

**Geoff Skene**  
**Manager, Environment Education**

## **Environment Education Department Report – February 2006**

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### **1. *Take Action***

Term one has commenced with eight schools beginning their initial classroom work before commencing trails in the third and fourth week of term. The Take Action team have been training teachers in the programme and are also continuing to work on the development of the second module on air and transport.

#### **1.1 Schools for 2006**

Nine schools will do the guided programme and 13 the self-guided programme this year (calendar 2006). Some of these schools are putting a high proportion of their classes through the programme. Twelve classes are participating at Wainuiomata Intermediate, 11 at Muritai, six at Ngaio, and 23 at Eastern Hutt (the whole school). With approximately 2200 students self-guided, and 950 guided, the total number for the year is likely to be around 3150. This will be the largest number yet. Take Action will be delivered to schools in Wellington, Porirua, Upper Hutt, Mauriceville, Lower Hutt, Wainuiomata, and Eastbourne. The numbers are likely to increase as four further schools (in South Wairarapa, Hutt, and Kapiti) are still considering how and when to do the programme this year.

Wadestown and Ngaio schools' participation reflects our efforts to include all of the schools in the Kaiwharawhara catchment over a three year period from 2004-5. This is to integrate school activity and students learning with the restoration activity being undertaken as part of Project Kaiwharawhara, the stream being one of the degraded six waterways which are priorities in Towards a Sustainable Region. Only two schools in the catchment have not yet taken part in Take Action. Ngaio school students will help restore the stream at Otari with the care groups working in the area.

The Waiwhetu stream is also one of the region's worst waterways and is a focus catchment for Take Action, tying in with the Waiwhetu improvement project. This area will be targeted strongly this year through the self-guided programme, which focuses on Lower Hutt. Three self-guided and one guided school in this catchment will take part.

Self-guided schools were recruited from Lower Hutt, Eastbourne, and Wainuiomata for 2006 as there has been a smaller uptake of the programme there than elsewhere in the region (19% of a regional average of 35%). With 12 more Lower Hutt schools (self-guided) and 2 guided in 2006, this imbalance will be corrected. It is worth noting that we filled our self-guided “quota” easily this year without going beyond this area. There are undoubtedly many more schools around the region which would do the programme if given the opportunity.

## **1.2 Teacher training**

Comprehensive training is provided by us for teachers doing both variants of the programme. The aim is to raise teachers’ awareness and knowledge so they can confidently deliver the programme both when they are working with Greater Wellington and in the future. There are many aspects that are covered by the training but perhaps the key ones are stream testing and identifying stream fauna and conditions, how to identify and explain bush species, erosion, soil formation, and so on. There is also a heavy emphasis put on health and safety. Three training days were held at the start of February for teachers from term one and two schools.

## **2. 2005 Enviroschools Awards**

On December 6 the second annual Enviroschools awards ceremony was held at Rutherford House in Wellington. Greater Wellington organised the event and Councillor Turver presented the awards. To receive an award, a school does not have to be an “enviroschool” (i.e. a member of the Enviroschools movement with environmental programmes and systems built into all aspects of its teaching and operations) but does have to demonstrate it is working towards environmental goals and developing environmental systems of one kind or another. A larger venue was needed this year to accommodate the students, teachers, and parents who attended. Fifteen schools participated from around the region, 12 receiving bronze awards and 3 receiving silver awards. As last year, it was pleasing to note the number of schools (nine of 15) that had an association with Greater Wellington having taken part in Take Action. These schools were:

- Paparangi, Plateau, Wainuiomata Intermediate, Wa Ora Montessori, Greytown, Glenview (all bronze awards)
- Plimmerton, Khandallah and Douglas Park (silver awards)

This is evidence for the fact that Take Action schools go on to develop long term environmental education programmes, reaching more than just the classes/years with which we have direct contact.

One of the reasons for using this venue was its proximity to public transport, reducing the environmental impact of holding the meeting itself. Travel to the event for schools was generously supported by public transport operators, Tranz Metro, Runciman Motors, Stagecoach Cityline, Mana Coach Services and Newlands Coach Service. This event has produced a number of newspaper stories highlighting Greater Wellington's role in environmental education.

### **3. Take Care**

At the end of last year ten applications were received from groups wishing to carry out ecological restoration projects through the *Take Care* programme. The successful applicants for the current year are:

- Glenside Stream Care; an existing group that has already completed planting projects on the Stebbings Stream and near the debris arrestor in Porirua Stream. The group is starting two new projects at new sites in the Porirua Catchment),
- Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust & the Trelissick Park/Ngaio Gorge Working Party have combined to undertake two new planting projects on the Korimako and Kaiwharawhara Streams where improvements to fish passage are being made and jointly funded by Greater Wellington and Wellington City Council.
- Churton Park Community Association is restoring the riparian margin of the Porirua Stream adjacent to Middleton Road); and
- Friends of Ngati Awa are excluding stock and restoring the margins of the Ngati Awa, a tributary of the Waikanae River.

In addition, a new group is commencing a project on the Enaki Stream, funded by *Take Care* and facilitated by the Wairarapa office. This makes up the five groups required by the Annual Plan target.

Applications were also approved for three projects commencing in 2006-7.

- The Henley Trust has been awarded funding for a further five years to restore degraded freshwater wetlands adjacent to the Ruamahanga and Waipoua Rivers near Masterton.
- Waitohu Stream Care has been granted funding to further enhance the lower reaches of the Waitohu Stream and restore coastal dunes south of this stream at Otaki Beach.
- A two year extension of the Silverstream Railway/Hulls Creek project was also approved.

Applications made by the Silverstream group and the Waikanae Estuary group to the Ministry for the Environment's Sustainable Management Fund for additional funds to carry out works beyond the ability of *Take Care* to fund passed the first stage of the two stage approval process.

Twenty five people from care groups all over the region took part in a Wetland Plant Identification workshop held in Waikanae Estuary Scientific Reserve on Tuesday 7 February. Paul Champion (NIWA), one of the country's leading wetland botanists led the course, which was very well received by all participants.

Generally speaking, care group activity has been quieter over the summer but most remained active removing weeds, tending plants in their nurseries, and watering during the dry spring and summer conditions. Many groups have regular working bees that have continued over the summer.

**Nicola Shorten**  
**Manager, Resource Policy**

## **Resource Policy Department Report – February 2006**

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### **1. Maintaining Regional Policies and Plans**

#### **1.1 Regional Plan Changes**

There is one outstanding appeal on Plan Change 1 to the Regional Freshwater Plan. A new rule requires resource consent to drive heavy vehicles on stopbanks. The Council appealed the decision of the Environment Court to exclude a length of stopbank within the Lower Wairarapa Development Scheme from the rule. The High Court has allowed the Council's decision to the extent that conditions should be included in the rule that prevent future changed use that could have unpredictable consequences. Agreement has been reached on a number of conditions and a memorandum filed with the Court to resolve two other conditions.

