

**Royal Commission's recommendations will help
'Resolve a dysfunctional Auckland'
Commission's recs should be rolled out nationwide – Water New Zealand**

Wellington, 27 March 2009

Auckland's dysfunctionality will likely be a thing of the past if the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Auckland Governance on relating to infrastructure are fully implemented.

"Rolling water infrastructure assets into one publicly owned and professionally governed business entity fits with proven best international practice for water utilities. It will improve the efficiency of management of these valuable assets and ultimately service delivery to ratepayers," said Water New Zealand's Chief Executive, Murray Gibb.

"The challenge now is for central government to move promptly to implement these recommendations and roll out similar reform across the rest of the country," he said.

"With a small population of around 4 million people, using 73 separate entities for water management, infrastructure development, delivery and disposal and a further 12 for water quality, coastal planning, river management and mitigation of erosion simply doesn't make sense. We should also remember that these arrangements were put in place before the revolution in communications that has occurred through use of the internet.

"Fragmentation to this degree is grossly inefficient."

Mr Gibb said Water New Zealand was particularly delighted to see a strong recommendation for promotion of demand management.

"The way New Zealanders waste scarce capital and energy on excessive water use is shameful," said Mr Gibb.

"The recommendations made by the Royal Commission on water infrastructure are sensible and consistent, are in accord with international best practice and with what Water New Zealand has been advocating for a long time," he said.

"The Royal Commission has recommended tried and tested ways of providing resolution to the infrastructure problems facing the Auckland region, and is to be congratulated on this aspect of its report. It now remains for the Government to respond.

Ends
284

Contact:

Murray Gibb Chief Executive
Water New Zealand

04 495 0896 cell 0274 916 956