

Northland Regional Council (NRC) high level comment on McKinlay Douglas (MDL) Report

When Chairman Mark Farnsworth and Chief Executive officer Ken Paterson presented their submissions on Friday 2 July 2010, issues raised in the McKinlay Douglas (MDL) report were inevitably discussed. Some of obvious inaccuracies contained in this report were outlined. You asked whether these comments had been included in the expanded regional council submission presented to yourselves as Commissioners at the hearing. When it was established that these comments were not included, you requested that some additional notes be prepared for you in this regard.

Methodology

The regional council recognises that many of the claims made in the MDL report are attributed to having come from various unnamed “informants”. It should be noted that these informants were selected by the district councils and include politicians and senior members of staff who are involved in the project. The regional council considers many of the claims published in the report are incorrect and that the report made no effort to verify, test or balance these claims with others from more neutral sources. Unsurprisingly, the discussion sections of the final report appear biased and constructed primarily to backup the pre-determined, politically motivated final recommendations. This paper intends only to state the facts in response to some of the claims made but does not attempt to address all the inaccuracies as they are too numerous. The regional council would be more than willing to provide additional comment on areas of specific interest rather than conduct a complete analysis at this time. Please find following some more general observations and corrections to claims made in the MDL report – made from the regional council’s perspective.

Assumptions made about regional councils used as a foundation for the MDL report

The MDL report uses as a basis for discussion throughout the document, a 10 year old Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment and Auditor General Report that compared regional councils and unitary councils in which regional councils were uniformly referred to as “remote” from their communities. This “remoteness” and “lack of connectedness” was referred to throughout the report as one of the most important issues in assessing options for local government options in Northland. The report also uses as a foundation for much of its discussion, the concept that regional councils are “technical, science based entities focusing on environmental management with minimal direct engagement with the public of their region”.

NRC does not consider that such an outdated report is a valid basis for assumptions about regional councils. NRC was surprised that the MDL report also did not appear to grasp the full impact of the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002 where all local authorities (including regional councils) are charged with “promoting the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future”: section 10 of the LGA 2002. The MDL report also did not appear to be familiar with the current activities of the regional council that extend well outside environmental activity. As requested, a brief overview of all NRC activities is included for your reference as appendix 1. The MDL report appears to have a very weak foundation for much of its discussion based on outdated and uninformed assumptions about NRC.

Remoteness and lack of connectedness

The facts are that NRC has a considerable presence throughout Northland that is totally overlooked by the MDL report and not recognised by many of the “informants” with vested interests. Following are just some examples illustrating the wide variety of ways that NRC connects with its various communities throughout Northland.

1. Councillors are elected from and live in communities throughout Northland from Kaitaia, Hokianga, Bay of Islands, Mangawhai and Whangarei (both urban and rural). NRC is not “Whangarei-centric” as claimed throughout the report.

2. Most Council Committees include community and in some cases district council representatives enabling extensive community involvement in decision making. A list of NRC committees and their membership is included as appendix 2.
3. The Environmental Management Committee has 4 sub-committees of river management community liaison groups where the community is extensively involved in developing flood risk reduction strategies and programmes of work for rivers and catchments. Currently, the community liaison groups are throughout the region in Awanui/Kaitaia, Whangaroa/Kaeo, Whangarei and Kaihu. Appendix 3 is a map of Northland showing the locations of current river management work. This number will grow as other river management plans are completed with work currently underway in a further 24 communities.
4. NRC has offices and skilled staff throughout the region in Kaitaia, Bay of Islands, Dargaville and Whangarei. To supplement the “eyes and ears” on the ground, NRC has 15 harbour wardens based throughout the region. These wardens are all members of the community charged with being available first hand as locals for any issues arising in their areas.
5. To supplement “eyes and ears” on the ground, NRC has two 24/7 hotlines for environmental and maritime incidents so that the public can have access to NRC at any time.
6. NRC works with 24 plus Coastcare community groups. Coastcare is a partnership between NRC, the local community, iwi, district councils, DOC, working together to protect and restore Northland’s beaches. Appendix 4 is a map of Northland showing the location of coastcare community projects.
7. NRC has set up 30 Community Pest Control Areas (CPCAs). CPCAs are a joint project between NRC and a community where we work with local people to agree on a suitable pest management plan for their location. NRC funds the initial control work, and the community is contracted to do the ongoing control. Appendix 5 illustrates the sites throughout Northland of current pest projects.
8. NRC granted funding for over 100 joint council/community environmental and biodiversity enhancement/restorations projects over the past year in Northland. Community groups or individuals may apply to the fund and NRC staff provide advice and technical support for the community to carry out the work. NRC works in partnership with the QE II National Trust, DOC, Fish and Game NZ and the three district councils under the Northland Biodiversity Enhancement Group. Appendix 6 illustrates the location and type of Environment Fund projects throughout Northland.
9. NRC has set up community liaison groups for major consent monitoring. This enables the community and industry to have input into compliance and effects monitoring in their areas of interest and promotes community awareness of monitoring results. Consent liaison groups exist for NZ Refinery (Marsden Point), Northport (Whangarei Harbour), Goldpine (Waipu), and Juken Nissho Board Mills (Kaitaia).
10. NRC participates in industry sector stakeholder groups. These include:
 - Forestry RMA Group
 - Dairy Effluent Improvement Group
 - Northland Agricultural Forum
 - Beef and Lamb NZ (“monitor farm” discussion groups)
 - Whangarei Harbour Maritime Safety Group
 - Bay of Islands Maritime Safety Group
 - Transport – Northland Technical Executive Group

11. NRC participates in and supports a number of community led water quality initiatives. NRC provides technical advice by specialist staff, along with logistical and funding support, and the community are involved in the monitoring. These groups exist in Wairoa/Hokianga, Bay of Islands, Doubtless Bay and Whangaroa Harbour.
12. NRC has an extensive community environmental education programme including:
 - Environmental education support for schools, including school visits and an annual youth summit on the environment;
 - Provision of funding for schools through the Environmental Curriculum Awards;
 - Regional coordination of the Enviroschools programme, including awards and hui;
 - Creation and free provision of school educational resources and training, including teacher workshops;
 - Sponsoring and supporting awards and programmes that align with our goals, including sustainable farming, science fairs, school environmental and sustainable business;
 - Supporting national events at a regional level, including Seaweed, World Environment Day, etc; and
 - Organising or hosting seminars and workshops on regional environmental matters.
13. NRC is a recognised leader in local government for online communications and engagement. The NRC ranked No 1 in 2008 and runner up in 2009. NRC provides a range of live environmental data including flood warnings, river and rainfall data and beach water quality.
14. NRC is the only council in Northland using social media such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn to deliver news, updates and to further engage with out communities.

In addition to the extensive community involvement listed above, to further refute claims of “remoteness” and “lack of connectedness”, following are facts from the last financial year of interactions between NRC and the people of Northland.

- 958 environmental incidents responded to
- 362 maritime incidents responded to
- 226 workplaces inspected for hazardous substance compliance
- 961 dairy farms inspected for effluent compliance
- 242 non-compliance follow-up meetings with farmers
- 63 bathing water sites sampled weekly (November – April); results on NRC website weekly
- 1750 resource consent compliance assessments made and reported.
- 165 biodiversity and environmental enhancement projects supported by NRC Environment Fund completed
- 984 enquiries about biosecurity / pest control responded to
- 999 resource consents processed
- 98.6% resource consents processed within statutory time frames
- 92% consents applicants found NRC staff’s level of helpfulness to be “good” or “very good”
- 52 school visits by NRC staff

These facts show that:

- **NRC is not “remote”.**
- **NRC does not “lack connectedness” with its communities – it has extensive community involvement, including water quality initiatives.**
- **NRC is not “Whangarei-centric”.**

The claims made in the MDL report that a new structure is needed to “bridge the gap” between NRC and the community is unfounded and poorly researched. The claims of lack of community input into the development of policy and management and monitoring of consents appear to be written from a very narrow perspective reflecting the prejudices of those with vested interests and again, are poorly researched.

The need for a strong “Northland voice”

It is not clear how further dividing Northland is going to help provide a single, strong voice for Northland. In addition, central government has indicated concerns about their ability to interact with multiple authorities, and yet these options are still being promoted in the report. As detailed in NRC’s main submission, political motivations are evident throughout the report when although MDL question the financial viability of the Far North Unitary, this option is still being promoted in the report.

There is no mention in the MDI report of how potential improvements such as a “1-stop-shop” for council services and a reconstituted Northland Intersectoral Forum could be done right now via shared services instead of costly reorganisation.

The report promotes certain initiatives as results or improvements that would arise from the split of Northland into two unitary authorities that already exist. This shows a complete lack of understanding of the current situation and is misleading because it implies that to achieve these things would require a change to the various unitary proposals. Examples include the establishment of CCOs for infrastructure management, commissioners being used to hear resource consents and changes to the Northland Regional Council Community Trust. Although NRC is one of the top performing councils in NZ as regards its resource consent activity, the report dismisses this glibly and without any evidence, as resulting from a “tick the box” mentality.

The report also uses the argument of “duplication and confusion” as a reason for moving to multiple unitary authorities. Given that two unitary authorities would require the creation of two Regional Policy Statements, two Water and Soil Plans, two Coastal Management Plans, two Air Quality Plans, two Oil Spill Response Plans and two Regional Pest Management Plans, it is unclear how this will help Northland operate more effectively with a strong regional voice and totally disregards the additional costs.

Specific claims in the MDL report as regards NRC's performance

The report contains many anecdotal and often inaccurate observations regarding NRC. In order to provide an insight into the extent of this problem, an alternative view to a number of these statements is discussed below.

1. Page 33 claims that “Northland has the lowest level of compliance with freshwater bathing sites of any NZ region” and makes the unsubstantiated claim that NRC “has not previously attached sufficient priority to managing freshwater quality for recreational purposes”.

NRC comment

This claim is not factually correct or able to be judged from the reference quoted in the MDL report. There is no scientific or statistical comparison of regional information presented in the referenced MfE report. Some regions submitted no or very few results, therefore it is not possible to compare relative levels of compliance. We note that the FNDC in particular, are currently opposing NRC and community requests for setting higher effluent standards so as to protect water quality for bathing and shellfish gathering.

2. Far North District Council (FNDC) claims on Page 33 that “NRC was both setting standards for council-owned infrastructure that were unreasonably and unacceptably high especially in terms of cost to communities, and inappropriately targeting council infrastructure when other activity was the primary source of the problem”. FNDC provided examples of Kaeo and Taipa wastewater treatment plants.

NRC comment

This assertion is not supported by fact or evidence: The facts are as follows:

Kaeo: The standards required in the resource consent for the FNDC Kaeo sewage discharge were arrived at after due public process, consultation and submissions from the local community, hearing of evidence by commissioners and negotiations and agreements with submitters. The standards were not imposed unilaterally by NRC as is implied. FNDC did not appeal the consent decision and NRC has offered and allowed FNDC extra time to comply or propose alternatives. They have done neither. We note that FNDC's ongoing non-compliance is prima facie a criminal offence raising serious questions about the claims made in this regard.

Taipa: NRC has not imposed any new or higher standard and is not at this stage requiring any upgrade. The resource consent for the FNDC Taipa sewage discharge has expired and FNDC has only just managed to get a proper application for a new consent ready for public notice. It is sections of the local community that are asking for FNDC to upgrade the sewage treatment and for NRC to set higher standards. The standards on the new consent will be set after due process, by agreement or if contested, by independent commissioners or the Environment Court that hears the evidence in relation to the application.

3. Page 37 states "NRC lacks the eyes and ears on the ground which district council have with people working throughout the entire district". Page 38 goes on to say "NRC's lack of connection with the region's individual communities and lacks the informal networks and ability to engage with people on the ground". The report goes on to say that "the regional council is a Whangarei based entity" and MDL comment that this reflects "the remoteness of regional councils from their community identified by the (10 year old) Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment Report" mentioned previously.

NRC comment

These comments show a lack of understanding of regional council business and reflect poorly on the quality of information used to draw conclusions in the MDL report. Refer to previous sections and the appendices for the facts.

4. Page 38 states "A lack of community presence was seen as a major factor contributing to what was seen as poor performance in monitoring and there is only limited NRC monitoring of harbour pollution".

NRC comment

There is no actual evidence of poor performance. We note that FNDC and WDC have representation on the NRC Environmental Management Committee (EMC) that advises on and recommends to the Council on matters such as monitoring programmes and the resourcing of these. The bathing water quality programmes have been developed and reviewed annually by a joint working group of staff from NRC, the 3 district councils and the Northland District Health Board and then put to the EMC for support. The district councils are given ample opportunity for input into these programmes. NRC disputes that it has a low community presence as evidenced in previous sections of this report.

Page 38 of the MDL report also cites the Wairoa Hokianga project as an example of lack of NRC engagement. The facts are that the local NRC councillor, Cr Joe Carr, and NRC monitoring staff are very active participants in this project. NRC provides technical advice on sampling and water quality and has assisted with sampling and funds the project analysis costs. The FNDC CEO has asked NRC to cover what was to be FNDC's share of the analysis costs. NRC has included an extra \$100k in this year's budget for support of community led water quality monitoring projects. In contrast FNDC has withdrawn support for the Wairoa Hokianga project.

5. Also on page 38, there is the statement that “it can be very hard for district councils to get environmental monitoring information, especially at peak holiday times”.

NRC comment

This claim is nonsense. NRC emails the summer water quality programme monitoring results directly to district council and health board staff as they become available (weekly) and puts them on our public website weekly, including during the holiday period. NRC has monitoring staff working throughout the holiday period.

6. Page 39 provides tables illustrating consents compliance for 2007-2008 with statistics from NRC, Environment Bay of Plenty and Taranaki Regional Council. The report comments that “the high level of significant non-compliance was seen as a principle reason for the relatively poor quality of receiving waters within the Northland region”.

