



## **Media Statement**

**20 August 2015 – for immediate release**

### **Water New Zealand welcomes Government's 30 year infrastructure plan**

Water New Zealand welcomes the Government's initiatives for better developing and maintaining New Zealand's 3 waters infrastructure announced today as part of the 30 Year Infrastructure Plan 2015.

Water New Zealand is a strategic partner of the Treasury's National Infrastructure Unit which produced the report\*.

"New Zealand's urban centres are rapidly growing and it is very encouraging to see that Central Government is facing the infrastructure challenges head on with an increased focus on developing a better understanding of water related infrastructure assets," said John Pfahlert, CEO of Water New Zealand.

"Standardising and centralising the management of some of our 3 water infrastructure assets is essential if New Zealand wants to ensure it maximises existing assets and that new water infrastructure is built effectively and for the benefit of all users.

"As part of this, Water New Zealand's recommendation to establish shared metadata standards for the country's \$45 billion of existing 3 waters pipelines has been recognised.

"This will ensure we have a consistent information base across the councils for assessing the condition of pipes and will ensure greater consistency in the collection and reporting of the condition of these pipes. This is important for calculating the level of expenditure by councils and allowing comparisons between councils," said Mr Pfahlert.

The plan also signals a positive response to Water New Zealand's proposal for the development of a set of National Rainfall and Runoff Standards to improve hydraulic modelling by councils.

"The Standards we put forward are designed to be used by council staff and engineers in the private sector and will ultimately improve the resilience of both urban and rural infrastructure, reduce insurance claims and reduce the risks from flood damage," said Mr Pfahlert.

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#### **\*Notes to Editor**

As a strategic partner, Water New Zealand's CEO, John Pfahlert has comments included in the 30 Year Infrastructure Plan 2015:

"Water New Zealand welcomes the 2015 Plan, and in particular the emphasis on the long term. Moving to 'a resilient and coordinated' infrastructure scenario will present challenges but is nevertheless a laudable goal. The Strategic Context described in part 2 of the Plan provides an excellent 'scene setter' for considering the current states of the particular infrastructure sectors. The description of the three waters sector is concise and highlights the key issues. The view of the current state of water infrastructure 30 years out identifies several scenarios for the future, a number of which we would expect to emerge well before 2045. The Plan is an important step in fostering a more informed discussion on our critical infrastructure and we congratulate the Board on a well-conceived document."

***Water New Zealand** is an independent not for profit association of approximately 1500 water professionals and organisations, focusing on the sustainable management and development of the water environment. It provides leadership in the water sector, through advocacy, provision of technical advice and professional development. It is the principal voice for the water sector.*

*Its nationwide network of members represent many disciplines; physical and social sciences, public health, engineering, law and management. Water New Zealand attracts decision makers and technologists from central and local government, industry, the academic and research communities, consultants and service/equipment supply organisations, who exchange information about water and wastes issues.*