There have been two pre-hearing meetings on the plan change to include minimum flows and allocation for the Mangaterere Catchment in the Regional Freshwater Plan. A review of hydrological information that supports the plan change has been completed as requested at a pre-hearing meeting. Staff reports have been sent to submitters, and the hearing has been set for 27 February.

#### **1.2 Regional Policy Statement review update**

The project plan for the Regional Policy Statement review is on a fairly tight timeline. Main areas of work since the last meeting of the Environment Committee have been:

- Completing the project plan and timeline;
- Looking at proposed content for the discussion document, and the most appropriate medium for consultation on the discussion document;
- Evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of chapters of the Regional Policy Statement;
- Initial meetings with staff from across the Greater Wellington to discuss the review;

- Organising meetings with territorial authority staff to gather information about the effectiveness of the Regional Policy Statement and discuss the review.

Note that there are two Councillor workshops on the Regional Policy Statement review during March.

## **2. Regional Policy Statement and Plan Implementation**

### **2.1 Freshwater Ecosystem Programme**

Concept designs for fish passes at weirs and culverts have now been prepared at nine sites in five urban streams - the Owhiro, Kaiwharawhara and Waiwhetu streams, Hulls Creek and a small tributary of the Hutt River. Community groups have prompted the work in all instances. There has been consultation on the designs at the Kaiwharawhara and Owhiro Stream.

Greater Wellington organised and hosted a workshop and tour of small and ephemeral streams for territorial authority and regional council staff. The purpose was to inform and educate attendees about the importance these streams, including what they are, what they look like and what their values are.

Auckland Regional Council's stream expert John Maxted presented the results of recent research and explained Auckland Regional Council's approach to managing small streams in the Auckland region.

### **2.2 Marine Biodiversity**

The Cawthron Institute has completed a biological survey of the intertidal zones of the Kapiti Coast, Plimmerton Beach, Titahi Bay, and Makara estuary. This work continues a programme that began in 2004 with a survey of the Wellington Harbour and South Coast beaches and estuaries in 2004. The report is currently being reviewed by staff.

The findings of the study will be presented to the next meeting of this Committee.

### **2.3 Project Kaiwharawhara**

Three signs have been erected at various locations in the Kaiwharawhara catchment. Under the title of Project Kaiwharawhara, the signs contain generic material about the catchment, what has happened, who is involved in the Project, and a map showing the whole area with various areas and features highlighted. For each of the three signs, there is also material specific to that location and the project carried out there.

A "launch" event took place on 9 December. The event recognised project achievements and acknowledged the voluntary effort that has been given by the community groups.

## **2.4 District Plans**

Statutory resource management work is the subject of a separate report to the Committee.

## **3. Hazards**

### **3.1 Upper Hutt fault trace project**

The Upper Hutt City fault trace project has been completed. The project collated known fault location, complexity and recurrence interval data for Upper Hutt City at an appropriate level of detail for inclusion in the District Plan to enable robust planning measures to be put in place in keeping with the MfE guidelines. This is a joint project with the Upper Hutt City Council.

At present the Wellington Fault is the only fault included in the Upper Hutt District Plan and shown in planning maps. A standard 20m buffer has been placed either side of the fault, regardless of the accuracy of its known location, to create a “fault band”. Any new habitable building or structure to be erected within the fault band is a discretionary activity.

The Akatarawa, Moonshine, Otaki Forks and Whitemans Valley Faults are not included in the District Plan and there is concern that District Plan rules do not provide an appropriate level of protection from fault rupture hazard.

### **3.2 Coastal erosion regional review**

A student was employed over the summer break to review coastal erosion literature and compile information about coastal erosion within the region.

Reports on both of these projects will be presented to the next meeting of this committee.

**John Sherriff**  
**Manager, Resource Investigations**

## **Resource Investigations Department Report – February 2006**

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### **1. Resource Information**

#### **1.1 Flood warning**

The Resource Investigations Department provides a flood warning and monitoring service for the western part of the Wellington Region. Rainfall and river level recorders around the Region automatically relay information to the Regional Council Centre. When specified rainfall intensities or river levels are reached the system automatically alerts staff who implement response procedures.

Details of alarms received are provided to the Committee to fulfil reporting requirements set out in the Annual Plan.

Since the last meeting of the Committee the following rainfall and water level alarms were received and responded to:

21 December 2005	<b>Water level:</b> Otaki <b>Rainfall:</b> Horokiri
23 December 2005	<b>Rainfall:</b> Wainui Reservoir
18 January 2006	<b>Water level:</b> Birchville, Cemetery, Te Marua, Otaki <b>Rainfall:</b> Taungata, Kapakapanui, McIntosh, Oriwa, Warwicks, Te Marua, Kaitoke Headworks, Cemetery.

### **2. Resource analysis**

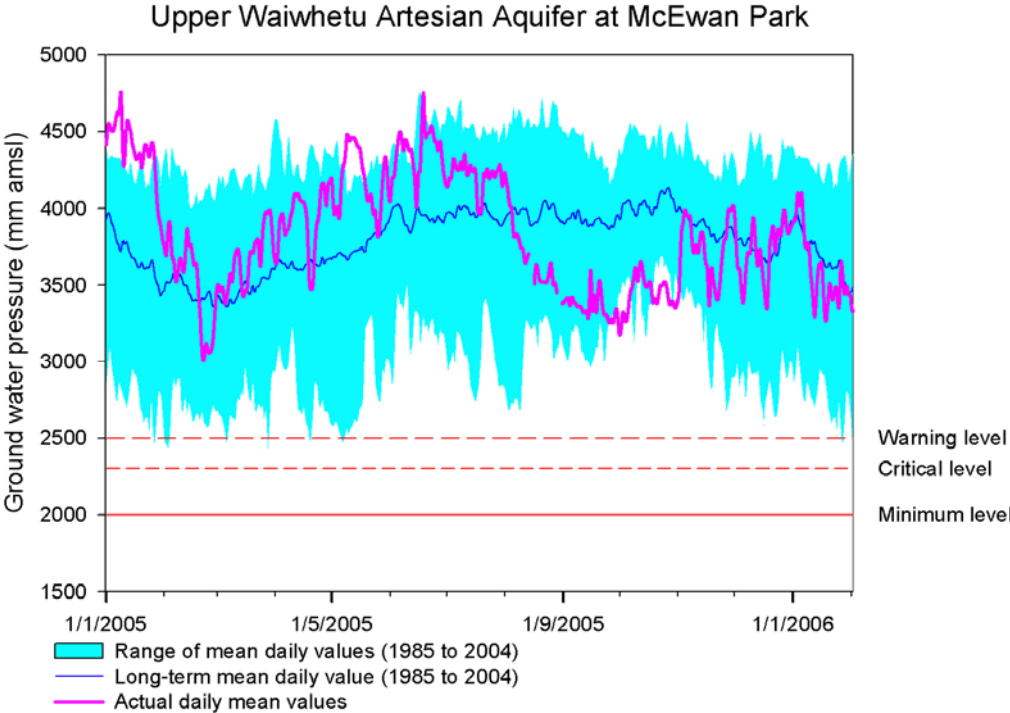
#### **2.1 Groundwater levels**

The Department monitors groundwater levels at 46 sites around the western Region. We use two of these bores, McEwan Park at Petone and Hautere Plain on the Kapiti Coast as general indicators of the state of groundwater resources in these areas. Records from these two bores and a synopsis of the situation are provided to the Committee at each meeting.