NRC comment

Page 38 and 39 of the MDL report discuss farm dairy effluent (FDE) compliance. We note that MDL misrepresent and then misinterpret the few figures they do use. One of the reasons that Northland’s non-compliance figures are higher than the other regions mentioned is not because of any lack of local “eyes and ears”, monitoring or follow-up. NRC has one of the most, if not the most rigorous FDE monitoring regimes nationally; monitoring all the farms annually, taking water quality samples of all those that discharge to water, monitoring in spring/early summer when discharge volumes are high, with no pre-warning of dates of inspections, and discharges from feed-pads, wintering barns and other major sources are included in the assessments. The more rigorous regime detects more non-compliance. Follow-up visits are made to non-complying farms, and enforcement action is taken. In 2009-2010; 200 abatement notices and 173 infringement notices were issued and 3 criminal prosecutions laid. NRC has in conjunction with the dairy industry, farmer’s representatives, Fonterra and Dairy NZ, set up a Northland Effluent Improvement Group and jointly funds a sustainable Dairying Advisor to work with farmers to improve effluent management.

7. Pages 43 and 44 contain a summary of the key themes from the district council selected group of interviews. The majority of comments are again about remoteness, lack of connectedness, lack of community awareness (and NRC invisibility) and lack of response to community concerns etc. Appendix 7 contains the 2010 NRC Northland community Awareness Survey. Facts relevant to the erroneous claims made in the MDL report include:

- When asked what NRC actually does, 94% knew NRC did planning and monitoring, 85% knew we also did flood management, 70% infrastructure planning and development and 68% harbour navigation and safety.
- 20% had accessed the NRC website to get information.
- In terms of contact with NRC, 23% had contacted us at least once in the past year. The highest level of contact is in the Far North District.

It appears that among those with least knowledge of NRC are not the community in general, but MDL and the informants selected by the district councils for interview.

Apart from the obvious bias and lack of facts in these examples, the question does need to be asked about whether the MDL report was intended to be an honest investigation into the structure of local government in Northland, or a critique of council performance. If it is the later, then perhaps the report should investigate corresponding district council performance with the same level of vigour starting with the failure to maintain and provide adequate infrastructure.

These examples by no means account for all incorrect claims made in the report, but merely serve as an indication of the bias and misinformation upon which the reports recommendations are made. The regional council is very happy to discuss any aspect of the MDL report and its findings further if required.

Appendices

1. Overview of functions – Northland Regional Council
2. Council Committees
3. Priority river management work in Northland
4. Coastcare groups in Northland
5. Pest projects in Northland
6. Environment Fund projects in Northland
7. 2010 Northland Community Awareness Survey

Overview of functions – Northland Regional Council

The regional council undertakes a wide variety of functions, summarised for you as follows:

Regional Growth Programme (RGP)

Currently being developed, the RGP will provide a framework for prioritising economic and environmental infrastructure enabling more effective targeting of council resources. It will also provide a structure to manage the complex relationship between environmental protection, economic growth and provision of necessary infrastructure for Northland. With preliminary work complete, the council is about to consult with key stakeholders on the priorities for the region and the various options available to Northlanders to achieve their goals and aspirations.

Economic Development

The council has an economic development agency trading under the name Enterprise Northland with a tourism subsidiary known as Destination Northland. Their combined objectives are to promote and encourage the development of a vibrant economy that creates wealth and jobs and provides opportunities for people to live, work and invest in Northland. Both organisations will have a role to play in implementing aspects of the Regional Growth Programme in areas such as

- Industry support for sectors to attract new businesses and expand existing business;
- Building community capacity;
- Building entrepreneurial capacity; and
- Building small business capacity.

Resource Management Planning

As required by the Resource Management Act (RMA) 1991, the regional council is responsible for the sustainable management of natural and physical resources within the region. The council must prepare a Regional Policy Statement (RPS), a Regional Coastal Plan, a Regional Water and Soil Plan and a Regional Air Quality Plan. These plans permit activities with certain adverse effects to be carried out without needing a resource consent, and also provide policy guidance on assessing activities with greater effects. The purpose of the plans is to practically apply the RMA to sustainably manage Northland's natural resources for current and future generations. RMA amendments now require Northland's three district councils to "give effect" to the RPS. A review of the RPS is currently underway and it is intended to have a draft for public comment in early 2011. The council is also actively investigating the feasibility of a consolidated planning framework or "one-plan" approach to simplify this complex legislative area and deliver efficiency gains through shared services with the district councils.

Regional Transport Management

The council has a statutory role in regional transport. Work includes strategic planning for the future transport needs of the region, and the active operational involvement in regional road safety issues through:

- Convening the Regional Transport Committee which includes representatives from the regional council, district councils, NZ Police, NZ Transport Agency and others;
- The development, implementation and monitoring of Regional Land Transport Strategy for Northland;
- The development of Regional Road Safety Plan; and
- Preparation of the Regional Land Transport Programme.

Passenger Transport Administration

The council's role in passenger transport is to provide affordable, safe, integrated, responsive and sustainable transport services to the public. This includes:

- Registration of commercial passenger services;
- Administration of the Whangarei Urban City Link bus service;
- Registration and administration of public passenger transport services; and
- Administration of the Total Mobility Scheme for the transport disadvantaged.

Resource Consents

The regional council controls activities affecting the use of the region's coastal, water, soil and air resources through the processing of coastal, water and discharge permits, land use consents and building consents for dams. This council is one of the top performers in NZ with 98.6% of decisions processed with statutory timeframes, no successful appeals against decisions made and 92% of consents customers rated the regional council's level of helpfulness as either "good" or "very good". Building consents and compliance are a district council function.

Environmental monitoring

The council monitors the current state of, and trends in the environment reflected in Northland's water, land, air and coastal resources using the following networks and monitoring programmes:

- River Water Quality Monitoring Network (35 sites);
- Lake Water Quality Monitoring Network (30 lakes);
- Recreational Bathing Water Quality Programme (freshwater and coastal);
- Freshwater biological (biodiversity) monitoring programme;
- Air quality Monitoring Programme;
- Hydrology Monitoring (60 automatic sites including 30 river level sites, 24 rainfall sites and 7 groundwater sites plus 55 daily rainfall stations, 16 lake level sites and a further 30-40 groundwater sites);
- Coastal Monitoring (over 50 sites in harbours and estuaries to collect water and sediment);
- Soil Quality Monitoring Programme; and
- State of the Environment Reporting.

Compliance monitoring

The council uses a range of methods to promote, and if necessary, enforce compliance with resource consents, regional plan rules and other statutory environmental standards. These methods include advice, education, workshops, warnings, abatement notices, infringement notices and prosecutions.

Environmental incidents response

This involves the recording and investigation of environmental incidents and the resolution of any detected non-compliance with the Resource Management Act. The council provides a 24-hour, everyday environmental incident reporting, recording and response system, including the environmental hotline free phone.

Hazardous substances and contaminated sites

This activity includes the collection, transport, storage, treatment and disposal of waste hazardous chemicals, hazardous substances storage where there is no alternative, compliance monitoring, incident response and the investigation and documentation of contaminated sites. In conjunction with PGG Wrightson, the council maintains and operates waste hazardous substances collection facilities in Kaitaia, Waipapa, Kerikeri, Dargaville and Whangarei. In addition, the regional council works with the Whangarei District Council to operate a collection and storage depot at the Resource Recovery Park for the short-term storage of hazardous substances prior to transportation to Auckland or Europe for safe disposal.

Under contract to the Department of Labour, the council also provides a service for the inspection of workplaces storing and using hazardous substances to ensure that all workplaces comply with relevant legislation and regulations under the HSNO Act 1996.

The council also provides and maintains a 24 hour, 7 day service for responding to incidents in Northland that involve hazardous substances.

Hazard Management

This area of work includes the preparation and implementation of flood risk reduction plans for 27 priority rivers or groups of streams in Northland. Hazard Management work also includes the preparation and implementation of risk reduction plans for land instability, erosion, settlement, coastal erosion, tsunami and storm surge, wild fire, earthquake and volcanic activity.

River Management

This involves the Implementation of approved management plans for the Awanui and Kaihu Rivers and the Kaeo River-Whangaroa Catchment, and other new management plans as they are approved. This includes the employment of contractors to carry out channel works, construction of structures, control of vegetation, and other works associated with building and implementing river management schemes.

Land and Biodiversity

This activity involves promoting change from unsustainable to sustainable land management practices (SLMP). Officers also have an educational role and act as change agents providing advice on SLMP. The council works with primary sector interest groups to optimise its limited resources, in particular with Fonterra/Dairy NZ, Meat and Wool New Zealand, the fertiliser industry, Forest Owners Association, and the Farm Forestry Association.

The council also promotes the protection and enhancement of indigenous biodiversity, both for its intrinsic values and because remnant indigenous forests help to reduce the rate of runoff and the incidence of soil erosion on steep hill country. The council is the management authority for pests which can include plants, animals and diseases. Pest management activity includes the development, review and implementation of the Regional Pest Management Strategies for pest species.

Emergency Management

Emergency Management is the process of reducing, preparing for, responding to and recovering from natural or human hazards that can cause widespread damage to property and infrastructure and/or loss of life in Northland. The Northland Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Group facilitates the coordination of inter-agency emergency readiness, response and recovery, and to develop and implement a region wide Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan. The regional council provides leadership, coordination, project management and funding for the Northland CDEM Group, Coordinating the Executive Group, Lifelines Group, Welfare Advisory Group and Rural Support Trust.

Oil Pollution Response

The Oil Pollution Response activity centres on the council's preparedness for, and response to marine oil spills. The overall aim is to avoid or mitigate the effects of oil spills that occur in Northland's marine environment.

Harbour Safety and Navigation

The regional council carries out harbour safety and navigation activities in line with the NZ Port and Harbour Marine Safety Code and associated risk assessments and harbour safety systems. The council promotes and regulates navigation safety on all coastal and harbour waters throughout the region and out to 12 nautical miles, and makes Navigation Safety Bylaws that cover all boating and shipping activities in Northland's waters.

The council also provides and maintains aids to navigation (all buoys, beacons, lights and signage), manages moorings, provides the services of a Regional Harbourmaster, Harbour Wardens, education and advice and if necessary, enforcement and a maritime incident response system. In addition, the council provides pilotage services to cruise ships in the Bay of Islands and provide a 24/7 maritime incident response service.

Appendix 2

council committees

The Chairman, Mark Farnsworth, is an ex-officio member of all committees.

Environmental Management Committee

Councillors Craig Brown (Chairman), Joe Carr (Deputy Chairman), Mark Farnsworth (ex officio), John Bain, Lorraine Hill, Peter Jensen and Bill Rossiter.

- Mrs Fiona King representing the Far North District Council.
- Cr Crichton Christie representing the Whangarei District Council.
- Cr Brian McEwing representing the Kaipara District Council.
- Mr Gerry Brackenbury representing environmental interest groups (nominated by Northland Regional Council).
- Mr Wayne Ward representing the farming community (nominated by Farmers of New Zealand).
- Mr Chris Jenkins representing the Department of Conservation.
- Mr Andrew Warren – NZ Forest Owners Association representing the forest industry.
- Mr Mike Kake representing cultural interests.

Regional Transport Committee

Councillors John Bain (Chairman), Joe Carr (Deputy Chairman), Mark Farnsworth (ex officio).

- Mr David Edmunds representing the Far North District Council.
- Mr Mark Simpson representing the Whangarei District Council.
- Cr Richard Alspach representing the Kaipara District Council.
- Mr Wayne McDonald representing the NZ Transport Agency.
- Mr Tony Norman representing public health.
- Ms Jo Douglas representing economic development.
- Mr Steve Westgate representing environmental sustainability.
- Mr Mike Kake representing cultural interests.
- Inspector Clifford Paxton representing New Zealand Police, safety and security.
- Mr John Williamson representing access and mobility.

Audit and Finance Committee

Councillors Peter Jensen (Chairman), John Bain (Deputy Chairman) Mark Farnsworth (ex officio), Ian Walker, Craig Brown and Bill Rossiter.

Hearings Committee

Councillors Lorraine Hill (Chairperson), Mark Farnsworth (ex officio), Peter Jensen, Craig Brown, Joe Carr and Ian Walker.

Any two (or more) of the above Councillors may be appointed by the Committee (or the Council), to conduct hearings and make decisions on behalf of the Council under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). The Committee (or the Council) similarly may appoint any individual member/s or other independent person/s as Commissioner/s pursuant to section 34(1) of the RMA, to conduct a hearing in any particular case. The Committee (or the Council) may also revoke such a delegation at any time, by notice to the delegate.

Northland Regional Council Community Trust

The Northland Regional Council Community Trust was established in March 1996 using the proceeds from the sale of some of the Northland Regional Council's majority shareholding in the Northland Port Corporation.

