



Report           03.430  
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File

Committee       Policy, Finance and Strategy  
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## Use of the rating information database for resource management and other purposes

### 1. Purpose

To advise the committee of issues concerning the use of the rating information database (RID) for resource management and other purposes.

### 2. Background

A new requirement in the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 is that the RID that is made available to the public must not include the name of any person or postal addresses. Unfortunately the RID is the base data source used by Greater Wellington and many other councils to identify property owners for resource management and other purposes. For example, when planning a biosecurity operation, Greater Wellington biosecurity staff use the database to ensure that critical information on toxins, risk management, operational timing, etc reaches the correct people.

*LGNZ* have provided local authorities with advice on this matter which explains the issue in some detail (see **Attachment 1**).

### 3. Considerations

The Executive Management Team (EMT) considered the issue in light of the advice from *LGNZ*. The conclusion reached was that we should continue to use the RID for our own activities but that names and addresses should not be supplied to external parties. Subsequently I have clarified that supply of names and addresses to contractors working for Greater Wellington falls within accepted use. Staff have been advised of our position.

As can be seen in Attachment 1, this approach is not without some legal risk but is considered a pragmatic response to an unduly restrictive legal requirement. In our view, the people being notified benefit from the advice they receive as a result of accessing their names and addresses.

EMT requested that I write to *LGNZ* expressing out concerns about the restriction and asking them to lobby for the matter to be rectified. A letter has been sent to this effect.

The restriction requires that manual methods be used to find information that can be readily accessed by computer and will add to the costs of compliance for applicants for resource consents. It is a significant retrogressive step.

#### **4. Communication**

This matter has already been taken up with *LGNZ*.

#### **5. Recommendations**

*That the Committee notes that:*

- 1. New requirements within the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 restrict the release of names and addresses from the rating information database.*
- 2. Greater Wellington staff have adopted a pragmatic approach whereby they will continue to use the rating information database to identify names and addresses of property owners for the purpose of undertaking Council business; but that they will not release this information to third parties for other purposes.*
- 3. The approach adopted by Greater Wellington staff is not without some legal risk.*
- 4. That staff have written to LGNZ asking them to lobby to have this issue rectified.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

**Wayne Hastie**  
Council Secretary

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**Attachment 1:** Memorandum from *Local Government New Zealand*