2.1.1 Lower Hutt groundwater zone – Upper Waiwhetu artesian aquifer

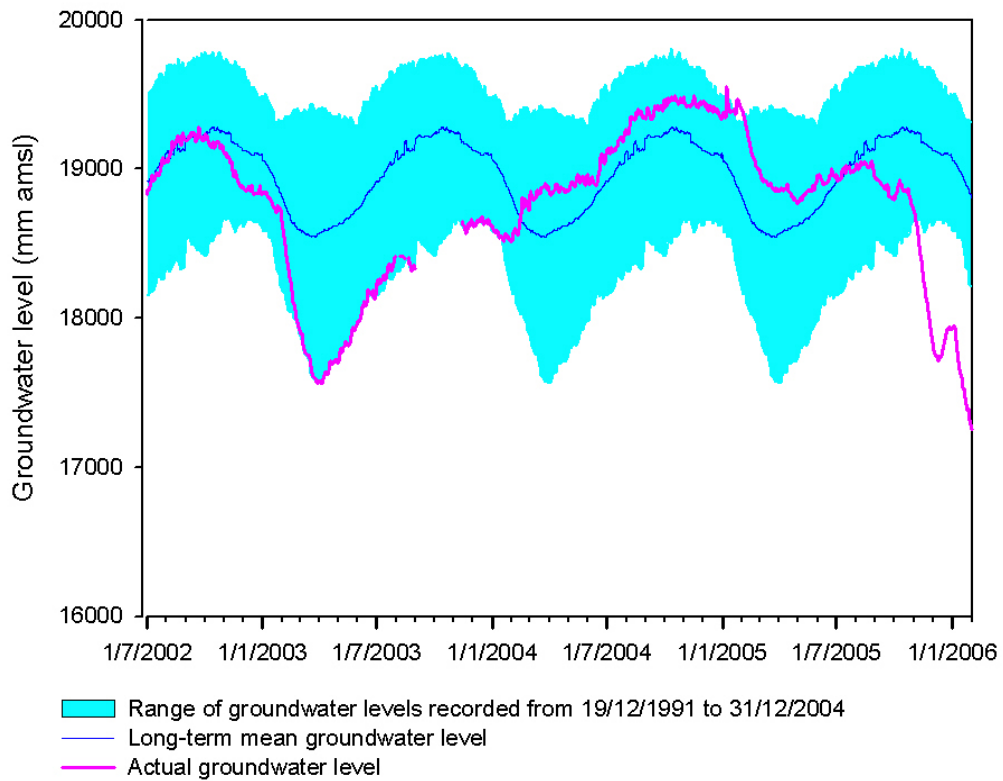
Aquifer pressure at our McEwan Park monitoring bore is at or about the long-term mean and, well above the seawater-intrusion alarm levels.



2.1.2 Kapiti Coast

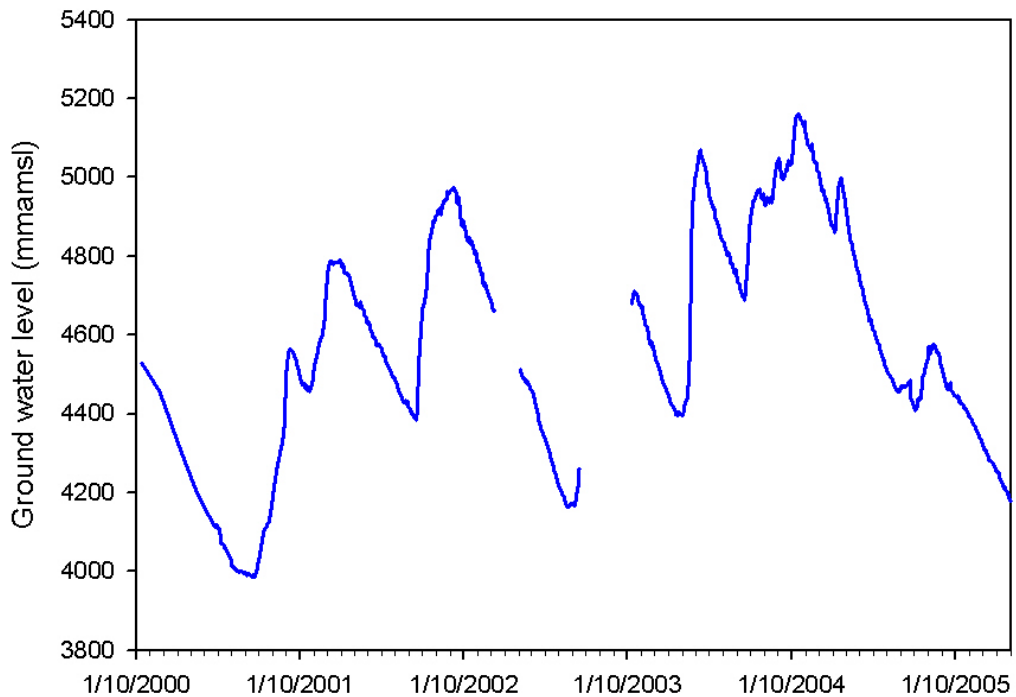
The water levels in Kapiti aquifers are being affected by the recent lack of rain in the region, particularly aquifers in the Otaki area. The hydrograph below shows the record from a Greater Wellington monitoring well on the Hautere Plain. This monitoring well intercepts a deep rainfall-recharged aquifer. The hydrograph shows the normal winter recovery slowing in June 2005 and becoming a decline in August. The current groundwater level is about 1.5 metres below the long-term mean, which is to be expected given the recent dry spell.

### Monitoring bore S25/5208 at Te Horo, Kapiti



Shallow groundwater levels are also in decline. The hydrograph below shows the record from a Greater Wellington monitoring well at the driving range on Milne Drive in Paraparaumu. The current groundwater level is at about the same level observed during the dry 2003 summer and autumn.