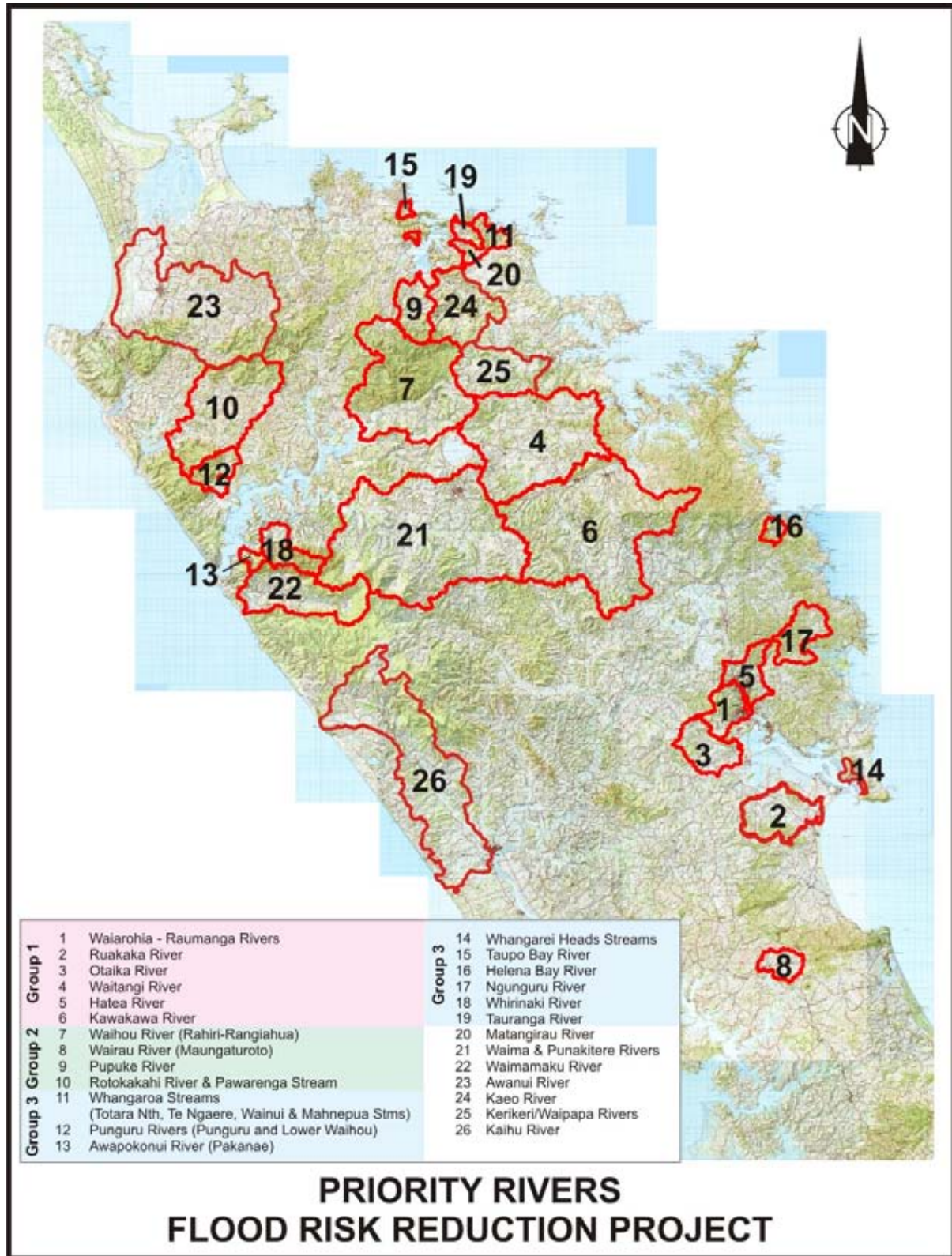
The current trustees are Andrew Britton, Rawson Wright, Irene Durham and Bill Shepherd.

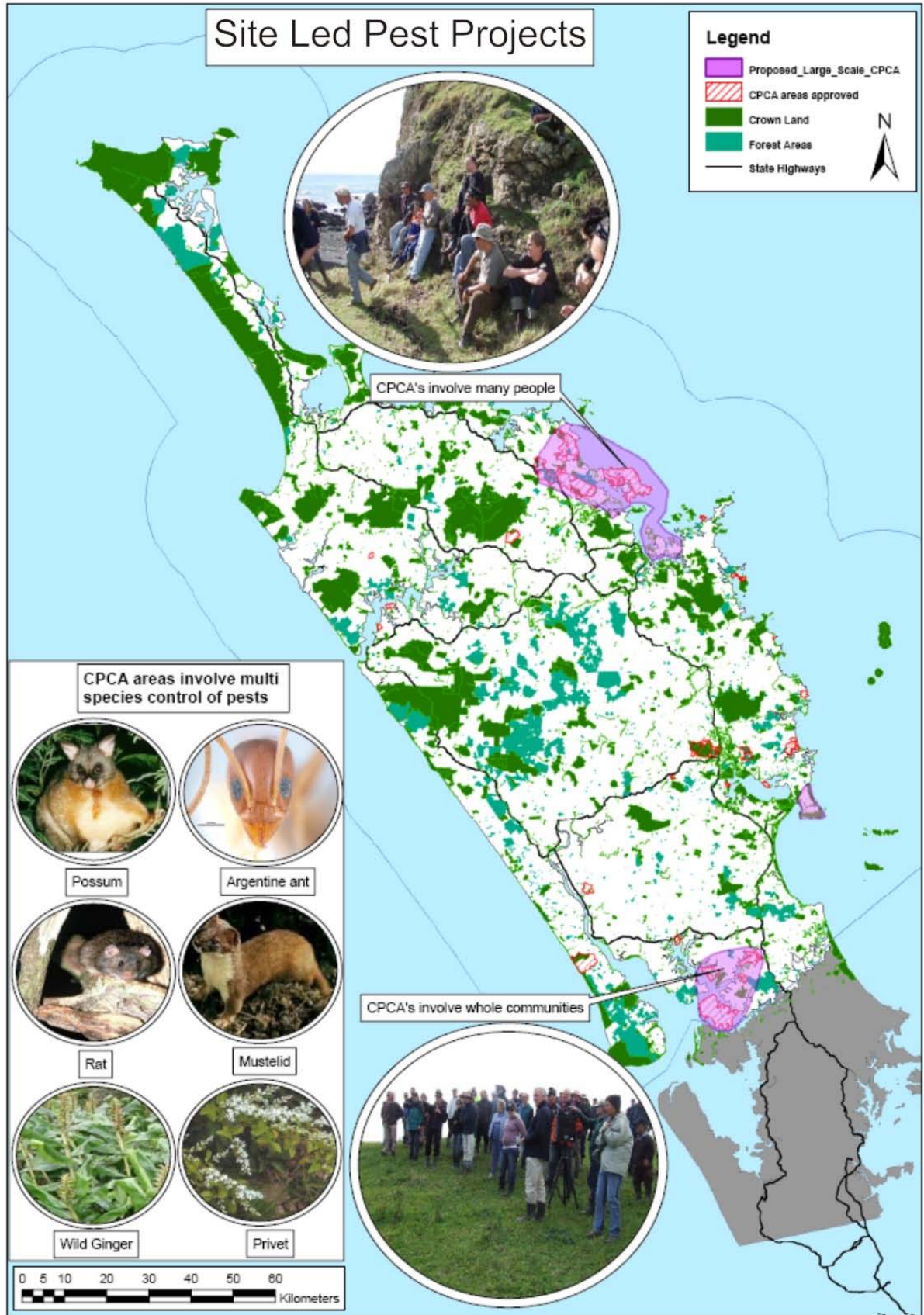
Representation – Other Organisations

- Zone 1 National Council of Local Government New Zealand – Cr Mark Farnsworth.
- Northland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group – Cr Bill Rossiter.
- Northland Regional Animal Health Committee – Cr Mark Farnsworth.
- Zone 1 Local Government New Zealand – Cr Bill Rossiter.
- Northland Conservation Board – Cr Craig Brown (observer).
- Northland Tourism Development Group – Cr Lorraine Hill.
- Ruakaka Sewerage Working Party – Cr Craig Brown.
- Advisory Board Member, Ministry for Environment : Making Good Decisions Advisory Board – Cr Mark Farnsworth.
- Northland Chamber of Commerce – Cr Bill Rossiter

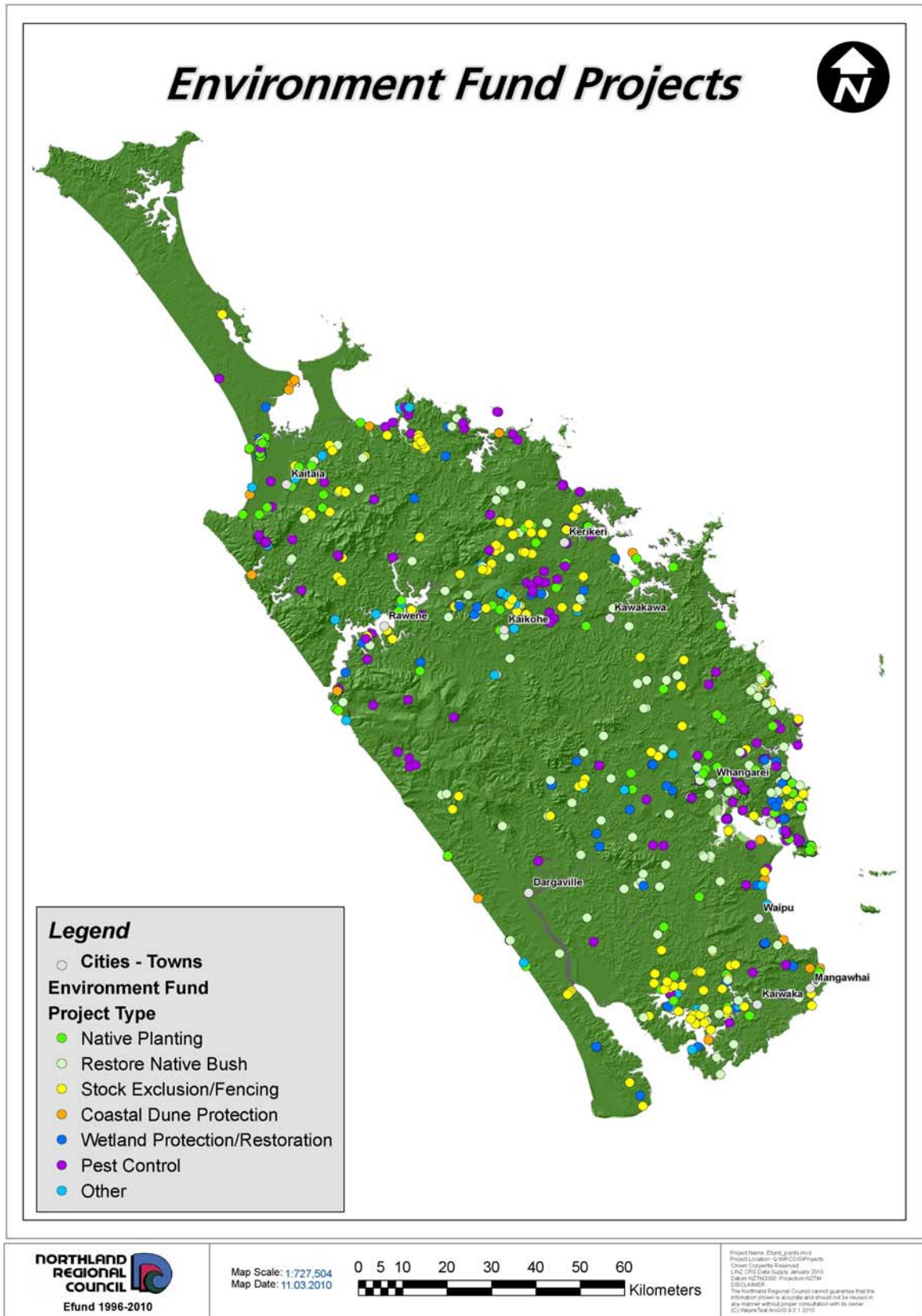
The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for setting the direction of the Council within the policy framework provided by Councillors. The Management Team is accountable to him and he is accountable to the Council.

Appendix 3





Appendix 6



Appendix 6



Research First



Northland Community Awareness Survey

April 2010

Friday, 14 May 2010

Research First. Better Results.

Level 1/320, Manchester Street PO Box 5596 Papanui, Christchurch 8542

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Northland Regional Council Community Awareness Survey May 2010

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Northland Regional Council Community Awareness Survey May 2010

1 Introduction and Context

The Northland Regional Council (NRC) has responsibility for the sustainable resource management of the Northland Region, including environmental, economic, social and cultural well-being. The work undertaken by the Council is diverse and covers a wide range of issues and a broad range of stakeholders in the community.

A major role of the Northland Regional Council is to communicate with the region's population. This encompassed nearly 155,800 people in the 2009 updated populations estimates, spread across three district councils¹:

- Far North District Council (population = 57,800)
- Kaipara District Council (population = 18,600)
- Whangarei District Council (population = 77,500)

The population in the region is estimated to have grown by 2.0% in the since the 2006 census, with the majority of this growth occurring in the Whangarei District (3.3%), while Kaipara had grown by 1.1% and Far North by 0.9%. The ethnic distribution in the region varies from that of New Zealand as a whole, with the Maori population representing over 29% of the regional population, compared to 14% for all of New Zealand. Other ethnicities have lower representations than the national average (Pacific Islanders 2.5% compared to 6.6% nationally; Asian 1.7% compared to 8.8% nationally).

In 2007 the Northland Regional Council (the Council) retained Research First Limited to conduct an initial Community Awareness Survey to provide the Council with understanding of the needs and perceptions of the branding and communication issues of the Northland community. The initial results were reported in June of 2007. A subsequent survey of the population has been conducted in July, 2008 and September 2009. The current iteration the research has been completed in April 2010, providing an ongoing data set evaluating the perceptions of Northland residents. This document reports the results from that research.

Disclaimer: This report was prepared by Research First Ltd for the Northland Regional Council. The views presented in the report do not necessarily represent the views of the Northland Regional Council, or of Research First Ltd. The information in this report is accurate to the best of the knowledge and belief of Research First Ltd. While Research First Ltd has exercised all reasonable skill and care in the preparation of information in this report, Research First Ltd accepts no liability in contract, tort, or otherwise for any loss, damage, injury or expense, whether direct, indirect, or consequential, arising out of the provision of information in this report.

¹ http://www.stats.govt.nz/methods_and_services/access-data/tables/subnational-pop-estimates.aspx

2 Research Objectives

The Community Awareness Survey reported here has been designed to provide ongoing data to measure against benchmark obtained in previous surveys; to assist the Northland Regional Council in tracking:

- Awareness, attitudes and public perception toward the Northland Regional Council – its role, responsibilities, activities, image and branding;
- Awareness and attitudes toward the Northland Regional Councillors;
- Community perception of current environmental issues within the region;
- Preferred information sources and communication methods, including effectiveness of current methods;
- Awareness of, and participation in, Northland Regional Council programmes and events;
- Customer satisfaction (including funding, services, functions, environmental advocacy); and
- Customer / target audience segmentation.

This survey focused on the awareness, knowledge and communications needs of the Northland community. The research covered four primary research areas:

- 1 Awareness and Services of the Northland Regional Council;
- 2 Communication;
- 3 The Natural Environment; and
- 4 Demographic data.

