

Compliance monitoring report 2017-18

We work with land managers, individuals and industry to ensure compliance with consents and to minimise impacts on the environment.

From effluent discharge requirements to water takes and a mix of coastal activities, the team monitor a wide range of activities covered by around 4000 consents each year. In addition, we issue around 1000 new consents annually; luckily not all of these require monitoring.

In short, we aim to:

- ◀ maintain strong relationships
- ◀ respond quickly to incident reports
- ◀ ensure effective and targeted consent compliance and monitoring
- ◀ be as transparent as possible with our actions and information
- ◀ have a continuous improvement approach to consents, monitoring and compliance

Our team benchmark our work against colleagues at other regional councils around New Zealand to check and validate our approach.

Consenting rules

Resource consents allow people or organisations to do something that may have an effect on the environment, but this comes with conditions to ensure our natural resources are managed well and remain sustainable.

It is important for our team to build and maintain positive relationships with our consent holders by providing education and guidance. We work together to ensure consents are understood and complied with, which helps achieve more positive environmental outcomes.

What we monitored – dairy consents

Fully compliant	801
Low risk or moderate non-compliance	104
Significant non-compliance	17

What we monitored – industry consents*

Fully compliant	28
Low risk or moderate non-compliance	21
Significant non-compliance	4

*Assessment of compliance includes industry and council sewerage systems

Incident reporting

Why this matters

Incidents involving contaminants in waterways or unauthorised discharges to land or air should be notified via our online form at www.es.govt.nz or for urgent pollution and environmental incidents, please call the 24/7 pollution response hotline **0800 76 88 45**.

Air: Offensive odour, smoke, burning prohibited items, spray drift or dust

Land & Water: offensive odour, farm dumps, dust, clean fill operations, stream/river works, chemical or oil spills

Coastal: oil slicks, chemical or sewage spills, rubbish dumped in the sea



What we investigated

961 incident reports up 34% from 2016/17

These incidents related to:

Air	346	
Coastal	125	
Land	205	
Water	285	



Incidents

The variety of incidents reported to the compliance team can be extremely wide and covers all manner of environmental incidents. Due to the high volume of reports, we respond to the most serious incidents first.

◀ Air complaints spiked in May 2018, an indication to us that tolerance for nuisance smoke and odour is reducing.

How we respond

Incidents are assigned a priority from one hour, for urgent matters, to six months for matters with low environmental impacts. We take into account several factors including potential harm to the environment, the need for evidence collection and where the discharge is going.

Directive

Our compliance approach is based on the 4E's (Enable, Encourage, Educate and Enforce), which remain at the heart of what we do.

Letters of direction - used to moderate situation with a co-operative, motivated party.

Abatement notices and enforcement orders - these actions carry no fines and are designed to direct people towards compliance.

Punitive

Formal warnings, infringements and prosecutions - These actions carry a reprimanding component and, in the case of infringement and prosecution, may result in a fine.

During the 2017/18 year, the compliance team issued:

Letters of direction	25	Infringement notices	36
Formal warnings	24	Diversions	3
Abatement notices	80	Prosecutions	19



Enforcement

A significant focus of the compliance monitoring and incident response roles are education, informing and directing, but there are times when enforcement action is required.



◀ Discharge of a contaminant to land where it may enter water.

Convicted and a fine of
\$116,250
issued.



◀ Discharge of a contaminant to land from an industrial site.

Convicted and a fine of
\$53,400
issued.

COMPLIANCE TEAM Who we are

Technical

We work with consent holders, including territorial authorities and major Southland industries – plus the likes of electricity generators. We analyse data around everything from groundwater takes, to treated wastewater and stormwater discharges, to monitoring of marine environment consents and discharges, to air consents.

Monitoring and enforcement

You'll find us out in the field carrying out dairy farm inspections and monitoring consent conditions around the likes of effluent discharges and water takes. Our role in enforcement includes information and evidence gathering and working proactively with all parties to try and resolve issues in a fair and equitable way.

Administration

We're the engine room of the compliance team, making sure vital data is collated and entered into our systems correctly – and helping to ensure our team maintains good, consistent communication with consent holders and other stakeholders.

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