### Paraparaumu Shallow Groundwater Level at Golftech

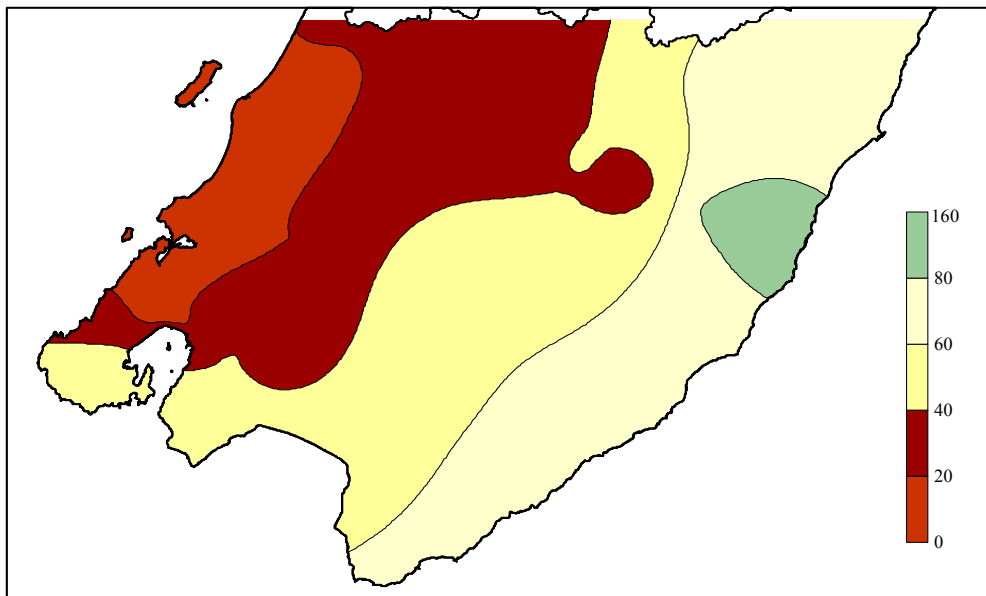


We are also monitoring deep groundwater levels in the Waikanae area where the new District Council well-field is located. This monitoring programme has been put in place with the assistance of KCDC and to date shows that groundwater levels have declined as expected due to pumping from the well-field.

## 2.2 Rainfall and river flows

November and December were unusually sunny and hot for most of the Wellington region. The overall climate pattern was dominated by above average mean sea level pressures in the Southern Ocean. This resulted in frequent south-easterly airflows over the country. November was particularly dry, with most of the region receiving less than 50% of normal rainfall for the month (Figure 1). Kapiti was particularly dry, recording less than 25% of normal rainfall. Paraparaumu Aerodrome recorded the driest November in at least 60 years. From 20 October there was a period of 30 days with no recorded rainfall at Paraparaumu. The eastern Wairarapa area received some isolated thunderstorm events that were recorded by sites located in the Taueru catchment.

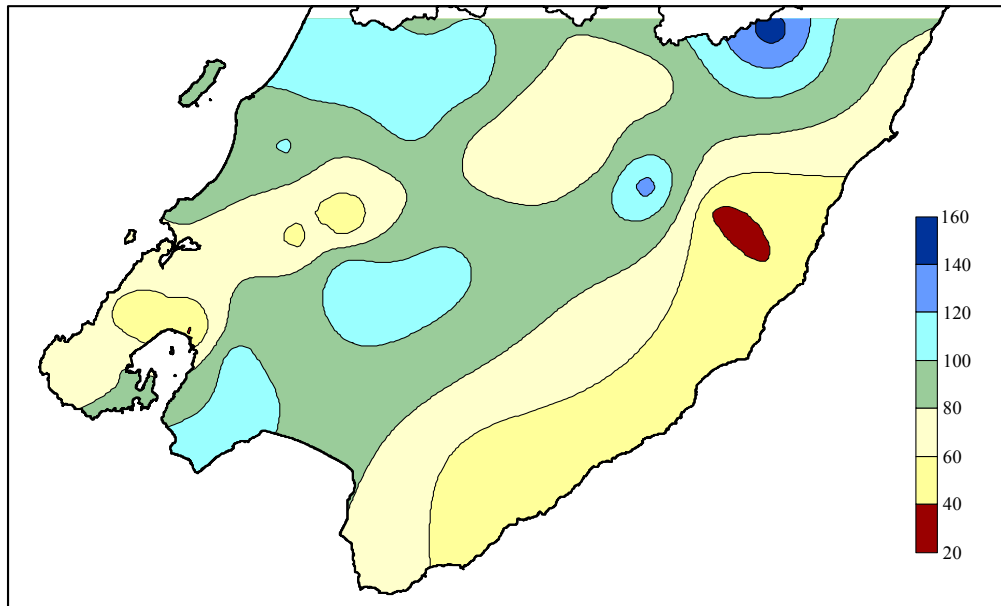
Dry conditions throughout the region resulted in soil moisture deficits at the end of spring that are not normally experienced until summer.



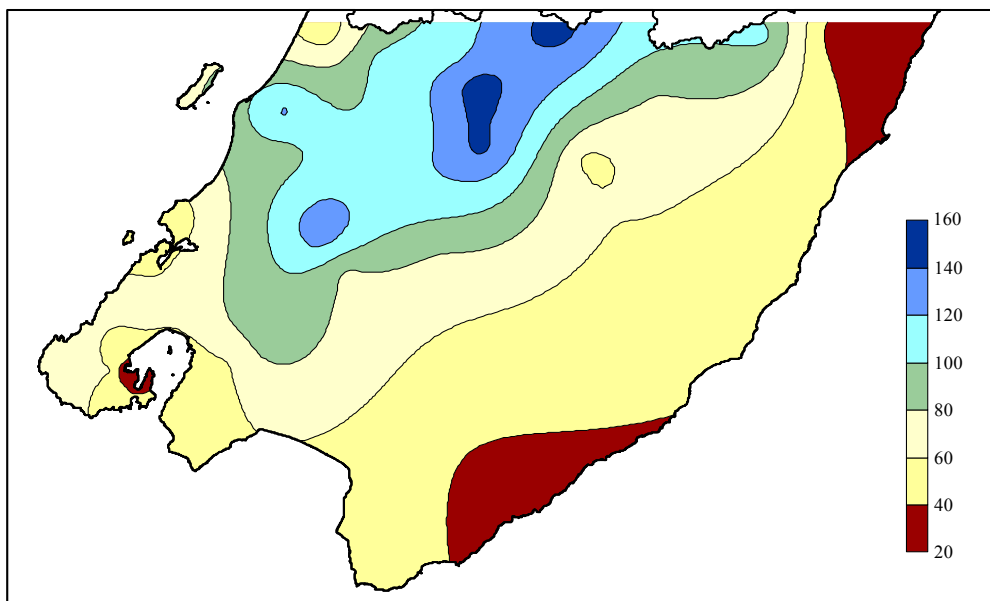
**Figure 1: Rainfall during November 2005 as a percentage of average for the month**

Some relief from the dry weather came in December with a shift to northerly airflows accompanied by troughs of low pressure over the North Island. The arrival of several northerly fronts helped push rainfall back towards normal monthly totals for most of the region (Figure 2). Temperatures remained hot, with Paraparaumu and Wellington Airport recording the hottest December since records began.

Dry weather continued into January in the south and east of the Wellington region (Figure 3). The arrival of several northerly fronts brought brief showers to the region and boosted rainfall in the Tararua Ranges. This resulted in above average January rainfall for sites in the Tararua Range.