3 Research Design

For Community Awareness surveys conducted since 2007, Research First has used a telephone survey to capture residents' opinions. The survey was structured to ensure coverage of all three local government areas in the Northland region (Whangarei District, Kaipara District and Far North District).

A total of 601 completed telephone calls were made during the month of August 2008. These calls were made to randomly generated phone numbers across the region, ensuring statistical validity. For the compiled data, the maximum margin of error for the results at the 95% confidence interval is 4.0%². For analysis by each district council, the maximum margins of error are:

- Far North 6.5%
- Whangarei 6.4%
- Kaipara 8.3%

The research design included collecting demographic details of respondents which could be used in the later analysis. All data collected has been analysed to provide the total number of responses for each question³. For relevant questions, the report also outlines specific cross-tabulations of results by key variables such as geographic region, age group, ethnic group, gender, or living situation to provide a more detailed understanding of the results. Where data is cross-tabulated, the number of results being analysed (N) has been noted. The margin of error for these sub-group analyses will be higher than the stated margins of error for the overall samples.

3.1 Distribution of Responses

Table 3.1 Sample Distribution by District Council

April 2010	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Total
Base	224	237	140	601

Table 3.2 Sample Distribution by Living Situation

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
City	0%	24%	0%	9%
Town	32%	22%	43%	30%
Rural - farm	28%	16%	26%	23%
Rural - lifestyle	40%	38%	31%	37%

² Technical Notes: (i) This sampling error assumes a 'sample proportion' (the proportion of people in the population being surveyed who are expected to answer a certain way on the key measure in the survey) of 50%. This value produces the maximum possible variation. In this research, many of the key results show 75% of the respondents answering a certain way. With this sample proportion, the sampling error associated with an achieved sample of 617 reduces to 3.4%; (ii) The sampling error only holds for the sample as a whole, and can only be used when talking about all 617 responses.

³ Where data has been collected on a 5-point scale, the average (mean) score for each question has been shown. This should be interpreted in line with the question. That is, if the scale represents scores from 1 = excellent, 2 = good, 3 = average, 4 = poor and 5 = very poor, a mean score of 2.44 would represent an overall response between good and average.

Table 3.3 Sample Distribution by Age Group

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
16-24	13%	15%	6%	12%
25-34	21%	22%	9%	18%
35-44	16%	16%	22%	17%
45-54	17%	14%	19%	16%
55-64	16%	14%	19%	16%
65+	18%	18%	25%	20%

Table 3.4 Sample Distribution by Ethnicity

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
New Zealander	34%	41%	38%	38%
NZ European	38%	45%	49%	43%
Maori	27%	13%	10%	17%
Pacific Islander	1%	0%	1%	1%
Other European (Australian, South African, British)	5%	10%	6%	7%
Other	2%	1%	2%	2%

Table 3.5 Sample Distribution by Gender

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Male	53%	41%	46%	47%
Female	47%	59%	54%	53%

Respondents were asked how long they had lived in Northland. Over three quarters of respondents were long-term residents, having lived in Northland for more than ten years. A further 8% had lived in the region for between five and ten years. Responses are shown in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6 Duration of Residence in Northland

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Less than 1 year	2%	2%	1%	2%
Between 1 and 3 years	4%	5%	4%	4%
Between 3 and 5 years	11%	6%	4%	7%
Between 5 and 10 years	10%	7%	9%	8%
More than 10 years	74%	81%	81%	78%

4 Key Findings

Following the analysis of the combined telephone surveys, the following key findings have been identified:

4.1 Awareness of Northland Regional Council

- Respondents identified a broad range of functions with which the NRC is involved. When unprompted, the most commonly identified functions were “Looks after Roads”, “Environmental Care / Conservation”, and “Water / Sewerage”. When prompted with regard to specific function, 94% of respondents believed the Regional Council is involved in planning and monitoring, 83% - 85% that they are involved in flood/ hazard management and civil defence and control of plants and pests, and 70% - 79% for roles of infrastructure planning and development, managing the transport network and economic development. 68% thought they were responsible for harbour navigation and safety. Responses are similar to previous surveys.
- There were variations in understanding of the role of the Regional Council, across the various analysis groups. For example:
 - Those in the Far North had a higher awareness of the role of the council in flood and hazard management, and a lower awareness of economic development and growth;
 - Those in the Kaipara had a higher awareness of the role of the council in consents for pest control, but much lower for managing and planning for the region's land transport network;
 - Those in the Whangarei District had higher awareness of managing and planning for the region's land transport network, and harbour navigation and safety.

4.2 Perceptions of Service

- Around two fifths of all respondents had been in contact with the NRC.
- Respondents were generally positive both with regard to the speed and quality of the service provided by staff at the council, with ratings between 2 (good) and 3 (average) for both the speed and quality of response.

4.3 Sources of Information

- The most common sources of information regarding the Council are community and daily newspapers and pamphlets/ letterbox drops. Other common sources of information are the internet and newsletters.
 - Age variations were apparent with regard to information regarding the NRC, with younger respondents showing lower interest in sourcing information through Community Newspapers than older respondents, and younger residents sourcing information via the internet.
- Once prompted 70% said they received information on Northland Regional Council from community newspapers, and half or more from pamphlets/ letter box drops, and rates notices. Just 4% said they did not get any information on the Northland Regional Council.

Over half (56%) of those surveyed are aware of the *Regional Report*. Of these, 13% read it in detail, but similar proportions (14%) do not read it at all.

- Readership levels were higher in the older age groups.
- Levels of internet and broadband access continue to grow in Northland, with an increase with each subsequent survey.
 - There are variations with regard to both age and living situation, with 80% of all households have access to the internet at home, and residents in Lifestyle and rural situations, and those under 65 years being more likely to have access.
- 20% of all residents had accessed the regional Council website, with the majority of those doing so to access information, followed by accessing a report, publication or plan or to find out information about an event, and most of those who had used the site believed it was relatively simple to use.

Northland Regional Council

Community Awareness Survey, April - May 2010

- There was a clear overall preference to receiving information with regard to the NRC and its' activities through local and community newspapers, followed by direct mail.
 - Younger respondents were more receptive to mobile phone text alerts and social network sites.

4.4 Issues Facing Northland

- When asked to identify the most pressing issues facing Northland, roads, as in previous surveys, was the major concern, nominated by 45%. In March 2010 the next most pressing issue was identified as drought/ water supply (26%). Others commonly mentioned were the environment/ conservation (17%), unemployment (12%), pollution of air and water (10%) sewerage/ drainage (10%), flooding/ disaster management (7%) and public transport (7%).
 - The environment/conservation was rated higher by those between the ages of 45-64;
 - Drought/ water supply was rated higher by those aged under 45 years;
 - Unemployment was rated higher by those aged 55 years and older.
 - Young people aged 16-24 overall nominated fewer issues than older age groups

4.5 Civil Defence

- 49% of respondents had discussed civil defence issues, up from 44% in September 2009, and 57% had put aside items for a civil defence emergency (from 56% in September 2009).
 - Respondents from Kaipara show a lower level of discussion about an emergency, however more have put aside items than residents in Whangarei, although fewer than in the Far North.

5 Survey Results

5.1 Function of the Northland Regional Council

Respondents were asked to provide an unprompted response to what they think the Northland Regional Council does. Respondents could provide multiple answers. The most common responses were 'looks after roads' and 'environmental care and conservation', both of which were identified by one quarter of the respondents. Those in The Far North were less likely to be aware of the Regional Council role in roading, while those in Kaipara were more likely to be aware of the Regional Council role in Environmental Care. Responses are shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Function of the Northland Regional Council

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Looks after roads	25%	24%	26%	25%
Environmental care/ conservation	18%	25%	32%	24%
Water/ sewerage	28%	19%	15%	21%
Responsible for harbours/ coastline/ waterways	19%	13%	15%	15%
Gardens/ parks/ reserves	5%	16%	12%	11%
Licensing/ consents/ resource management	13%	9%	8%	10%
Charges/ collects rates	12%	10%	7%	10%
Regional policy planning/ management	6%	8%	9%	8%
Waste removal/ management/ street cleaning/recycling	8%	8%	2%	7%
Looks after community interests	7%	7%	4%	6%
Infrastructure	4%	8%	4%	6%
Looks after the towns in the area	5%	6%	6%	5%
Weeds/ pest control	4%	3%	4%	4%
Land development/ management	4%	3%	3%	3%
Does nothing	3%	1%	4%	2%
Libraries	1%	3%	0%	2%
Civil defence/ flood protection/ disaster management	3%	1%	1%	2%
Don't know	21%	21%	18%	20%
Other	20%	22%	19%	21%

A broad range of unprompted responses were grouped into categories of function. The most common responses were 'Looks after Roads' and 'Environmental Care / Conservation', followed by "Water/ Sewerage". 20% could not name any of the functions of the Northland Regional Council.

5.2 Prompted Functions of Northland Regional Council

Respondents were asked which of a range of functions they believed were conducted by the Council. Responses are shown in Table 5.2.

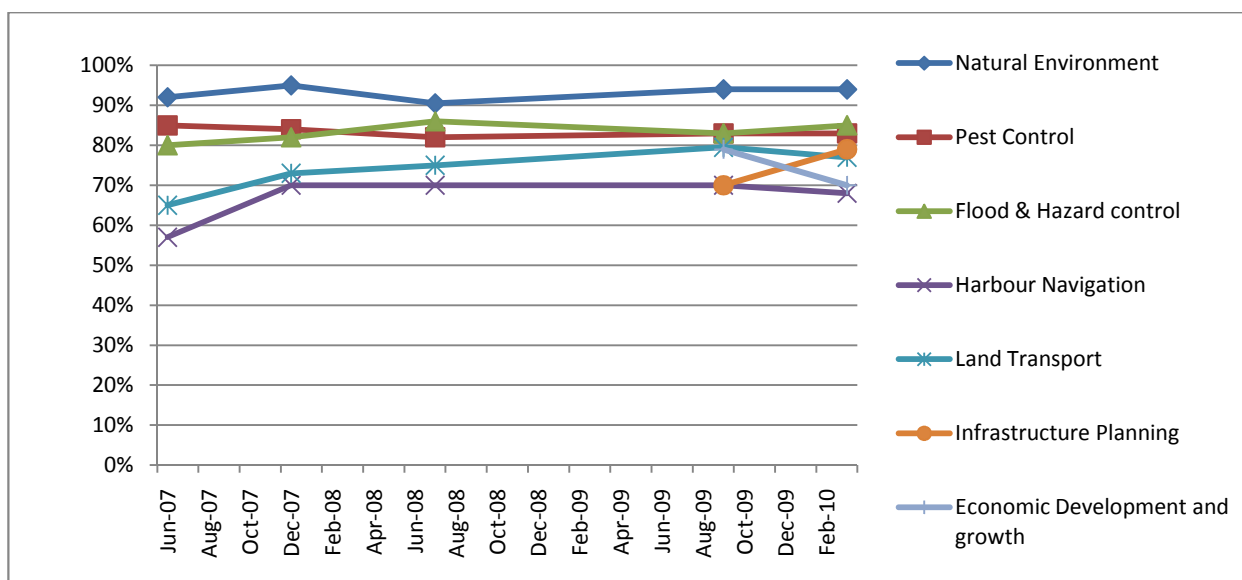
Table 5.2 Prompted Functions of Northland Regional Council

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Planning, monitoring and issuing consents for the natural environment - air, land, water and coast	95%	94%	95%	94%
Flood, hazard management and civil defence	87%	84%	83%	85%
Control and advice of plant and animal plant pests	80%	83%	86%	83%
Infrastructure planning and development	77%	80%	80%	79%
Managing and planning for the region's land transport network	77%	84%	68%	77%
Economic development and growth	67%	72%	73%	70%
Harbour navigation and safety	67%	71%	66%	68%

The role that the majority of respondents identified as being relevant to the Northland Regional Council was Planning, monitoring and issuing of consents for the natural environment (94%), while responses to other services ranged from 68% (Harbour navigation and safety) to 85% (Flood, hazard management and civil defence).

Across the functions that were asked in the September 2009 survey, most results showed minimal variation from previous data collection. Figure 5.1 shows the trend in response over time.

Figure 5.1 Awareness of Regional Council Functions, Trends



Some differences were noted across the regions:

- Those in the Far North had a higher awareness of the role of the council in flood and hazard management, and a lower awareness of economic development and growth;
- Those in the Kaipara had a higher awareness of the role of the council in consents for pest control, but much lower for managing and planning for the region's land transport network;
- Those in the Whangarei District had higher awareness of managing and planning for the region's land transport network, and harbour navigation and safety.

5.3 Contact with Regional Council

Respondents were asked what level of contact they have had with the Northland Regional Council previously, and over what time period. Table 5.3 demonstrates that 60% have never had contact with the Regional Council, compared to 63% in September 2009. Only 13% had frequent contact. Those in the Whangarei District were less likely to have had contact with the Council than those in the Kaipara, while Far North residents had the highest levels of contact.

