

**16 DECEMBER 2010**  
**POLICY ON POLICIES**

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**Policy**

Water New Zealand will develop policies to assist members, politicians, government officials and the general public better understand the issues of matter to the industry. Such policies and positions shall be developed following consultation with relevant groups within and beyond the industry. Policies are ratified by the Board and then posted on the Water New Zealand website / distributed to members. Policies shall be reviewed every five years.

**Explanation**

**Policies**

Policies can be defined as “plans of action or statements clearly delineating an issue, outlining why it is an industry issue, and proposing a resolution pathway for the issue”. They reflect the considered view of the Water New Zealand membership on specific subjects. It is unlikely that there would be a significant divergence of views among members on Water New Zealand developed policies. Therefore, members and spokespeople can quote from them with confidence.

Associations such as Water New Zealand have a public duty to develop policies on subjects within their area of expertise/interest. In developing policies, the Association is practising good corporate citizenship.

Policies may be used for informational, educational or political purposes. Policies shall be set out in a consistent format with the policy itself set out first followed by an explanation.

**Policy**

A policy statement sets out in one or two paragraphs, the Associations’ considered view on a matter relevant to the industry. Policies should be succinct, easy to read and understand and give readers clear direction on the area covered.

**Explanation**

The explanation should give the background as to the reason for policy development in a particular area, the purpose of the policy and contain any other information required to explain the reason for the policy statement.

**Consultation Process**

The Board and executive office do not have sufficient expertise or resource to be able to write policy on every area of industry activity. Therefore, reliance is placed on members or SIGs with specific expertise/interest to assist in the development of policy within their area of competence.

The process of initiating policy development may come from members, SIGs, the executive office or the Board. If an issue is proposed for policy development from outside the Board, Board approval must be sought prior to developing a draft of that policy.

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Depending upon the degree of generic interest and sensitivity, a draft policy statement may go through a greater or lesser degree of consultation. In matters of generic interest to the membership, it would normally be expected that a draft policy document would be available on the Water New Zealand website so that any member can give feedback before a final draft is produced.

Draft policies are ratified by the Water New Zealand Board and then placed on the Water New Zealand website. It is important to appreciate that while policies may be initiated by individuals or SIGs, they in fact are Association policies. It is therefore inappropriate to make reference to authors in policy statements.

### **Standing Operating Procedure for Policy Development**

1. The Water New Zealand Board, a SIG or an individual member may suggest a need for policy in a particular area.
2. The Water New Zealand Board must approve further development of policy, and provide guidance on parties that should be consulted in preparation of drafts.
3. The National Office, in consultation with the policy proposer, will develop the draft policy. Where there may be a spectrum of opinion within the membership on a potential policy position, such draft policies shall be accompanied by background material setting out the range of positions available to be taken, and the reasoning behind such positions.
4. Draft policy is circulated to general and specific audiences for comment, including all parties identified in (2) above.
5. Based on feedback, draft policy is refined.
6. Final draft is submitted to the Water New Zealand Board for ratification. In order to assist the Board in determining levels of support, final drafts shall be accompanied by summary reports including parties consulted ( e.g. SIG, individual or corporate entity), and include a synopsis of dissenting or supporting views.
7. The Water New Zealand Board considers the policy, which it may or may not ratify.
8. Policy is ratified.

All policies must bear the date of final ratification and be reviewed every five years, or earlier if the Board considers it advisable. At review date, a policy is re-circulated to original drafters/interest group for reconsideration, if necessary. Such policies must be re-subjected to the consultation process and resubmitted to the Board for ratification again if substantively modified.

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