**Figure 2: Rainfall during December 2005 as a percentage of average for the month**



**Figure 3: Rainfall during January 2006 as a percentage of average for the month**

The spring period usually provides most of the rainfall recharge required to sustain river flows through the summer. However, the lack of spring rainfall has left high soil moisture deficits in most catchments in the Region. The lack of water naturally stored in catchments has resulted in river base-flows that are well below normal from spring to the present. Mean monthly flows for most rivers in the Region were less than 25% of normal for November and less than 50 % of normal in December (Table 1). Of note, the Mangaone Stream has

recorded the lowest observed monthly flows from September to January since records began in 1993.

**Table 1: River flows in the Wellington Region during November to December 2005**

	Average flow in Nov 2005 (m <sup>3</sup> /s)	Long-term average for Nov (m <sup>3</sup> /s)	Average flow in Dec 2005 (m <sup>3</sup> /s)	Long-term average for Dec (m <sup>3</sup> /s)
Wainuiomata @ Manuka Track	0.25	0.86	0.41	0.85
Hutt @ Taita Gorge	4.92	26.07	10.80	26.42
Akatarawa @ Cemetery	1.21	5.57	2.64	5.19
Porirua @ Town Centre	0.23	0.64	0.28	0.51
Waikanae @ WTP	1.00	4.91	2.30	5.30
Waitohu @ WSI	0.15	1.01	0.92	1.13
Mangaone @ Ratanui	0.08	0.37	0.20	0.41

Flows have continued to be below normal during January (Table 2). Frontal showers and higher rainfall totals in the Tararua Range during January did not provide enough rainfall to significantly boost river base-flow. As a result, mean monthly flows have continued to fall below December values. While average monthly flows have been low going into summer, minimum flow values have not yet been reached in the southern and Kapiti catchments.

**Table 2: River flows in the Wellington Region during January 2006**

	Average flow in Jan 2005 (m <sup>3</sup> /s)	Long-term average for Jan (m <sup>3</sup> /s)	Lowest flow in Jan 2005 (m <sup>3</sup> /s)	Minimum flow specified in Regional Plan (m <sup>3</sup> /s)
Wainuiomata @ Manuka Track	0.30	0.56	0.2	0.1
Hutt @ Taita Gorge	10.76	17.53	2.59	
Akatarawa @ Cemetery	2.72	3.73	0.87	
Porirua @ Town Centre	0.22	0.78	0.1	
Waikanae @ WTP	1.63	3.78	0.87	0.75
Waitohu @ WSI	0.55	0.56	0.24	0.14
Mangaone @ Ratanui	0.12	0.24	0.08	0.02

## 2.3 Air quality monitoring

### 2.3.1 Ambient air quality monitoring

We currently monitor ambient air quality at three permanent sites in Lower Hutt (Birch Street Reserve), Upper Hutt (Savage Park) and Masterton (Wairarapa College). Our mobile ambient monitoring station is still located at Trentham Fire Station and will soon be moved to a site in the Porirua airshed.

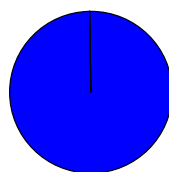
The graphs below represent air quality at the location indicated when the monitoring results are compared to ambient air quality guidelines. The assessment categories are as follows:

Category	Maximum Measured Value	Comment
Action	Exceeds Guideline	Completely unacceptable by national and international standards.
Alert	Between 66% and 100% of the guideline	A warning level which can lead to guidelines being exceeded if trends are not curbed.
Acceptable	Between 33% and 66% of the guideline	A broad category, where maximum values might be of concern in some sensitive locations, but are generally at a level that does not warrant dramatic action.
Good	Between 10% and 33% of the guideline	Peak measurements in this range are unlikely to affect air quality.
Excellent	Less than 10% of the guideline	Of little concern.

**Councillors will be aware that our *Take 10 - Quality of Life* target for air quality is that there will be no recorded instances when air pollution reaches the "alert" level of the national air quality guidelines.**

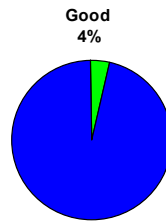
### Results for the past two months at Upper Hutt

8-Hour Average CO at Savage Park



Excellent  
100%

24-Hour Average NO<sub>2</sub> at Savage Park



Excellent  
96%

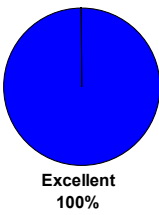
24-Hour Average PM<sub>10</sub> at Savage Park



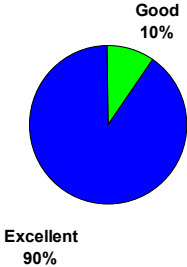
Good  
87%

### Results for the past two months at Lower Hutt

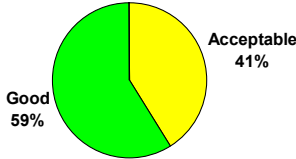
8-Hour Average CO at Lower Hutt



24-Hour Average NO<sub>2</sub> at Lower Hutt

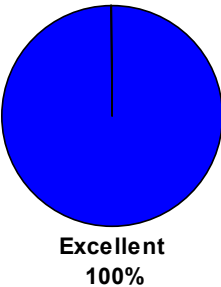


24-Hour Average PM<sub>10</sub> at Lower Hutt

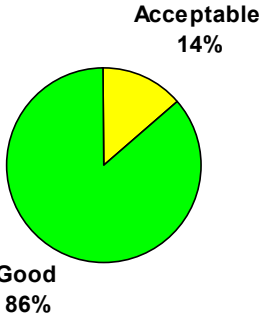


### Results for the past two months at Masterton

8-Hour Average CO at Masterton



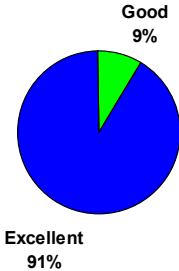
24-Hour Average PM<sub>10</sub> at Masterton



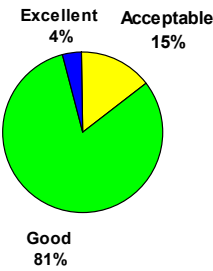
### 2.3.2 Traffic emissions monitoring

### Results for the past two months at Corner Victoria & Vivian Streets

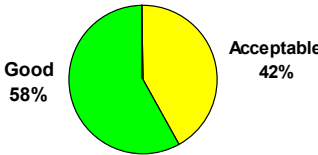
8-Hour Average CO at Corner V



24-Hour Average NO<sub>2</sub> at Corner V

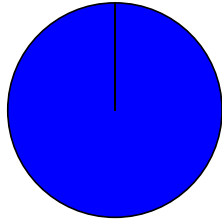


24-Hour Average PM<sub>10</sub> at Corner V



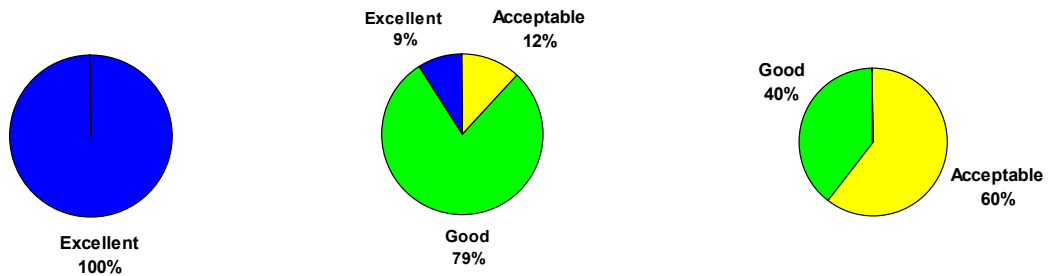
### Results for the past two months at Te Aro