Table 5.3 Frequency of Contact with Regional Council

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Never	53%	65%	61%	60%
Rarely	19%	17%	17%	18%
Once in the last year	11%	7%	12%	10%
More frequently	17%	11%	9%	13%

Respondents were then asked how this contact was initiated: (1) - Initiated by NRC; or (2) self-initiated. The response shows that in April 2010 the majority of those who were in contact with the council initiated the contact (80%, similar to September 2009). Responses are shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 Direction of Contact between Individuals and the Council

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
You contacted the Council	83%	81%	72%	80%
The Council contacted you	33%	33%	43%	35%

5.4 Format of Contact between Individuals and the Council

Respondents that had initiated contact with the Northland Regional Council were asked to detail the form in which contact was made. Most contact with the council was by telephone, followed by in person. Although in previous surveys this question was asked regardless of whether contact had been initiated by the respondent or by the Council, responses are consistent with past surveys. Responses are shown in Table 5.5

Table 5.5 Format of contact between individuals and the Council

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
By telephone	68%	66%	64%	66%
In person	33%	35%	36%	35%
By email	9%	9%	8%	9%
By letter/ mail	10%	6%	8%	8%
Through a third person	3%	6%	3%	4%
Public Meeting	2%	1%	0%	2%
Other	5%	7%	3%	5%
<i>Base: Those initiating contact</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>194</i>

5.5 Satisfaction with Response from Council

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction (on a scale of 1 to 5) with regard to the manner in which the council had dealt with the matter or inquiry. Specifically, respondents were asked to respond to the statements:

'I was satisfied with the speed with which the Regional Council dealt with my matter or inquiry'

AND

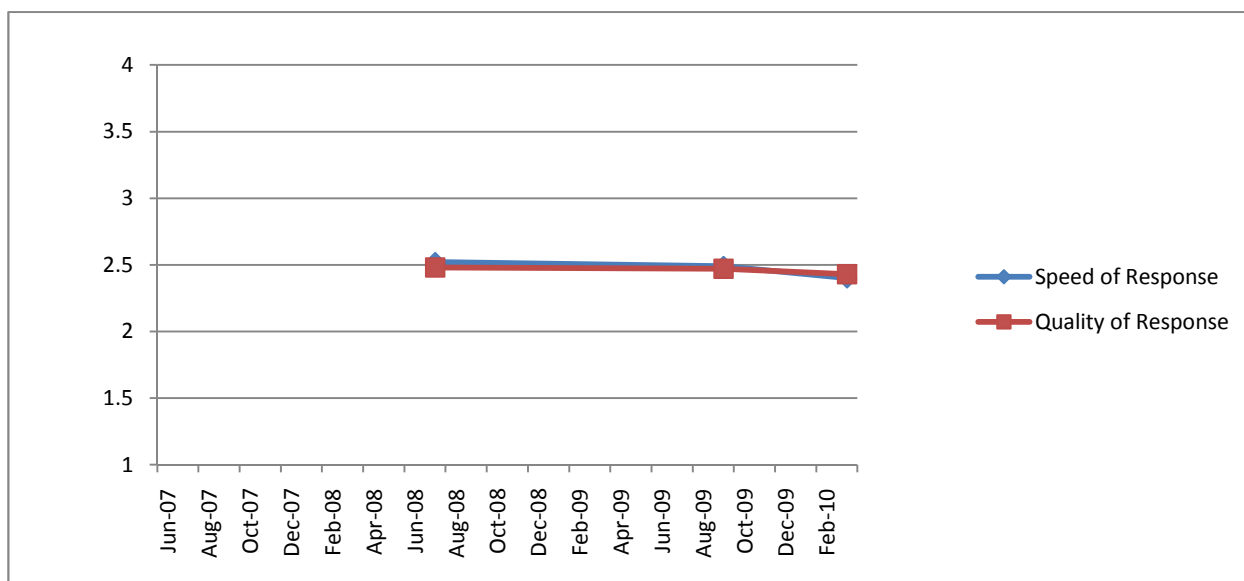
'I was satisfied with the quality of response with which the Regional Council dealt with my matter or inquiry'

Across all regions, the respondents showed overall satisfaction with both speed and with quality of response. Those in the Far North region rated the speed and quality of response marginally lower than average, and those in Whangarei marginally higher. Results are shown in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6 Speed and Quality of Council response

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Mean score: 1 = agree strongly, 5 = disagree strongly				
I was satisfied with the speed with which the Regional Council dealt with my matter or inquiry	2.52	2.26	2.38	2.40
I was satisfied with the quality of response with which the Regional Council dealt with my matter	2.60	2.28	2.31	2.43
<i>Base: Those initiating contact</i>	87	68	39	194

Figure 5.2 Satisfaction with Council, Trend



5.6 Sources of Information Regarding the Regional Council

Respondents were asked as a spontaneous question: 'Where do you mainly get your information about the Northland Regional Council?' They were then prompted a list of sources, and asked if they received information via these. Responses are detailed in Table 5.7 (unprompted) and 5.8 (prompted, overleaf).

When responding without prompting, the most common source of information regarding the Council was a community newspaper, followed by pamphlets/ letter-box drops, daily newspapers, the internet/ website and newsletters. Those in Whangarei cited a daily newspaper along with community newspapers as their main sources. Those in the Far North mentioned pamphlets / letter box drops along with community newspapers, and in Kaipara the most common along with community newspapers were daily newspapers and newsletters. Once prompted 70% said they received information on Northland Regional Council from community newspapers, and half or more from pamphlets/ letter box drops, and rates notices. Just 4% said they did not get any information on the Northland Regional Council.

Of note, in previous data collection, only unprompted data was collected. The trend analysis (Figure 5.3, overleaf) demonstrates a notable decline in the role of newspapers (both community and daily), and a steady increase in the role of the internet.

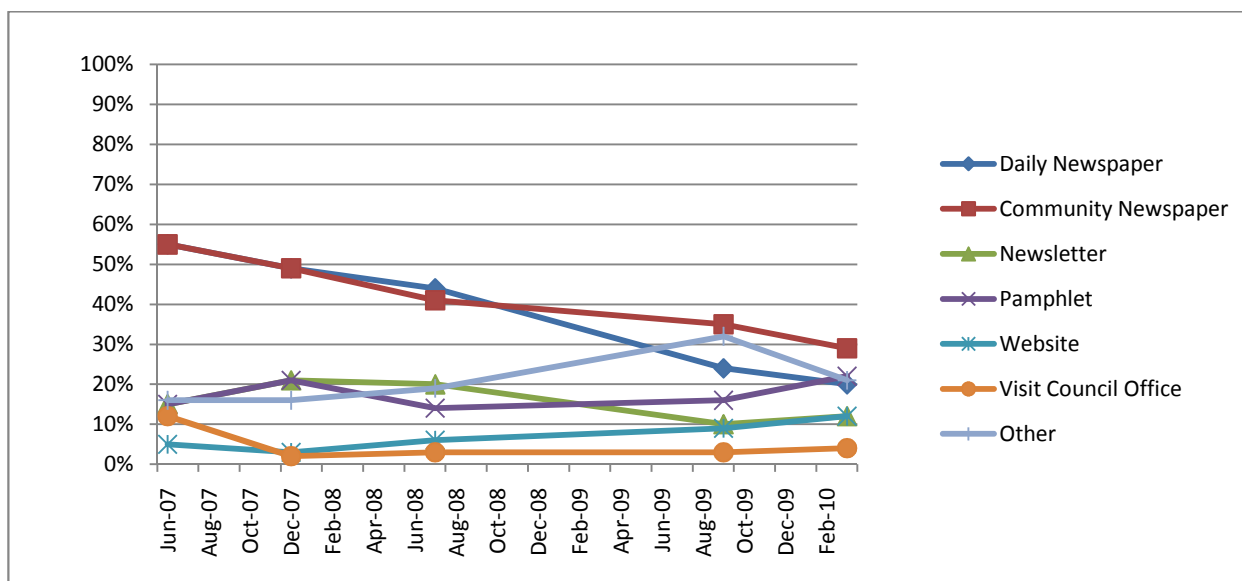
Table 5.7 Sources of information regarding the Regional Council - Unprompted

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Community newspaper	27%	27%	34%	29%
Pamphlets/ letter box drops	25%	20%	19%	22%
Daily newspaper	12%	27%	21%	20%
Internet/ website	11%	16%	7%	12%
Newsletter	13%	5%	21%	12%
Word of mouth	8%	8%	5%	7%
Go to Council office/ Information Centre	5%	3%	4%	4%
Radio	1%	4%	1%	2%
Ring for information	2%	2%	3%	2%
With rates notices	2%	0%	5%	2%
Library	3%	0%	0%	1%
TV News	1%	0%	1%	1%
Other	4%	9%	5%	6%
Don't get information/ don't know	9%	12%	9%	10%

Table 5.8 Sources of information regarding the Regional Council – Prompted

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Community newspaper	69%	70%	72%	70%
Pamphlet/ letter box drop	61%	53%	61%	58%
Rates notice	53%	51%	46%	50%
Word of mouth	41%	51%	46%	46%
Newsletter	46%	30%	44%	39%
Daily newspaper	29%	50%	34%	38%
Radio	33%	44%	29%	36%
Phone for information	33%	30%	29%	31%
Go to office	23%	28%	24%	25%
Website	22%	29%	18%	24%
Library	25%	17%	19%	21%
TV	19%	20%	20%	20%
Social network site	3%	3%	4%	3%
Don't get any	4%	5%	3%	4%

Figure 5.3 Sources of Information Regarding Council - Trends



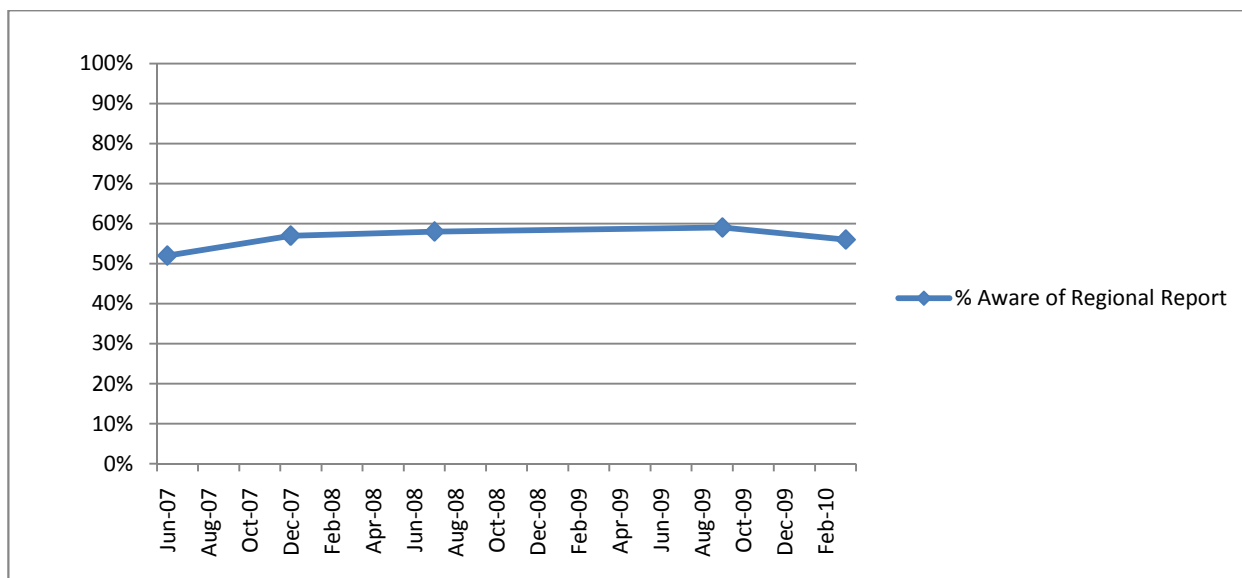
5.7 Awareness of Regional Report

The survey sought to maintain an understanding of the readership and awareness of the Council-published newsletter, *Regional Report*. Specifically, respondents were asked: 'Are you aware that the Northland Regional Council sends a newsletter to all homes called *Regional Report*?' The responses showed that 56% of those interviewed were aware of the *Regional Report*. This was consistent across the previous survey periods (52% in June 2007, 57% in November 2007, 58% in July 2008, 59% in September 2009). Awareness in April 2010 was higher in Kaipara District and the Far North rather than in Whangarei. Responses are shown in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9 Awareness of the *Regional Report*

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Aware	63%	46%	64%	56%
Not aware	37%	54%	36%	44%

Figure 5.4 Awareness of *Regional Report*, Trend



Having established awareness, those who indicated they were aware were asked to rate the level at which they read *Regional Report*. Readership of *Regional Report* was mixed across the region, with 13% reading the publication in detail. Overall, a slightly higher proportion read at least some of the issues in the Whangarei and Kaipara districts than in the Far North. However fewer read it in detail in Whangarei than the other two areas. Responses are shown in table 5.10.

Table 5.10 Readership of the *Regional Report*

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Read this in detail	13%	7%	19%	13%
Scan the publication only	42%	44%	28%	39%
Read some issues, but not all	30%	37%	40%	35%
Don't read it	16%	12%	13%	14%
Base: Those aware of <i>Regional Report</i>	141	108	90	339

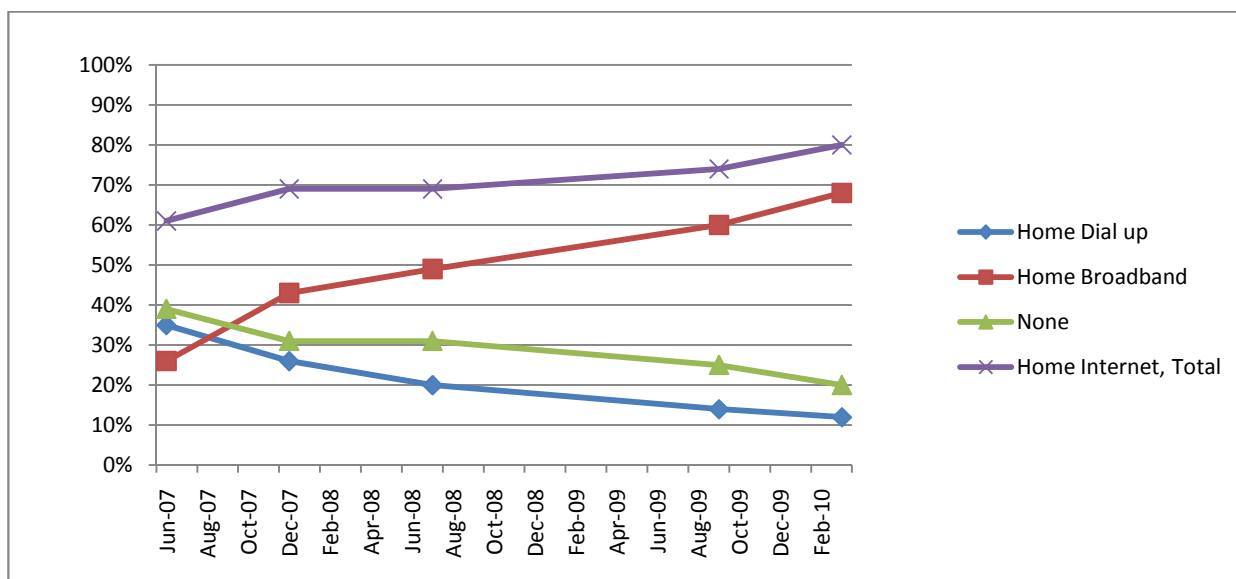
5.8 Levels of Internet Access in Northland

The survey sought to determine levels of internet access among the Northland community. Respondents were asked to nominate the availability of the internet, by both dial-up and broadband, at their home, work, place of study or elsewhere. Results for the region and for each District Council area are shown in Table 5.11. The results show that 80% of Northland residents have access to the internet at home, with 68% having broadband access, an increase from the 60% in September 2009, 49% in July 2008, 37% in November 2007 and 26% in June 2007. The data show an ongoing trend in internet access at home, up from 74% in September 2009, 69% in July 2008, 61% in June 2007 and 67% in December 2007. Access levels at home are similar across the regions. Data is shown in Figure 5.5, overleaf.

