

# 1. Introduction

## Purpose of this volume

1.1 The Royal Commission on Auckland Governance (“the Commission”) received 3,564 submissions from the public. The Commission is grateful to all those who took the time to make a submission.

1.2 The Commission has not attempted to draw statistical significance from the submissions data. In particular, the extent to which submissions represent public opinion cannot be judged from the data, as submitters were self-selected, and not a random or representative sample of the population.

1.3 The Commission considered that the value of the submissions lay in the range and quality of the ideas they contained. The submissions assisted the reasoning of the Commission on many points. The conclusions and recommendations of the Commission were made after taking the submissions into account, but in no case were the submissions the sole consideration. The Commission had available to it a great deal of other information from numerous sources, including public hearings and its own research, which were considered together with the submissions.

1.4 The purpose of this volume is to draw together and describe the various ideas that were presented in the submissions. Many people put forward similar ideas in their own words, with variations on points of detail. In order to present the underlying pattern of the ideas, some of the detail is not stated in this volume. Occasionally, the text states conclusions about the number or percentage of submitters who supported or opposed a particular point of view. This is to illustrate the pattern of the submissions, but leaves readers to apply their own understanding. The constraints on the data referred to above should be read into the text where necessary.

1.5 Very broadly, the volume is structured to address first, the future vision for Auckland, and the principles that should underpin local governance arrangements; second, analysis of the effectiveness of current arrangements; and third, proposed changes for the future. We have also summarised submissions under particular topic headings, for example, transport and water.

## Call for submissions process

1.6 The Commission’s terms of reference required that the Commission consult with the public in a way that allowed people to express clearly their views on issues relating

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to local government arrangements for the Auckland region. The terms of reference also required the Commission to adopt procedures that encouraged public participation.

1.7 With this in mind, the Commission initiated a number of processes intended to obtain the views of the general public and specific communities. These processes are described in further detail below, and included

- widespread advertising of the Commission's call for submissions
- publication and wide distribution of two information booklets about the issues under discussion
- encouraging media coverage of the Commission's work
- promotion of the website as a forum for information and interface with the Commission.

1.8 A press release about the establishment of the Commission was made available in December 2007, with a further press release on 23 January 2008 highlighting the upcoming request for feedback from the public. From December 2007 to March 2008, there were various articles in the *New Zealand Herald*, the *New Zealand Listener*, and the *National Business Review* about Auckland governance issues and the Commission. The Commission formally called for public submissions on 5 March 2008.

1.9 The call for submissions on 5 March 2008 was marked by a large display advertisement of an Open Letter from the Commissioners in the Metro pages of the *New Zealand Herald*, as well as an advertisement in the Public Notices section, both of which outlined how submissions could be made to the Commission. The same advertisements were also placed in all the community newspapers of the Auckland region, as well the *Northern Advocate*, the *Waikato Times*, the *Bay of Plenty Times*, the *Dominion Post*, *Mana* magazine, and council publications throughout the Auckland region. The Open Letter was published again on 8 March 2008, in the *New Zealand Herald*, with the letter in both English and Māori. On 15 March, the Commission published a reminder in the *New Zealand Herald*.

1.10 A theme of the advertising was that everyone was welcome to make a submission. A copy of the advertisement of 5 March is in Appendix A.

1.11 Press releases on the submissions process were sent to a host of media, including television channels, radio stations and magazines in early March. The Commission Chair, Hon Peter Salmon QC, participated in interviews with radio, television, and print journalists about the submissions process throughout March and April.

1.12 To inform and support the submissions process, the Commission published 12,000 copies of two booklets, *Call for Submissions* (9,000 copies), which outlined the major governance issues for Auckland, and *Hei Whakapuaki i te Kōrero* (3,000 copies), which focused on Māori issues relating to governance. These booklets contained a broad set of questions intended to stimulate submissions. (See Appendix B.) The booklets also included a submission form that could be posted to the Commission. (See Appendix C.) Booklets were distributed to councils and libraries throughout the Auckland region so the

public could pick them up easily; they were also posted on request, and handed out at public consultation meetings arranged by the Commission. Booklets were also distributed through hui<sup>1</sup> and using the distribution networks of the Māori officers at the councils.