8-Hour Average CO at Te Aro  
Excellent  
100%



### Results for the past six weeks at Ngauranga Gorge

8-Hour Average CO at Mobile Transport    24-Hour Average NO<sub>2</sub> at Mobile Transport    24-Hour Average PM<sub>10</sub> at Mobile Transport



## 3. Pollution Control

### 3.1 Pollution and non-compliance complaints

A summary of pollution complaints, our performance in responding to them and enforcement action taken is reported separately.



**Nigel Corry**  
**Manager, Consents Management**

## **Consents Management Department Report – February 2006**

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### **1. Consent statistics**

In the period from 1 July to 8 February 2006 we have received 317 consent applications. This compares with 281 received for the same period last year.

Over the same period, we have processed 291 consents. This compares with 244 over the same period last year.

All consents processed since the last committee meeting have been done so within statutory timeframes. Our median processing time for non-notified consents (excluding s37 time extensions) is currently sitting at 10 working days. I am very pleased with this outcome given we have been understaffed for some of this time, and have also had a number of staff tied up with major applications.

A summary of the notified consents we are currently processing is also attached for information.

### **2. Appeals and objections**

#### **2.1 Ridvan Garden Developments Limited**

As reported at the last Committee meeting, the joint GW/Wellington City Council decision on the Ridvan Gardens consent, which was released on 19 July, has been appealed by four parties: Action for the Environment Incorporated, the Southern Environmental Association (Wellington) Incorporated, the Trellissick Park/Ngaio Gorge Working Group and Ronald England.

Progress in relation to this appeal is slow, and we still consider it likely that this matter will be heard in the Environment Court in April/May of this year.

#### **2.2 Exide Technologies Limited**

The Environment Court cleared some of its existing cases in late December last year in order to be able to hear appeals on the Exide review prior to Christmas. The speed with which this issue got to court surprised all parties, and we had to work quickly in order to participate in an experts teleconference and prepare and exchange evidence. In an extremely pleasing outcome, the Court released its decision in mid January, upholding all aspects of the Council's decision. This

represents an excellent outcome to what was 8 months of solid work for the Department from the commencement of the review.

### **2.3 Meridian Energy Limited – Project *West Wind***

On 21 December 2005, the decision on the jointly notified application by Meridian for the West Wind project was released, with the Wellington City Council (WCC) consents being granted, along with the majority of the GW consents. The only exception to this was the suite of consents applied for by Meridian to develop road access from Ohau Bay. This does not affect the viability of the project, and was a decision that Meridian anticipated and were comfortable with.

10 appeals have been received in relation to this decision, 9 of which have listed GW as a respondent. Meridian have also lodged an appeal, but they have only challenged aspects of the decision in relation to WCC consents. Other appellants have sought relief in relation to a whole range of issues, ranging from water supply, to the number of turbines, noise, visual amenity and roading. The Environment Court has advised us that they are preparing a schedule to hear these appeals, and that this will run to a tight timeframe. The expectation is that the appeals will be heard around the middle of the year. All parties have also been instructed to participate in mediation with a view to limiting the scope of issues that need to be formally heard in Court. We are hopeful that a lot of GW matters subject to appeal will be able to be resolved through this Court facilitated mediation process.

### **2.4 New Zealand Forestry Group**

On 22 December, we issued an abatement notice on New Zealand Forestry Group (NZFG) seeking the removal of gabion baskets, intended to act as a bridge abutment, from the Karori Stream where they had been illegally placed. GW is concerned about the structural integrity of the structure, and its ability to act as a bridge abutment without failing in times of high flow. An infringement notice was also served in relation to this. At the same time, the Wellington City Council (WCC) also served an abatement notice, also seeking the removal of the structure on the basis that it had been placed without WCC approval on legal road.

NZFG appealed the abatement notices issued by both GW and WCC on 31 January 2005, and sought the cancellation of the notices. At the same time, NZFG also lodged an application for stay of the abatement notices. We did not oppose this request, on the assumption that NZFG take immediate steps to provided us with additional information to establish that the abutment is structurally sound, and is adequately protected from erosion and scour. The Courts granted the application for a stay until 7 April 2006, and directed NZFG to take immediate steps to provide GW with additional information in line with our request. Based on the content of this additional information, we will then review the continuing applicability of the abatement notice.

### **3. Compliance**

#### **3.1 General**

In the lead up to Christmas last year, we held one of our regular meetings with members of the Gorge Action Group (GAG) concerning activity at Taylor Preston. We continue to have an open dialogue with GAG, and while there are still odour issues from Taylor Preston which are a frustration for members in the adjacent community, GAG did acknowledge the more stringent enforcement approach that we are taking in relation to Taylor Preston non-compliance. Interestingly, towards the end of last year, Environment Waikato successfully prosecuted a local meat works over offensive or objectionable odour, with the Court imposing an \$80,000 fine, which is substantial. We are seeking more details in relation to this case to see how closely the odour issues in this case may parallel our experience with Taylor Preston.

Carey's Gully has been relatively quiet this summer, which is good, although there are always regular complaints received: usually these are received after-hours.

As you will see from the agenda papers, we also have a separate paper on our pro-active odour monitoring programme for consideration.

#### **3.2 Abatement notices**

We have not served any abatement notices since the last Committee meeting in addition to that served on the NZFG.

#### **3.3 Infringement notices**

In addition to the infringement notice that was served on the NZFG, we also issued an infringement notice on the Wellington City Council for an offensive our objectionable odour from the Northern Landfill.

#### **3.4 Prosecution and enforcement orders**

There are no prosecution or enforcement order proceedings currently underway.

### **4. Other**

#### **4.1 Regional Council Best Practice Audit**

I went to Environment Canterbury for two days in November, along with consent staff from all other Regional Councils, to participate in the Regional Council Best Practice Audit. This happens every couple of years, and ranks certain aspects of Council performance against an agreed to set of criteria. Regional Council staff themselves act as the auditors. Results were made available in December, and as in past years we came out of this audit very well, with 94% 'compliance' with best practice indicators. This is a very pleasing

result, and provides useful validation that our processes and practices are robust and amongst the best in the country.

#### **4.2 Hilton Hotel**

Applications for the Hilton Hotel proposal on the Queens Wharf outer-T were lodged just before Christmas. This will be a very high profile application for us, and I anticipate that we will receive submissions that total in the hundreds. Submissions close at the end of February. We have engaged Wellington City Council staff to help us assess the proposal given that while GW is the sole consenting agency, as the proposal lies fully within the CMA, many of the issues to be assessed are those which would typically fall to the City Council.