Table 5.11 Regional access to internet services

	Far North District	Whangarei District	Kaipara District	Overall
At home				
Dial up	12%	11%	14%	12%
Broadband	68%	70%	66%	68%
None	20%	19%	20%	20%
At work				
Dial up	2%	2%	1%	1%
Broadband	38%	41%	34%	38%
None	61%	58%	66%	61%
At a place of study				
Dial up	0%	0%	0%	0%
Broadband	12%	15%	11%	13%
None	88%	85%	89%	87%
Elsewhere				
Dial up	4%	1%	0%	2%
Broadband	18%	22%	19%	20%
None	78%	76%	81%	78%

Figure 5.5 Access to Internet at Home, Trend



5.9 Use of Council web-site

The Council provides a range of on-line services. The questionnaire has been designed to obtain information about how widespread use of the website is in general, what it is being used for, and effectiveness of those uses. 20% of residents had used the Council’s website. Use was higher in Whangarei and the Far North than in Kaipara District. Details are shown in Table 5.12 (use) and 5.13 (functionality), while Table 5.14 provides a trend analysis .

Table 5.12 Use of Council Website

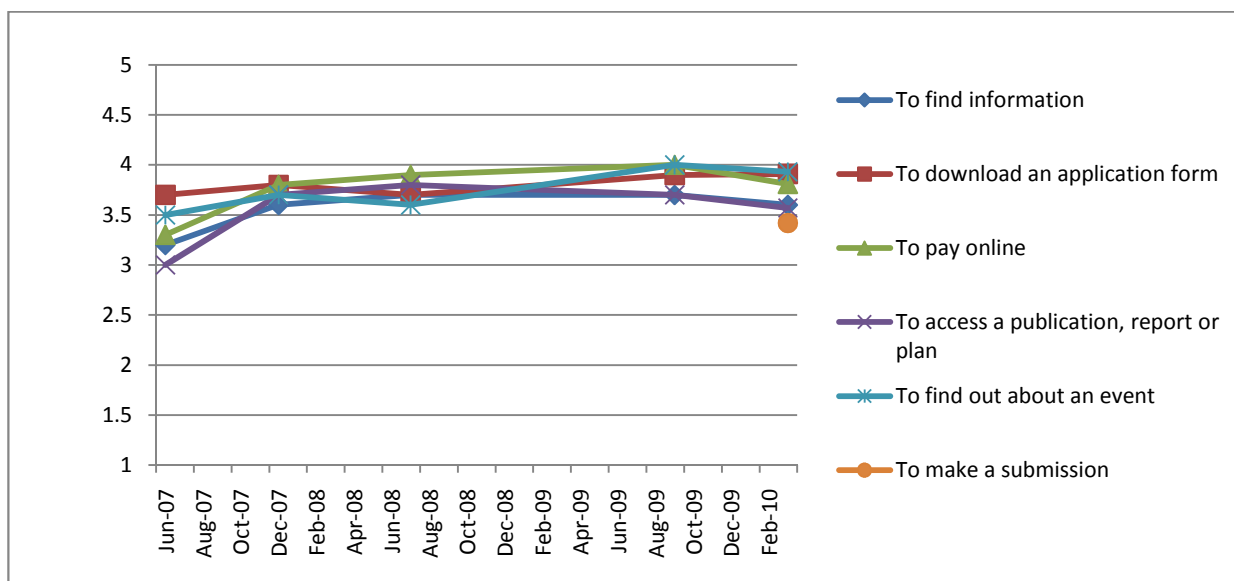
	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Yes	21%	23%	15%	20%
No	79%	77%	85%	80%

Table 5.13 Effectiveness of Council Website

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Mean score: 1 = extremely difficult, 5 = extremely simple				
To find information	3.42	3.66	3.86	3.60
To download an application form	4.12	3.83	3.60	3.91
To pay online	4.06	3.53	3.75	3.81
To access a publication, report or plan	3.41	3.57	4.00	3.57
To make a submission	3.33	3.44	3.67	3.42
To find out about an event	3.88	3.89	4.18	3.93
Base:	48	54	21	123

All services overall were rated between 3 (average) and 4 (simple), showing the services were relatively simple to use. Finding out about an event and downloading applications forms appeared to be the simplest actions.

Figure 5.6 Effectiveness of Council Website, Trends



5.10 Information About the Council

Respondents were asked what information they would like to receive with regard to the Council and a number of regional issues. Over 60% of respondents expressed an interest in finding out information about Environmental Issues, Civil Defence, Regional issues, Community Events and Workshops. Over half were interested in opportunities to have a say on Council issues, while less interest was shown in Transport, Consents, Consultation issues and The Council itself. Results are shown in Table 5.15.

Table 5.15 Information sought about the Regional Council

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Environmental issues	75%	64%	59%	67%
Civil Defence	70%	58%	56%	62%
Regional issues	66%	57%	57%	60%
Community Events and Workshops	63%	58%	53%	59%
Opportunities to have my say on Council issues	61%	49%	48%	53%
Transport Issues	52%	46%	41%	47%
Consents	54%	40%	38%	44%
Consultation Issues	50%	38%	39%	43%
The Council	47%	41%	37%	42%

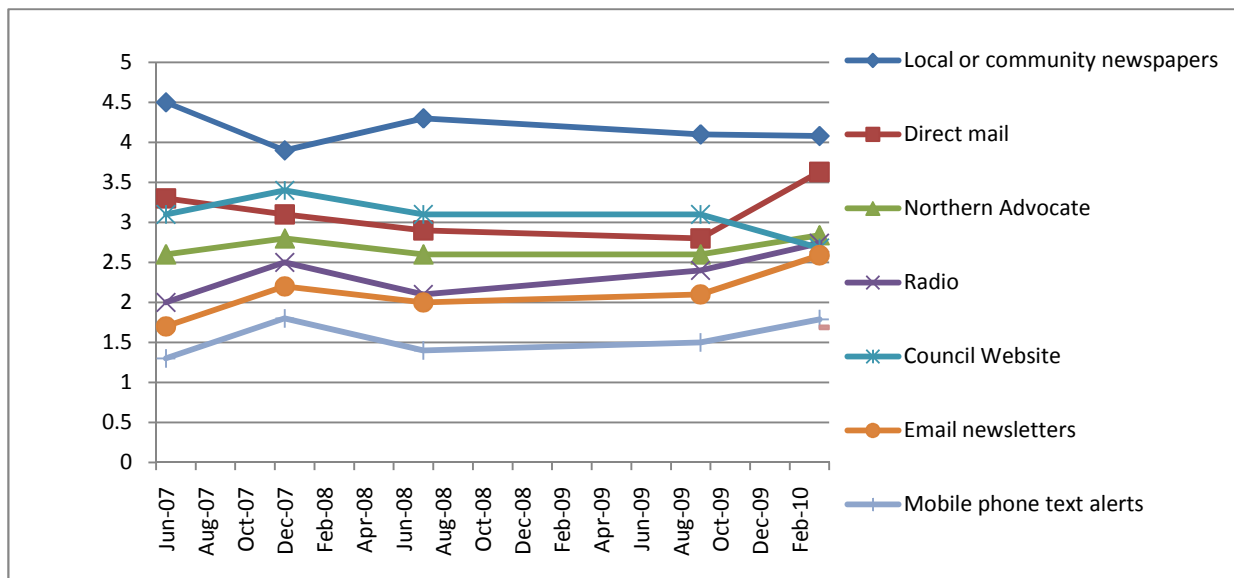
5.11 Sources of Information Regarding the Council

The survey sought information with regard to how people prefer to gain information about the Council. A range of sources was nominated; and residents were asked to rate these on a scale of 1 to 5 as to how preferable they found them. By far the most preferred medium was 'Local or Community Newspapers' (mean score of 1.92). This was followed by Direct Mail, the radio, Council website, and email newsletters. Least preferred options were mobile phone/ text alerts and social network sites. The results are shown in Table 5.16, with a trend analysis shown in Figure 5.7⁴.

Table 5.16 Preference: Sources of information regarding the Council

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Mean score: 1 = most preferable, 5 = least preferable				
Local or community newspapers	1.84	2.03	1.87	1.92
Direct mail	2.35	2.54	2.11	2.37
Northern Advocate	3.63	2.65	3.27	3.16
Radio	3.40	3.03	3.42	3.26
Council Website	3.37	3.27	3.34	3.32
Email newsletters	3.44	3.41	3.36	3.41
Mobile phone text alerts	4.23	4.09	4.36	4.21
Social network sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)	4.39	4.23	4.34	4.31

Figure 5.7 Preference: Sources of information regarding the Council, Trend



⁴ Note – data for this graph has been inverted to demonstrate the most highly preferred option at the top of the graph.

5.12 Issues Facing Northland

Interviewees were asked, in an unprompted manner, to identify up to three issues they perceived as the three most important issues facing Northland. As in previous surveys, roading was the major concern, nominated by 45%. The next most common was drought/ water supply, mentioned by 26%, a factor that had not been identified in previous surveys. After these came the environment/ conservation (17%), unemployment (12%), pollution of air and water (10%) and sewerage/ drainage (10%). A broad range of other topics included flooding/ disaster management, public transport, protection of coast/ development/ access, waste/ recycling/ rubbish control, infrastructure, the economy, crime and safety and young people/ what to do. Concern about roads was particularly high in the Kaipara district, and drought in the Far North. Results are shown in Table 5.17, while Table 5.18 (overleaf) shows a trend in identified issues.

Table 5.17 Issues Facing Northland

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Roads	42%	41%	56%	45%
Drought/ water supply	31%	25%	21%	26%
Environment/ conservation	14%	16%	23%	17%
Unemployment	13%	11%	11%	12%
Pollution - air/water	11%	11%	9%	10%
Sewerage/ drainage	11%	12%	5%	10%
Flooding/ disaster management	14%	3%	2%	7%
Public transport	7%	8%	4%	7%
Protection of coast/ development/ access	3%	7%	8%	6%
Waste/ recycling/ rubbish control	5%	4%	6%	5%
Infrastructure	5%	3%	6%	4%
The economy	4%	4%	5%	4%
Crime and safety	2%	8%	2%	4%
Young people/ what to do	4%	3%	4%	4%
Future planning	4%	5%	0%	3%
Rates	4%	1%	4%	3%
Weed and pest control	4%	1%	6%	3%
Drugs/ alcohol	3%	3%	1%	2%
Health	0%	3%	5%	2%
Consents	2%	2%	3%	2%
Rail line	2%	2%	2%	2%
Promoting tourism	0%	2%	5%	2%
Education	1%	1%	4%	2%
Council merge	1%	1%	4%	2%
Genetic engineering	2%	2%	1%	2%
Other	33%	32%	30%	32%

Table 5.18 Issues Facing Northland

	Jun-07	Dec-07	Jul-08	Sep-09	Mar-10
Roads	49%	46%	46%	41%	45%
Drought/ water supply					26%
Environment/ conservation	8%	8%	3%	15%	17%
Unemployment	14%	13%	16%	13%	12%
Pollution - air/water				12%	10%
Sewerage/ drainage	4%	3%	3%	11%	10%

5.13 Preparation for Civil Defence Emergencies

Following a series of flood events in 2007, the Council has sought information with regard to how well prepared individuals are for emergencies. As in surveys post 2007, respondents in the current survey were asked three questions:

- “Have you discussed with anyone about how you would prepare for a civil defence emergency?”
- “Have you made plans?”
- “Have you put aside items or supplies ready for a civil defence emergency?”

49% of those interviewed had discussed plans for such an emergency, up from 44% in September 2009 and at the level of July 2008, but lower than the 56% in November 2007. Of these, 76% had made plans (against 76% in September 2009, 81% in July 2008 and 55% in November 2007) and 57% of the total sample had put aside items for such an emergency (similar to 56% in September 2009 and 54% in July 2008). As in the previous survey, respondents from Kaipara show a lower level of discussion about an emergency, however more have put aside items than residents in Whangarei, although fewer than in the Far North. Results for each question are shown in Table 5.19, 5.20 and 5.21, while Figure 5.X (overleaf) shows the trend in planning for civil emergencies.

Table 5.19 Those who have discussed plans for a civil defence emergency:

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Yes	52%	49%	45%	49%
No	48%	51%	55%	51%

Of those who have discussed plans for a civil emergency...

