BBC in 1934 as a film critic and began reporting three years later. "Letter from America" began in 1946, when Cooke was asked to give a weekly snapshot of life in America.

Thanks to "NewsRoom"

Finnish Heir Faces Hefty Speeding Fine

One of Finland's richest men was fined \$300,000 after he was caught speeding in the centre of the capital, Helsinki. Jussi Salonoja was doing twice the allowed speed in a 40 km an hour zone. Finnish traffic fines are levied as a percentage of people's incomes. Twenty-seven-year-old Salonoja is heir to his family's sausage business and his earnings last year were almost \$13 million. The final penalty could still change when the case is eventually heard by a Helsinki court.

Thanks to "NewsRoom"

The Mother of All Diamonds

Twinkling in the sky is a diamond star of 10 billion trillion trillion carats, astronomers have discovered. The cosmic diamond is a chunk of crystallised carbon, 1,500 km across, some 50 light-years from the Earth in the constellation Centaurus. It weighs 2.27 million trillion trillion kg, which translates to about 10 billion trillion trillion carats, or a one followed by 34 zeros.

The huge cosmic diamond – technically known as BPM 37093 – is actually a crystallised white dwarf. A white dwarf is the hot core of a star, left over after the star uses up its nuclear fuel and dies. It is made mostly of carbon. Astronomers have decided to call the star "Lucy," after the Beatles song, "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds."

Appointments

NZ's next *High Commissioner to Singapore* will be Richard Grant, and our next *High Commissioner to Samoa* will be John Adank. Judge Peter Boshier is the new *Principal Family Court Judge*. High Court Judge Justice Eddie Durie has been appointed to the *Law Commission*. Michael Behrens is a new *District Court Judge*. Dr Helena Catt is the new *Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission*. Janice Wright has been re-appointed to the *Transfund NZ Board* (as *Chair*), and Bryan Jackson is new to the Board. David Stubbs has been re-appointed to the *Transit NZ Board* and assumes the role of *Chair*. Sir Tipene O'Regan has been re-appointed as *Deputy Chair of the Transit Board*, and other board members are Mike Williams, John Wright, Janice Wright (until her current term expires in October 2004) and a new appointment – Gary McIver. Graeme Hansen is the latest *Chief Executive of the NZ Racing Board*. Dr Ian LeGrice and Dr Roger Marchant are new members of the *National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee* and Barbara Benson has been reappointed. Don McLeod has been appointed as the PPTA's new *Principals' Council Chairperson*. *Fletcher Challenge Forests* has appointed Bryan Goldsack as *Director, Operations*.

Legislation Notes

Easter Sunday Trading Recommendation

A Parliamentary Committee is recommending that shops be allowed to open on Easter Sunday. Currently there are restricted trading hours for retail outlets on Easter Sunday, Good Friday, Christmas Day and Anzac Day. The Commerce Select Committee

recommended that there should be no liberalising of shop trading hours on Christmas Day or Good Friday. But it says shops should be allowed to open on Easter Sunday because there are many regional exemptions in place. However, the committee also says protections are needed to ensure that employees are not forced to work on Easter Sunday.

Thanks to "NewsRoom"

Sitting Days 2004

Parliament is likely to be sitting on the following dates:

Tues 6 March – Thurs 8 April
Tues 4 May – Thurs 27 May
Tues 15 June – Thurs 1 July
Tues 27 July – Thurs 12 Aug
Tues 24 Aug – Thurs 6 Sept
Tues 5 Oct – Thurs 21 Oct
Tues 2 Nov – Thurs 17 Nov
Tues 30 Nov – Thurs 16 Dec

Tax Relief for Flooded Farmers

The Government will legislate to give Inland Revenue more flexibility in dealing with business taxpayers who are having problems paying their taxes because of the floods in the lower North Island last month. The law will be changed to allow Inland Revenue to remit use-of-money interest on tax payments that are late as a result of the flooding – either because taxpayers' records have been destroyed, they cannot gain access to their records, or they did not have time to make their payments because of higher priorities created by the flooding.

The change is necessary because, under present law, Inland Revenue can remit penalties arising from late filing of returns or late payments caused by the flooding, but it does not have clear authority to remit use-of-money interest in these circumstances.

The law will also be changed to allow Inland Revenue to accept estimates of provisional tax that are late because of the floods. Normally, taxpayers who want early refunds of overpaid provisional tax must re-estimate their income for the year and file that information by the due date of their third and final instalment for the year – which is 7 March for many taxpayers. Strict criteria will apply: the taxpayers involved will have to have been significantly affected by the flooding, and they will have to apply for the relief.

