Hon Chris Bishop

Minister of Housing
Minister for Infrastructure
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform
Minister of Transport
Leader of the House
Associate Minister of Finance
Associate Minister for Sport and Recreation

10 NOV 2025

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Daran Ponter
By email: Daran.Ponter@gw.govt.nz

Dear Daran,

Thank you for your letter of 10 October 2025, sent on behalf of Te Uru Kahika, regarding the Castalia report on the *Delivery of Functions at a Regional Scale*. While there are a wide range of issues raised in the report, many relate to the current reforms to establish the new planning and environmental management system, which fall within my portfolio responsibilities as Minister Responsible for RMA Reform.

I have asked officials to consider the Castalia report as part of the broader implementation planning for the new system. Your insights will help ensure the transition process takes account of the practical realities faced by regional councils and unitary authorities.

Many of the operational functions currently delivered by regional councils and unitary authorities will continue under the new system, including regional planning, environmental monitoring and reporting, natural hazard management, public transport, and flood control.

The new planning and environmental management system will also support more proportionate, outcome-focused decisions. By expanding permitted activities through clearer standards and zoning, it will reduce some of the regulatory burden the current system has on regional councils and unitary authorities.

I recognise the importance of regional sector involvement in designing a system that is effective, durable, and grounded in local experience. I value Te Uru Kahika's ongoing engagement and commitment to constructive collaboration as we progress these reforms.

Thank you for your correspondence on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform

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