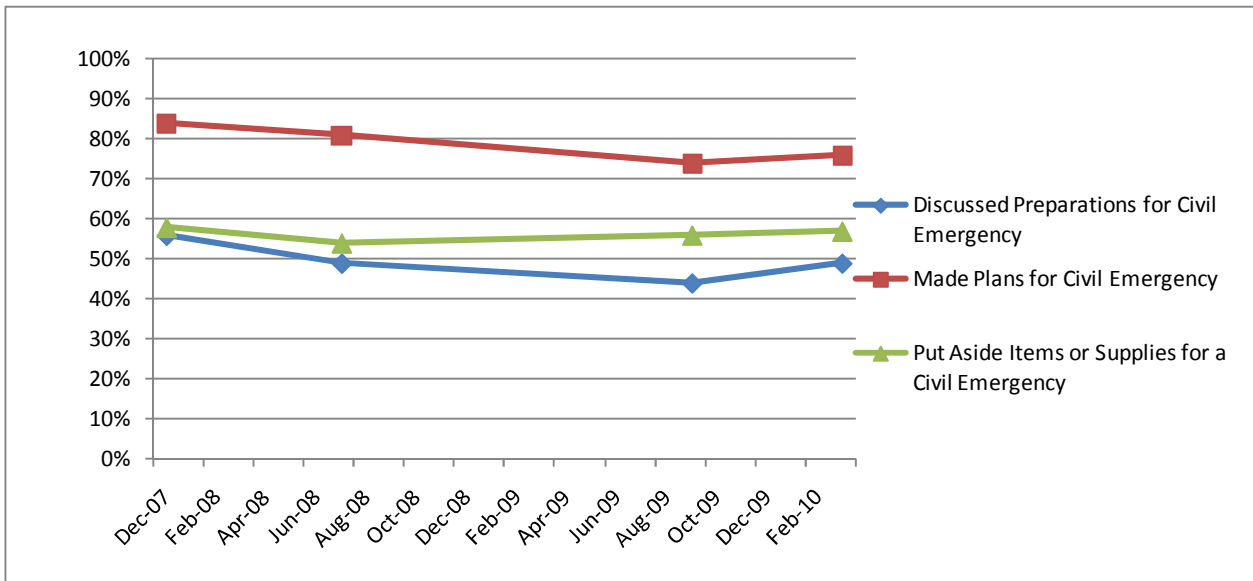
Table 5.20 Those who have made plans for a civil defence emergency:

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Yes	80%	74%	73%	76%
No	20%	26%	27%	24%
<i>Base: Those discussed plans</i>	117	117	63	297

Table 5.21 Those who have put aside items for a civil defence emergency:

	Far North	Whangarei	Kaipara	Overall
Yes	61%	53%	56%	57%
No	39%	47%	44%	43%

Figure 5.8 Planning for Civil Emergencies, Trend



6 Cross Tabulations by Demographic groupings

For the purpose of analysis, the responses to several questions have been cross-tabulated with regard to key demographics. The following analysis is designed to identify factors that are particularly relevant to the Northland Regional Council based on factors including the age, location or lifestyle situation of the respondent. Commentary has only been included to highlight specific features that show variance with the overall response rate.

6.1 Selected Responses by Living Situation

6.1.1 Function of the Northland Regional Council

Residents were asked what they thought was the function of the Northland Regional Council.

When asked what they believed the Council does, respondents nominated a variety of functions. Details are shown in Table 6.1 of unprompted responses, and in Table 6.2 of prompted responses. Unprompted, those from Rural situations were more likely to identify Environmental Care and Harbours and Coastline, and City dwellers tended to identify parks and reserves. Once prompted, city dwellers tended to think the Northland Regional Council were involved in all the functions listed.

Table 6.1 Function of the Northland Regional Council (unprompted)

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Looks after roads	28%	23%	24%	26%
Environmental care/ conservation	23%	17%	35%	23%
Water/ sewerage	21%	18%	24%	22%
Responsible for harbours/ coastline/ waterways	16%	12%	22%	14%
Gardens/ parks/ reserves	19%	13%	9%	9%
Licensing/ consents/ resource management	2%	8%	10%	14%
Charges/ collects rates	9%	9%	13%	9%
Regional policy planning/ management	5%	5%	16%	6%
Waste removal/ management/ street cleaning/recycling	7%	10%	5%	6%
Looks after community interests	4%	7%	4%	8%
Infrastructure	2%	3%	8%	8%
Looks after the towns in the area	5%	8%	5%	4%
Weeds/ pest control	4%	3%	3%	5%
Land development/ management	2%	3%	4%	4%
Does nothing	0%	4%	4%	1%
Libraries	4%	2%	0%	2%
Civil defence/ flood protection/ disaster management	2%	1%	3%	1%
Other	19%	23%	17%	21%
Don't know	25%	22%	17%	20%
Base:	57	183	139	222

Table 6.2 Function of the Northland Regional Council (prompted)

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Planning, monitoring and issuing consents for the natural environment - air, land, water and coast	98%	92%	94%	95%
Control and advice of plant and animal plant pests	89%	79%	81%	85%
Flood, hazard management and civil defence	91%	84%	85%	84%
Infrastructure planning and development	81%	81%	75%	80%
Economic development and growth	72%	69%	65%	74%
Harbour navigation and safety	77%	63%	73%	68%
Managing and planning for the region's land transport network	88%	74%	76%	78%
<i>Base:</i>	57	183	139	222

6.1.2 Contact with Northland Regional Council

City and town dwellers were the least likely to have had contact with the Northland Regional Council. Rural farm dwellers had the most frequent contact (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3 Contact with Northland Regional Council

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Never	70%	70%	52%	53%
Rarely	16%	16%	14%	22%
Once in the last year	5%	6%	12%	12%
More frequently	9%	8%	22%	13%
<i>Base:</i>	57	183	139	222

Most had initiated the contact, and a higher proportion of rural farm dwellers had been contacted by the Council than other dwellers (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4 Direction of Contact between Individuals and the Council

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
You contacted the Council	88%	80%	75%	82%
The Council contacted you	24%	25%	58%	28%
<i>Base:</i>	17	55	67	104

6.1.3 Format of Contact between Individuals and the Council

Those respondents that had initiated the contact were asked to detail the form in which contact with the Northland Regional Council was made. Town dwellers were more likely than others to have visited in person. Responses are shown in Table 6.5

Table 6.5 Format of contact between individuals and the Council

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
--	------	------	--------------	-------------------

By telephone	53%	64%	74%	66%
In person	33%	43%	28%	34%
By email	7%	7%	16%	6%
By letter/ mail	13%	7%	16%	4%
Through a third person	0%	0%	6%	6%
Public Meeting	0%	2%	2%	1%
Other	7%	2%	8%	5%
<i>Base: Those initiating contact</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>85</i>

6.1.4 Satisfaction with Response From Contact with the Council

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction (on a scale of 1 to 5) with regard to the manner in which the council had dealt with the matter or inquiry. Respondents from Town areas appeared to be less satisfied with the speed and quality of response received. Results are shown in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6 Speed and Quality of Council Response

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Mean score: 1 = agree strongly, 5 = disagree strongly				
I was satisfied with the speed with which the Regional Council dealt with my matter or inquiry	2.33	2.48	2.26	2.46
I was satisfied with the quality of response with which the Regional Council dealt with my matter or inquiry	2.33	2.64	2.34	2.39
<i>Base:</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>85</i>

6.1.5 Information regarding the Northland Regional Council

When asked where they mainly get your information about the Northland Regional Council the most common sources for all situations were the daily and community newspapers, and pamphlets/ letter box drops. City dwellers rarely nominated newsletters, but had the highest occurrence of daily newspapers and the radio. Details are shown in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7 Sources of information regarding the Council - Unprompted

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Community newspaper	30%	32%	27%	26%
Pamphlets/ letter box drops	14%	20%	21%	25%
Daily newspaper	30%	17%	22%	19%
Internet/ website	12%	11%	9%	14%
Newsletter	5%	13%	14%	12%
Word of mouth	2%	8%	6%	9%
Go to Council office/ Information centre	0%	2%	5%	5%
Radio	11%	2%	1%	1%
Ring them for information	2%	2%	3%	2%

With rates notices	0%	4%	1%	2%
Library	2%	2%	0%	2%
TV News	2%	2%	0%	0%
Other	12%	7%	4%	6%
Don't get information/ don't know	9%	9%	14%	9%
Base:	57	183	139	222

6.1.6 Regional Report

When asked about awareness of the *Regional Report*, there were variations in response, with highest awareness among those living in town situations and lowest awareness among city dwellers. Details are shown in Table 6.8.

Table 6.8 Awareness of the *Regional Report*

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Aware	40%	62%	58%	55%
Not aware	60%	38%	42%	45%
Base:	57	183	139	222

Having established awareness, those who indicated they were aware were asked to rate the level at which they read the *Regional Report*. Responses are shown in table 6.9. Rural farm dwellers had the highest incidence of non-readers, and city dwellers the highest incidence of reading in detail.

Table 6.9 Readership of the *Regional Report*

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Read this in detail	17%	14%	9%	13%
Scan the publication only	35%	38%	35%	42%
Read some issues, but not all	35%	35%	39%	33%
Don't read it	13%	13%	18%	12%
Base: Those aware of <i>Regional Report</i>	23	113	80	123

6.1.7 Internet Access

Respondents identified as City and Town dwellers had the lowest level of access to the internet at home, while those from the Rural Lifestyle s had the highest level. Rural farm and Rural Lifestyle dwellers had the highest incidence of broadband access at home. Details are shown in Table 6.10.

Table 6.10 Internet Access

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
	At home			
Dial up	7%	10%	14%	14%
Broadband	65%	62%	71%	73%
None	28%	28%	16%	13%

	At work			
Dial up	2%	0%	4%	1%
Broadband	37%	36%	38%	40%
None	61%	64%	58%	59%
	At a place of study			
Dial up	0%	1%	0%	0%
Broadband	7%	16%	13%	12%
None	93%	84%	87%	88%
	Elsewhere			
Dial up	0%	1%	1%	4%
Broadband	19%	25%	14%	20%
None	81%	74%	84%	77%
Base:	57	183	139	222

6.1.8 Use of Council web-site

The Council provides a range of on-line services. The questionnaire has been designed to obtain information on extent of use of the Council website, and what it is being used for. Results are shown in Table 6.11 and 6.12. Use of the website was similar across all living situations at 19% - 22%. All services were rated 3 (average) or 4 and just over (simple), showing the services were relatively simple to use.

Table 6.11 Use of Council web-site

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Yes, used	19%	19%	21%	22%
No, have not used	81%	81%	79%	78%
Base:	57	183	139	222

Table 6.12 Rating of Ease of Use of Council web-site

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
To find information	3.64	3.32	3.90	3.60
To download an application form	3.20	3.69	4.38	4.12
To pay online	3.50	3.73	3.86	3.93
To access a publication, report or plan	3.43	3.29	3.75	3.74
To make a submission	3.75	3.00	3.43	3.70
To find out about an event	3.90	4.06	4.00	3.83
Base:	11	34	29	49

6.1.9 Information About the Council

Respondents were asked what information they would like to receive with regard to the Council and a number of issues. Results are shown in Table 6.13. Comparison between type of dwelling shows City dwellers were particularly

interested in information on Civil Defence, Transport and the Council, and Rural farm dwellers on Consents and Environmental issues.

Table 6.13 Information sought about the Regional Council

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
The Council	53%	43%	40%	40%
Community Events and Workshops	63%	60%	60%	56%
Consents	42%	38%	53%	45%
Consultation Issues	40%	43%	44%	43%
Transport Issues	60%	48%	47%	42%
Civil Defence	74%	61%	64%	59%
Opportunities to have my say on Council issues	54%	52%	55%	53%
Regional issues	58%	54%	65%	64%
Environmental issues	63%	63%	73%	68%
Base:	57	183	139	222

6.1.10 Preferred sources of information

Respondents were asked what media was their preferred option for obtaining information. The most preferred option was local or community newspapers, both from an overall perspective and when analysed by living situation. Social network sites and text alerts were the least preferred. Results are shown in Table 6.14

Table 6.14 Preferred information sources

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Mean score: 1 = most preferable, 5 = least preferable				
Local or community newspapers	1.96	1.83	2.02	1.92
Northern Advocate	2.61	3.22	3.01	3.33
Radio	3.07	3.20	3.32	3.31
Social network sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)	4.23	4.16	4.36	4.44
Council Website	3.40	3.43	3.35	3.21
Direct mail	2.18	2.46	2.37	2.33
Email newsletters	3.49	3.45	3.55	3.27
Mobile phone text alerts	3.77	4.19	4.32	4.26
Base:	57	183	139	222

6.1.11 Issues Facing Northland

There was variation in the perceived issues facing Northland, when analysed by living situation. Across all grouping, roading was noted as being the most significant factor. There were minor differences across the regions including

- Drought/ water supply was less of an issue for city than other dwellers,
- Flooding and disaster management was an issue for rural dwellers,
- The protection and access of the coast was more of an issue for city dwellers.

Details are shown in Table 6.15

Table 6.15 Issues Facing Northland

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Roads	46%	41%	46%	46%
Drought/ water supply	14%	28%	30%	26%
Environment/ conservation	19%	13%	19%	18%
Unemployment	14%	11%	9%	13%
Pollution - air/water	14%	10%	10%	10%
Sewerage/ drainage	12%	9%	8%	12%
Flooding/ disaster management	0%	5%	10%	9%
Public transport	5%	7%	6%	8%
Protection of coast/ development/ access	12%	7%	3%	5%
Waste/ recycling/ rubbish control	5%	6%	4%	5%
Infrastructure	2%	5%	6%	4%
The economy	5%	4%	3%	5%
Crime and safety	4%	8%	1%	3%
Young people/ what to do	2%	6%	3%	3%
Future planning	5%	2%	3%	4%
Rates	2%	5%	4%	2%
Weed and pest control	0%	2%	6%	3%
Drugs/ alcohol	4%	4%	1%	2%
Health	2%	3%	1%	3%
Consents	0%	2%	0%	5%
Other	37%	33%	41%	40%
DK	11%	7%	6%	4%
<i>Base</i>	57	183	139	222

6.1.12 Civil Defence Preparations

When asked about being prepared for civil defence emergencies, all groups had some level of preparedness. Overall, those in rural areas showed the highest levels of preparedness. Results are shown in Tables 6.16, 6.17 and 6.18.