**1.13** The Commission also developed a website to support the submissions process, [www.royalcommission.govt.nz](http://www.royalcommission.govt.nz). The text of the booklets was available for downloading from the website and submissions could be made online, with or without electronic attachments. All submissions received by the Commission were placed on the website, available for reading or download by the public.

**1.14** On 15 April 2008, the Commission placed a large display advertisement in the *New Zealand Herald*, announcing the pending close of submissions a week later on 22 April 2008. Press releases with that information were sent to television, radio, and magazines, and published in many newspapers and council publications.

**1.15** The advertised closing date for submissions was 22 April 2008; however, a small number of submissions continued to be made for some weeks after that. All submissions received have been included in the summary of submissions.

## Responses to submissions process

**1.16** Many people welcomed the process of inquiry by the Royal Commission:

- Property Council New Zealand challenges the Commission to grab the nettle and fundamentally change the way decisions are made in Auckland. We can no longer tolerate the culture of divergence, deferral, delay and inefficiency. [11137]
- The increasing sense of frustration at the failure of the region to grasp the opportunities before it to truly become a world class global city has resulted [in] the appointment of a Royal Commission on Auckland Governance. Stevenson welcomes this 'once in a lifetime opportunity' to get it right for Auckland. [1476]

**1.17** The invitation to write and speak about the issues of local governance was appreciated by many as an opportunity for democratic engagement and decision making about local bodies:

I make this submission because, if I don't, I can have no complaints if my views and those of the faceless many who might share them go unheard. [10589]

**1.18** A number of submitters commended the Commission on the invitation and content of the *Call for Submissions* booklet, with many people making positive comments about the Commission's role and work:

I wish you all well in your deliberations on this as it is not an easy task. [11060]

**1.19** A couple of people were critical about the content of the booklet, including the commentaries and questions. The Commission stands by the contents of its booklet as a

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<sup>1</sup> Meeting(s).

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reasonable, concise summary of legislation and existing local government arrangements. The booklet was not the only source of information on these matters. The text and numerous open-ended questions in the booklet and submission form encouraged submitters to go beyond the material in the booklet if they wished, and many did so.

**1.20** Some people complained around the time of the submissions deadline that they had insufficient time to make submissions. In setting the time frame for making submissions, the Commission was driven by its own hearing and reporting time frames, but the Commission continued, on request, to accept late submissions to accommodate these people.

### Profile of submitters

**1.21** Of the 3,564 submissions received, 1,334 were via the website, and 2,230 were received in hard copy. A complete list of submitters is in Appendix D.

**1.22** Submitters were asked for contact addresses: 3,080 gave legible addresses, distributed as shown in Table 1.

**1.23** The submitters were self-selected. Demographic information was not collected from submitters, for example about their age, income, or ethnicity.

**1.24** Some 515 submitters (15%) stated the name of an organisation associated with their submission. Organisations included councils, iwi and hapū<sup>2</sup>, commercial entities, Government and non-governmental organisations, and educational institutions. The remainder of submitters are assumed to have submitted as private individuals.

**1.25** Organisations represented by submissions are included in the list of submitters in Appendix D. They include all eight of the councils in Auckland region, as well as 27 out of 30 community boards. Council organisations including Auckland Regional Transport Authority (“ARTA”), Auckland Regional Holdings, The Edge, and Manukau Water Ltd made separate submissions. Other councils that made submissions were Northland Regional Council, Kaipara District Council, Far North District Council, Environment Waikato, and Waikato District Council. Māori viewpoints were specifically represented by iwi authorities, rūnanga<sup>3</sup>, hapū, marae<sup>4</sup>, trusts, and numerous individuals. Ten Government departments were represented by a submission from the Government Urban and Economic Development Office, and five Government departments made their own submissions. Several organisations whose stated objective is to advance the interests of Auckland made submissions. Non-governmental organisations included 41 residents and ratepayers associations, and a wide range of charities, churches, political parties, environmental groups, unions, education, health promotion, and sports groups, among others.