#### **4.3 Staff issues**

We have three new staff members who I will introduce at the meeting. They are Fiona Betteridge, Sean Lisle and Natasha Hoogeveen, all of who have started in the last couple of months.

Harley O'Hagan also recently left the Department to take up an environmental officer position with the New Zealand Army, based in Trentham. Harley had been with the Department for over four years, so we have lost a lot of experience with his departure. We are currently assessing CV's and will replace him as soon as possible.

Applicant	Proposal	Date Consent Lodged	Date Submissions Closed	Number of Submissions Received	Pre-hearing Held	Hearing Held	Hearing Committee Members	Date Decision Released	Granted or Declined
Wharfe Quarry <sup>1</sup>	To undertake a quarrying operation, including discharge of stormwater, dam and diversion of water, taking of water and piping a watercourse.	06/11/03	04/02/04	57 plus 2 late	-	Application withdrawn	-	-	-
Ridvan Garden Development <sup>2</sup>	To lay culverts and discharge contaminated stormwater as part of a residential subdivision development in Crofton Downs.	23/12/04	25/02/05	51		27/28 June	Sally Baber Ian Hutchings	19/7/05	Under appeal by 4 parties
Wellington Waterfront Ltd and the Wellington Tenth Trust <sup>3</sup>	To construct and maintain a new Wharewaka on the western side of the extended Lambton Harbour Lagoon.	02/06/05	08/07/05	54	-	22/23 August and 6/7 September	Glen Evans Aka Arthur	24/11/05	Granted – WCC consents appealed
The Wellington Tenth Trust	To construct and maintain a new building (wharanui) at Taranaki Street Wharf.	02/06/05	08/07/05	54	-	22/23 August and 6/7 September	Glen Evans Aka Arthur	24/11/05	Granted – WCC consents appealed

<sup>1</sup> This application will be jointly heard with Porirua City Council

<sup>2</sup> This application was jointly heard with the Wellington City Council

<sup>3</sup> This application was jointly heard with the Wellington City Council

Applicant	Proposal	Date Consent Lodged	Date Submissions Closed	Number of Submissions Received	Pre-hearing Held	Hearing Held	Hearing Committee Members	Date Decision Released	Granted or Declined
Wellington Waterfront Limited	To develop, use and maintain public spaces, landscaped areas and associated structures at Taranaki Street Wharf.	02/06/05	08/07/05	54	-	22/23 August and 6/7 September	Glen Evans Aka Arthur	24/11/05	Granted – WCC consents appealed
Hutt City Council	To discharge treated and disinfected wastewater from the Seaview wastewater treatment plant.	07/06/05	20/07/05	3	6 September 2005	All parties have signed off on draft conditions. RCA with Minster of Conservation for approval.	-	-	-
Meridian Energy Limited <sup>4</sup>	Various land use, discharge, and coastal permits associated with the development of the “West Wind” wind farm proposal.	010/7/05	10/08/05	4000 +	-	September to November.	Commissioners: Jim Lynch David McMahon	21/12/05	Granted – 9 appeals received.
Wellington Marine Conservation Centre <sup>5</sup>	Establish an aquarium at Te Raekaihau Point	13/09/05	2/11/05	1500+	-	20 February 2005 (approx. 2 week hearing)	Chris Turver Sally Baber	-	-
Whitby Coastal Estates <sup>6</sup>	Various land use and discharge permits for an 81 lot subdivision in James Cook Drive, Whitby	6/09/05	29/11/05	-	-	Currently on hold pending further information	-	-	-
GWRC – Biosecurity	Discharge permit to discharge Endathol across the entire Greater Wellington region for the control of hornwort and aquatic pest plants	7/10/05	2/12/05	28	7/2/2005	Hopeful can be negotiated out following pre-hearing meeting outcomes	-	-	-
Pacific Wallcoverings Ltd	Discharge permit associated with the operation of a wallpaper	15/08/05	9/12/05	1	-	Draft conditions negotiated out.	-	-	-

<sup>4</sup> This application will be jointly heard with Wellington City Council

<sup>5</sup> This application will be heard jointly with the Wellington City Council

<sup>6</sup> This application will be heard jointly with the Porirua City Council

Applicant	Proposal	Date Consent Lodged	Date Submissions Closed	Number of Submissions Received	Pre-hearing Held	Hearing Held	Hearing Committee Members	Date Decision Released	Granted or Declined
<b>(Limited notification)</b>	manufacturing plant								
Waterfront Investments Ltd	'Hilton Hotel' proposal	23/12/05	27/02/06	-	-	-	-	-	-

**Mike Pryce**  
**Manager, Harbours**  
**Harbours Department Report – February 2006**

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**1. Harbour navigation aids**

One mooring shackle on the ground-leg mooring chain of Barrett Reef buoy was detected missing during a routine check and was replaced soon thereafter.

Minor defects had Some's Island light extinguished on 3 February and Porirua south leading light extinguished on 5 February. Both were repaired quickly. All other navigation aids operated satisfactorily.

**2. Oil pollution**

- Three oil spills were reported and investigated, none of which required further action.
- The Manager, Harbours, attended the Oil Pollution Advisory Committee meeting at Te Atatau, Auckland on 9 December, where the third (and final) oil skimmer barge was officially launched and named.
- A quarterly check of marine oil spill equipment was carried out on 10 January 2006.

**3. Port and harbour risk assessment**

A port and harbour risk assessment for Wellington Harbour was received from Marico NZ Ltd, in early December 2005. See separate report on this.

**4. Beacon Hill Staff**

Daryl Edwards joined the Beacon Hill staff on 25 January to replace Ray Brown, who retired after 27 years service.

**5. Recreational**

The two swim rafts were placed in position off Oriental Bay on 7 December for the summer season, and all "5-knot" marker buoys were checked and moorings renewed where necessary.



Rian van Schalkwyk  
Manager, Emergency Management

## **Emergency Management Department Report – February 2006**

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### **1. Civil Defence Emergency Management Group**

#### **1.1 Progress with CDEM Group Work programmes**

We have seven CDEM Group programmes listed in the CDEM Group Plan for completion in the 2005/6 year as well as the sewerage disposal project which was requested by the CDEM Co-ordinating Executive Group.

The programmes are:

- CDEM Group Public Information and Media Management
- CDEM Group Welfare Management
- Review of Standard Operating Procedures
- The Role of the CDEM Group in Public Health Hazards
- Lifelines Communications System implementation
- Development of a Joint Agency Training and Exercise Schedule
- CDEM Group Reconnaissance Plan developed and tested
- Sewerage disposal

Steady progress is being made in all these programmes.

#### **1.2 Upgrade of the Regional Communications system**

At the last meeting of the Committee it was reported that installing a satellite system (iPSTAR 400) turned out to be too costly over the longer term and that alternate systems would be looked at.