Table 6.16 Discussed Preparations for Civil Emergency

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Yes	46%	45%	50%	54%
No	54%	55%	50%	46%
<i>Base:</i>	57	183	139	222

Table 6.17 Made Plans for Civil Emergency

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Yes	73%	65%	80%	83%
No	27%	35%	20%	17%
<i>Base: Those discussed plans</i>	26	82	70	119

Table 6.18 Put Aside Items or Supplies for a Civil Emergency

	City	Town	Rural - farm	Rural - lifestyle
Yes	49%	49%	63%	61%
No	51%	51%	37%	39%
<i>Base:</i>	57	183	139	222

6.2 Selected Responses by Age of Respondent

It should be noted that even on a compiled basis, the number of responses per category when analysis is conducted by age group mean **that the margin of error is relatively high, ranging from 12.5% for the under 35 age-groups to 7.5 for the largest representative group (55-64).**

6.2.1 Awareness of the Functions of the Northland Regional Council

Those aged between 16-24 overall showed a lower awareness of the roles of the Northland Regional Council, with 34% not able to state any function, although they had the highest awareness of the Council looking after community interests. Those aged 35 - 64 showed a stronger awareness of the role in Environmental Conservation than the younger and oldest age group. Respondents aged 45 years and older tended to mention their role in harbours/ coastline/ waterways more than younger respondents. Details are shown in Table 6.19.

Table 6.19 Unprompted Awareness of Northland Regional Council Functions

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Looks after roads	23%	30%	28%	28%	23%	17%
Environmental care/ conservation	14%	19%	30%	30%	32%	19%
Water/ sewerage	10%	22%	22%	27%	21%	23%
Responsible for harbours/ coastline/ waterways	3%	11%	16%	19%	21%	19%
Gardens/ parks/ reserves	8%	12%	18%	9%	11%	8%
Licensing/ consents/ resource management	7%	12%	16%	8%	13%	6%
Charges/ collects rates	5%	10%	9%	16%	6%	11%
Regional policy planning/ management	3%	6%	6%	10%	9%	11%
Waste removal/ street cleaning/ recycling	8%	11%	9%	3%	7%	4%
Looks after community interests	15%	5%	5%	5%	7%	3%
Infrastructure	4%	5%	7%	8%	6%	3%
Looks after the towns in the area	4%	7%	10%	1%	4%	6%
Weeds/ pest control	1%	3%	2%	4%	7%	4%
Land development/ management	1%	5%	2%	2%	6%	3%

Northland Regional Council

Community Awareness Survey, April - May 2010

Does nothing	1%	4%	2%	3%	3%	2%
Libraries	3%	1%	3%	1%	1%	2%
Civil defence/ flood protection/ disaster management	0%	1%	3%	3%	2%	1%
Other	33%	21%	30%	17%	13%	14%
Don't know	34%	23%	17%	11%	17%	21%
<i>Base:</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>111</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>118</i>

Residents aged 16-24 tended to think the Northland District Council was involved in infrastructure and the transport network more than older residents. Results are shown in Table 6.20

Table 6.20 Awareness Northland Regional Council is Involved With....

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Planning, monitoring and issuing consents for the natural environment - air, land, water and coast	93%	93%	97%	94%	98%	92%
Control and advice of plant and animal pests	79%	79%	86%	83%	88%	81%
Flood, hazard management and civil defence	82%	86%	87%	86%	83%	86%
Infrastructure planning and development	84%	79%	82%	75%	81%	75%
Economic development and growth	68%	68%	74%	65%	75%	71%
Harbour navigation and safety	58%	63%	65%	72%	71%	79%
Managing and planning for the region's land transport network	92%	80%	74%	76%	74%	73%
<i>Base:</i>	73	111	105	99	95	118

6.2.2 Contact with Northland Regional Council

Those more likely to have had some contact with the Northland Regional Council were aged between 35 and 64. Residents aged 45-64 had the most frequent contact. With the exception of those aged 16-24, most had initiated the contact. Results are shown in Tables 6.21 and 6.22.

Table 6.21 Contact with Northland Regional Council

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Never	86%	66%	53%	47%	45%	64%
Rarely	5%	21%	16%	20%	24%	17%
Once in the last year	4%	7%	17%	12%	8%	8%
More frequently	4%	6%	13%	20%	22%	11%
<i>Base:</i>	73	111	105	99	95	118

Table 6.22 Direction of Contact between Individuals and the Council

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
You contacted the Council	40%	79%	82%	77%	87%	83%
The Council contacted you	60%	42%	33%	38%	33%	26%
<i>Base:</i>	10	38	49	52	52	42

6.2.3 Format of Contact between Individuals and the Council

Respondents that had initiated contact were asked to detail the form in which contact with the Northland Regional Council was made. Responses are shown in Table 6.23.

Table 6.23 Format of contact between individuals and the Council

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
By telephone	50%	57%	78%	78%	58%	63%
In person	25%	43%	25%	35%	29%	46%
By email	0%	7%	3%	10%	13%	11%
By letter/ mail	25%	7%	5%	8%	9%	11%
Through a third person	25%	3%	3%	0%	9%	3%
Public Meeting	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	3%
Other	0%	3%	5%	0%	9%	9%
<i>Base: Those initiating contact</i>	4	30	40	40	45	35

6.2.4 Satisfaction with Response From Contact with the Council

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction (on a scale of 1 to 5) with regard to the manner in which the council had dealt with the matter or inquiry. Results are shown in Table 6.24.

Table 6.24 Speed and Quality of Council response

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Mean score: 1 = agree strongly, 5 = disagree strongly						
I was satisfied with the speed with which the Regional Council dealt with my matter or inquiry	3.25	2.13	2.58	2.38	2.31	2.49
I was satisfied with the quality of response with which the Regional Council dealt with my matter	2.00	2.10	2.40	2.35	2.49	2.80
<i>Base: Those initiating contact</i>	4	30	40	40	45	35

6.2.5 Information Regarding the Northland Regional Council

Residents were asked "Where do you mainly get your information about the Northland Regional Council?" Older residents tended to receive information from community newspapers more than younger residents, whereas those aged under 34 more often used the internet. Results are shown in Table 6.25.

Table 6.25 Information regarding the Northland Regional Council

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Community newspaper	16%	25%	37%	27%	31%	31%
Pamphlets/ letter box drops	10%	23%	19%	22%	27%	25%
Daily newspaper	5%	22%	19%	25%	14%	31%
Internet/ website	18%	25%	9%	10%	8%	3%
Newsletter	3%	5%	12%	21%	13%	14%
Word of mouth	16%	8%	5%	8%	5%	4%
Go to Council office/ Information centre	0%	2%	7%	3%	4%	5%
Radio	3%	1%	1%	4%	1%	4%

Ring them	0%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%
With rates notices	0%	0%	1%	4%	6%	2%
Library	3%	1%	2%	0%	1%	2%
TV News	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	1%
Other	14%	3%	3%	8%	9%	4%
Don't get information/ don't know	19%	8%	11%	9%	11%	6%
Base:	73	111	105	99	95	118

6.2.6 Regional Report

There was a clear variation in awareness of the *Regional Report*, with awareness highest in the 35-64 age group and considerably much lower among those aged 16-24. Details are shown in Table 6.26.

Table 6.26 Awareness of Regional Report

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes, aware	19%	47%	65%	62%	68%	67%
No, not aware	81%	53%	35%	38%	32%	33%
Base:	73	111	105	99	95	118

Having established awareness, those who indicated they were aware were asked to rate the level at which they read the *Regional Report*. Responses are shown in table 6.27. The amount of the report read increased with age, and those aged 45+ were more likely to have read it in detail.

Table 6.27 Readership of the Regional Report

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Read this in detail	7%	2%	7%	15%	14%	23%
Scan the publication only	36%	44%	41%	38%	35%	37%
Read some issues, but not all	14%	29%	38%	36%	40%	34%
Don't read it	43%	25%	13%	11%	11%	6%
Base: Aware of Regional Report	14	52	68	61	65	79

6.2.7 Internet Access

When asked "I have access to the internet", between 80% - 96% had access at home with the exception of the 65+ age group where fewer than half had access, as shown in Table 6.28.

Table 6.28 Internet Access

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	At home					
Dial up	11%	11%	7%	13%	13%	17%
Broadband	74%	69%	83%	83%	72%	36%
None	15%	20%	10%	4%	16%	47%

	At work					
Dial up	0%	3%	0%	2%	3%	1%
Broadband	33%	50%	54%	51%	31%	10%
None	67%	48%	46%	47%	66%	89%
	At a place of study					
Dial up	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Broadband	51%	10%	11%	8%	4%	5%
None	49%	90%	88%	92%	96%	95%
	Elsewhere					
Dial up	5%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Broadband	37%	32%	15%	12%	18%	11%
None	58%	65%	83%	87%	81%	88%
<i>Base:</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>111</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>118</i>

6.2.8 Use of Council web-site

The Council provides a range of on-line services. The questionnaire has been designed to obtain information about the proportion using the website and ease of use of the services. Results are shown in Table 6.29 and 6.30. Around a fifth or more in each age group had used the website, with the exception of just 6% of those aged 65 plus. All services were rated between 3 (average) and 4 and over (simple), showing the services were relatively simple to use.

Table 6.29 Use of Council web-site

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes, used	23%	31%	21%	25%	19%	6%
No, not used	77%	69%	79%	75%	81%	94%
<i>Base:</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>111</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>118</i>

Table 6.30 Ease of Use of Council web-site

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
To find information	3.88	3.68	3.41	3.46	3.72	3.29
To download an application form	3.86	3.54	3.71	4.38	4.14	4.25
To pay online	3.29	3.80	4.13	4.25	3.83	3.00
To access a publication, report or plan	3.67	3.61	3.25	3.77	3.50	3.60
To make a submission	3.80	3.33	3.33	3.50	3.17	3.50
To find out about an event	4.07	3.95	3.75	4.25	3.57	3.67
<i>Base:</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>7</i>

6.2.9 Information About the Council

Respondents were asked what information they would like to receive with regard to the Council and a range of issues. Results are shown in Table 6.31. Overall, those in the youngest and oldest age groups tended to seek less information than other ages.

Table 6.31 Information sought about the Regional Council

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
The Council	38%	45%	39%	37%	47%	45%
Community Events and Workshops	63%	72%	68%	54%	53%	44%
Consents	37%	43%	47%	53%	48%	38%
Consultation Issues	22%	43%	46%	54%	51%	37%
Transport Issues	47%	52%	55%	49%	32%	45%
Civil Defence	53%	78%	70%	61%	57%	52%
Opportunities to have my say on Council issues	49%	68%	61%	57%	45%	39%
Regional issues	53%	69%	70%	62%	56%	49%
Environmental issues	63%	74%	70%	74%	64%	58%
<i>Base:</i>	73	111	105	99	95	118

6.2.10 Preferred sources of information

Respondents were asked what media was their preferred option for obtaining information. The most preferred option was local or community newspapers, both from an overall perspective and when analysed by age group. Younger respondents were more receptive to mobile phone text alerts and social network sites as means of communicating information. Results are shown in table 6.32

Table 6.32 Preferred Sources of Information

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Mean score: 1 = most preferable, 5 = least preferable						
Local or community newspapers	2.29	1.88	1.74	2.16	1.89	1.70
Northern Advocate	2.70	2.87	3.40	3.26	3.38	3.22
Radio	3.01	2.84	3.17	3.31	3.66	3.50
Social network sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)	3.73	3.95	4.23	4.30	4.67	4.82
Council Website	3.33	2.67	2.92	3.27	3.61	4.11
Direct mail	2.88	2.26	2.27	2.52	2.21	2.24
Email newsletters	3.44	3.01	3.10	3.25	3.60	4.03
Mobile phone text alerts	3.64	3.87	4.21	4.14	4.56	4.64
<i>Base:</i>	73	111	105	99	95	118

6.2.11 Issues Facing Northland (General)

What are the most pressing issues facing Northland?

Roading was seen as the primary issue across all age groups. On a proportional basis,

- The environment / conservation was rated higher by those between the ages of 45-64;
- Drought/ water supply was rated higher by those aged under 45 years;
- Unemployment was rated higher by those aged 55 years and older.

Table 6.33 Issues Facing Northland (General)

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Roads	37%	41%	52%	45%	46%	44%
Drought/ water supply	33%	33%	27%	23%	21%	23%
Environment/ conservation	8%	16%	18%	26%	21%	9%
Unemployment	8%	9%	7%	9%	20%	17%
Pollution - air/water	5%	5%	10%	19%	12%	10%
Sewerage/ drainage	8%	13%	11%	9%	7%	10%
Flooding/ disaster management	0%	5%	8%	10%	13%	6%
Public transport	7%	3%	4%	10%	12%	8%
Protection of coast/ development/ access	3%	5%	7%	8%	5%	6%
Waste/ recycling/ rubbish control	3%	6%	5%	3%	7%	4%
Infrastructure	1%	5%	4%	5%	11%	2%
The economy	3%	3%	9%	2%	7%	3%
Crime and safety	4%	7%	4%	5%	0%	4%
Young people/ what to do	7%	4%	5%	1%	3%	3%
Future planning	1%	2%	4%	6%	3%	3%
Rates	0%	4%	4%	2%	5%	3%
Weed and pest control	1%	3%	2%	5%	3%	3%
Drugs/ alcohol	4%	2%	3%	2%	0%	4%
Health	0%	2%	2%	5%	2%	3%
Consents	1%	2%	6%	1%	2%	2%
Other	27%	42%	39%	38%	37%	39%
DK	15%	8%	4%	1%	2%	6%
<i>Base:</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>111</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>118</i>

6.2.12 Civil Defence Preparations

When asked about planning and preparation for civil defence emergencies, the oldest and youngest age groups were the least likely to have discussed this, however the older age groups (45+) were more likely to have items out aside than the younger groups (16-44). Details are shown in Table 6.34, 6.35 and 6.36.

Table 6.34 Discussed Civil Defence Preparations by Age Group

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes	30%	47%	57%	62%	57%	41%
No	70%	53%	43%	38%	43%	59%
<i>Base:</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>111</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>118</i>

Table 6.35 Made Plans by Age Group

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
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Northland Regional Council

Community Awareness Survey, April - May 2010

Yes	64%	73%	82%	84%	78%	69%
No	36%	27%	18%	16%	22%	31%
<i>Base: Those discussed plans</i>	22	52	60	61	54	48

Table 6.36 Put Aside Items or Supplies for a Civil Emergency by Age Group

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes	33%	53%	52%	66%	63%	66%
No	67%	47%	48%	34%	37%	34%
<i>Base:</i>	73	111	105	99	95	118

Research First Ltd
Friday, May 14, 2010