Details on how to apply for relief and other information will be available on Inland Revenue's website at www.ird.govt.nz

Resources Available

Food Processing the Powerhouse of NZ's Manufacturing Sector

The food and beverage manufacturing industry is NZ's largest and most competitive manufacturing sector, a new study has found. The NZ Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) commissioned study, which evaluates the economic importance of NZ's food processing sector, shows that exports have doubled since 1990 to \$14.2 billion in 2002, and food processing now represents half the total value of merchandise exports from NZ. The sector also

accounts for 5 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 31 percent of manufacturing GDP and 26 percent of manufacturing employment, with 63,000 full time jobs.

The study shows the food and beverage sector is performing well, but NZ supplies just 2.4 percent of the world trade in processed foods. The largest country has a market share of just less than 10 percent.

The report notes that although this sector is making a huge contribution to the NZ economy, it can do more and is crucial to lifting our future rate of economic growth. The reality is that in terms of international competitiveness, NZ is somewhere in the middle.

The report, titled "Economic Evaluation of the Food Processing Sector", can be viewed and/or downloaded from the NZTE website at www.nzte.govt.nz/foodandbeverage

Explaining Why Some NZers are Inactive

Nearly 1.3 million NZers are insufficiently active and a new study released recently offers unprecedented insight into why. The SPARC (Sport and Recreation NZ) study, "Obstacles to Action: A Study of NZers' Physical Activity and Nutrition", is based on the findings of a joint SPARC/Cancer Society survey of over 8000 NZers about physical activity, nutrition, community facilities, obesity and sources of health information. The report identifies six distinct types of inactive people with particular behavioural needs, motivations and trigger points. These are:

Others Oriented. Others Oriented make up around 6 percent of the total adult population (about 170,000) and this segment has several distinctive features:

- nearly all (97 percent) report some influence of discouragement from others, and 38 percent are clearly influenced;
- more perceived barriers to physical activity than for other segments (the perceived barriers can be loosely combined into three groups: commitment barriers, community barriers and physical barriers);
- one in three are Asian or Pacific peoples; and
- a comparatively high proportion of the segment are people who are obese or overweight.

This is the first obvious segment to target. They are motivated extrinsically, more discouraged by others and have a lot of barriers, particularly environmental barriers.

Support Seekers. This category makes up 6 percent of the adult population. A perceived barrier, lack of encouragement, strongly distinguishes this segment from others: 99 percent of the segment feels that they do not get enough encouragement (specifically from their spouse/partner, their family/whanau/children, and their close friends). Apart from lacking someone to do physical activity with, other perceived barriers important for this segment include lack of time and energy, lack of commitment, and cost. Also people in this category have more health problems (27 percent are obese, 22 percent suffer from depression or mood disorder, and 11 percent have some kind of anxiety disorder).

Overall, it will be challenging to change the behaviour of this group, and it is likely to require a multifaceted approach. There is a need to get support seekers to make physical activity a priority, get them started and then find ways to build small successes into a strong commitment. This will help lead to them maintaining their

newfound fitness. This group is considered to be one of two priority targets for early action.

I'm OK Thanks. This category of people (10 percent of the adult population or about 290,000 people) have higher than average health, they are less often overweight or smokers (17 percent smoke), and they are more likely to be male. Also this group is characterised by:

- few worries, low stress, low time pressure;
- few barriers; but
- they see few benefits from physical activity (don't need to change – think they are OK as they are).

Go Away – It's Not For Me. Six percent of adults (170,000 people). Also the youngest segment (27 percent aged 16-24 years). Also:

- lowest belief in benefits, least motivation;
- only 16 percent rate health very good/excellent, 30 percent smoke; and
- lack commitment, e.g., more would rather be doing something else with free time.

Busy & Stressed. Nine percent of adults (270,000 people). Perceive a lack of time as a barrier to activity – 62 percent lack of time due to work, and 45 percent lack of time due to family. Two-thirds are female. Also characterised by being the most stressed and having a moderate belief in benefits. Twenty-six percent of them are obese. This group, although a fairly high priority one, is to be targeted after "Others Centred" and "Support Seekers".

Why Not Then? Nine percent of adults (270,000 people). Of all groups, these people have the strongest intrinsic motivation (e.g., 50 percent strongly agree: I enjoy physical activity, I care about keeping in shape), and:

- are the strongest believers that physical activity will deliver benefits, and rate the importance of these benefits highly;
- are the most confident they can be physically active 5 days per week; and
- barriers generally less of a problem.

"Obstacles to Action" and a range of other supporting papers can be accessed from www.sparc.org.nz

Craig Matthews
Editor

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