After more research and following numerous discussions with other service providers we have still not decided which system would suit us best. Most systems are too costly (well above \$500,000). We are currently considering the upgrade of our radio communications system to allow the transfer of written data over radio, the purchase of a handheld satellite option and the purchase of a 'Smartboard' system which would be used over the internet.

## **2. Marketing and Communications**

There is a lot of education work being conducted in the Region, both as a Group and as individual authorities.

The preparation of the CDEM Group Education Strategy should provide direction and priorities for this work, as well as ways to monitor our progress. Meanwhile, emergency management officers are, where possible and practicable, endeavouring to work more closely together on education initiatives.

Below are some of the initiatives that we are currently working on.

### **2.1 The CDEM Group website**

The Wellington Region CDEM Group website ([www.wrcdemg.govt.nz](http://www.wrcdemg.govt.nz)) went live on 7 October 2005.

We have received some really good and positive feedback from other local authorities, emergency services, and the public on the 'user-friendliness' of our site.

The server is now being operated from Auckland which provides us much more robustness, especially for operating the site during an emergency. The decision to move the server to Auckland aligns the web services to both the CDEM Group and the Greater Wellington Regional Council.

The new website was extensively tested during Exercise Phoenix IV.

### **2.2 Pandemic Planning**

The department is actively involved in planning for a possible 'bird flu' outbreak.

We are working very closely with the Ministries of Health, Civil Defence Emergency Management and Economic Development, the territorial authorities and the emergency services. A Pandemic Plan is now being prepared.

## **3. Environment**

### **3.1 Earthquake Reports**

Since preparing the last report for the Environment Committee meeting 52 reports for earthquakes bigger than 3 on the Richter Scale were received from GNS.

### **3.2 Special Weather Bulletins**

Nineteen Special Weather Bulletins (9 for heavy rain, and 10 for strong wind) were received since the last Committee meeting.

The relevant agencies were notified and no problems were experienced.

### **3.3 Communications**

Weekly tests of the radio communications network are being carried out and the system is functioning well.

**Richard Waddy**  
**Divisional Accountant**  
**Financial Position: 30 June 2005**

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**1. Operating Results**

We are pleased to report the operating results for the year ended 30 June 2005. These numbers are provisional and subject to audit confirmation.

<b><u>Environment Division</u></b>				
<b><u>Summary Income Statement</u></b>				
<b><u>For the Period Ended 30 June 2005</u></b>				
	<b><u>Actual</u></b> <b><u>\$000s</u></b>	<b><u>Year to Date</u></b> <b><u>Budget</u></b> <b><u>\$000s</u></b>	<b><u>Variance</u></b> <b><u>\$000s</u></b>	<b><u>Full Year</u></b> <b><u>Budget</u></b> <b><u>\$000s</u></b>
Rates	8,199	8,199	--	8,199
Other Revenue	2,079	2,113	34 U	2,113
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>10,278</b>	<b>1,0312</b>	<b>34 U</b>	<b>10,312</b>
<b>Less:</b>				
Direct Expenditure	8,742	9,017	275 F	9,017
Indirect Expenditure	1,256	1,354	98 F	1,354
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>9,998</b>	<b>10,371</b>	<b>373 F</b>	<b>10,371</b>
<b>Operating Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>(59)</b>	<b>339 F</b>	<b>(59)</b>

**2. Surplus**

- The Division's finances are in a sound position and overall slightly higher than we anticipated in our budgets. An operating surplus of \$280,000 was recorded, which is significantly above our budgeted deficit of \$59,000.
- The result translates to a net favourable variance of \$339,000, comprising reduced revenue of \$34,000, and offset, by lower than expected expenditure of \$373,000.

- From a cash perspective, the net funds surplus at \$102,000 compares favourably to our neutral or nil budget.

### 3. Revenue

Total Revenue at \$10,277,000 is some \$34,000 short of our budget target of \$10,311,000.

The shortfall has been caused by a lower number of notified consents processed in the first half of the year than budgeted and a one-off feature – the remit of costs for a notified consent. In addition, changes to the internal arrangements for the after-hours answering service have resulted in a loss of revenue. Previously Beacon Hill staff provided the service.

However, we received \$88,000 from the Department of Conservation towards our biodiversity initiatives for landowner assistance, and this has helped offset some of that shortfall. Some of this contribution was not specifically included in our budget.

### 4. Total Expenditure

The Division's total expenditure at \$9,997,000 is some \$373,000 less than our budget.

The main reasons for this variance are:

- **Personnel costs** were slightly over budget by \$54,000. Some of this additional spend is with the part-time Emergency Management officer. The officer has been engaged to help with the training of volunteers, and to conduct CDEM group exercises.
- **Materials, Supplies and Services** are less than budget by \$164,000.

The reduced number of notified consents and introduction of "limited" notified consents has meant that our call for commissioners to hear applications is less than we expected (\$41,000).

The cost of repairs for navigational aids was at a lower level than budgeted (\$36,000) - some of the work will be completed in the new year.

The cost required to run the Civil Defence Emergency Management group has come in lower than envisaged, in this, the first year of the group's operation. A small saving of \$18,000 has been realised.

Groundwater projects were slightly underspent by some \$10,000 because some of the Hutt groundwater sites maintenance was not required. Similarly, some repair work for the air quality station for transport emissions was not needed and repairs came in at \$10,000 less than budgeted.

A number of projects have come in with material costs less than the amount budgeted, and these have been more than offset from costs of contractors

and consultants. For example, the Wetlands project suggests a favourable materials variance of \$22,000 and implementing the methods of the Regional Plans project appears to be underspent by \$14,000. In each instance the contractors and consultants costs for these projects amounted to more than the “saving”.

- **Consultant costs** were less than budget by \$169,000.

The take-up of the funding for the iwi projects has been lower (\$101,000) than anticipated in our budgets. The Council Secretariat has assumed responsibility for the iwi budget and as foreshadowed, the funds set aside have not been used fully.

In addition, QE11 National Trust work is behind (\$111,000). Although funds have been allocated, invariably, with this type of work there is a significant time-lag from the stage funds are committed to the completion of projects. Farmers will be reimbursed costs (via the QE11 National Trust) once the work is completed.

- **Internal charges** were under budget by \$28,000.

Most of the underspend arises because of the changes to the after-hours answering service previously provided by Beacon Hill staff.

## 5. **Capital Expenditure**

The capital expenditure programme (after asset disposals) was some \$124,000 short of our budget.

The principal reason for this is with the delay of the launch of the satellite which was to carry our emergency management communication equipment (\$95,000) into space. The underspend has been carried over into 2005-06.

In addition, it has been decided to defer replacing the Voice logger (\$15,000) because a full risk assessment of Wellington Harbour is presently being conducted. Further, the upgrade to the Pencarrow navigation aid (\$10,000) has been postponed as this will depend on whether the main shipping channel at the harbour entrance is dredged or not. The capital expenditure programme has been reduced by \$25,000.