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2 Tribal grouping and sub-tribe.

3 Institute, assembly.

4 Tribal meeting house(s) and buildings.

**Table 1** Addresses given by submitters

Location	No. of submitters
Rodney	256
North Shore	266
Waitakere	395
Auckland City <sup>1</sup>	1338
Manukau	141
Papakura	427
Franklin	205
Rest of New Zealand	46
Other countries	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>3080</b>
<sup>1</sup> Auckland City included:	
Waiheke Island	737
Great Barrier Island	130

**1.26** Some city and district councils sought their citizens' views on Auckland governance, to assist the councils to prepare their own submissions to the Commission. Some private organisations similarly canvassed their members' views. This feedback is reflected in the summary only to the extent that it was included in submissions made by the organisations to the Commission.

### Form of submissions

**1.27** A submission form was provided with the booklets and on the website, with long- and short-form options to fill in. A copy of the submission form is contained in Appendix C. Most submitters used the form to some extent. Some submitters, both online and postal, filled in only the name and address details of the submission form and attached their submission in separate documents, adopting their own format.

**1.28** Some submitters (notably from Waiheke Island, Papakura District, Waitakere City, and Rodney District) sent in pre-formatted submissions, coupons, or postcards that had been prepared by interest groups for others to sign and send in. Each of these was analysed on the same basis as submissions received on the Commission's form. There were 1,475 such forms received (see Table 2).

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**Table 2** Submissions on printed coupons, postcards, and standard forms

Source of submission	No. of submitters
<i>Papakura Courier</i>	314
<i>Waiheke Marketplace</i>	59
Waiheke A4 short form	118
Waiheke A4 long form	13
Waiheke Postcards	558
Great Barrier	93
Rodney “Disband Rodney”	102
Waitakere ( <i>Western Leader</i> )	218
<b>Total</b>	<b>1475</b>

**1.29** All of the submissions were made available to the public to view in their entirety on the Commission’s website, and will remain available while the website remains in operation.

### Methodology

**1.30** Submissions were compiled in a database by categorising them by reference to an open-ended set of propositions advanced by submitters. The database was used to capture qualitative data, in the form of reasons given by submitters for their submissions, and direct quotations, where these amplified an opinion. The information captured in the database is the basis for this report.

**1.31** As stated above, no attempt was made to draw statistical significance from the data, and no inferences have been drawn about the extent to which submissions represent public opinion.

**1.32** This report usually states the total numbers of submitters who gave their opinion on a particular matter, to assist readers to draw their own conclusions. Imprecise indications of numbers such as “few”, “many”, or “most” are used in general summary sections to improve readability, and defined where necessary for the context.

**1.33** The words of submitters are usually paraphrased, but direct quotations are used to illustrate particular points of view. Quotations are followed by the submitter number in square brackets. These numbers, which were allocated by the Commission when submissions were received, are included with the list of submitters in Appendix D. Where necessary, quotations have been corrected for spelling and punctuation.

**1.34** The chapter headings in this volume indicate the contents of each chapter. Comments received about local governance principles are in the early chapters, followed by comments about current governance, and then suggestions for future governance.

**1.35** In many chapters, reference is made to relevant questions posed in the *Call for Submissions* booklet. The questions are included in the booklet text in Appendix B. Submitters did not, however, limit themselves to the questions stated in the *Call for Submissions* booklet. Similarly, this report is not so limited, and is intended to represent the breadth and depth of submissions made to it that are relevant to the Commission's terms of reference.

### Hearings

**1.36** After submissions closed, submitters had the opportunity to be heard by the Commission. Five hundred and fifty people took advantage of this opportunity and addressed commissioners. During the course of hearings, many submitters tabled additional papers. Additional papers and oral submissions are not included in the summaries in this volume, which refers only to the content of the original written submissions. In a few cases, submitters asked for changes and corrections to original submissions, and these are taken into account in this volume.

### Notes for Readers

**1.37** This document follows New Zealand parliamentary report style in most particulars. Note that direct quotations, however, retain the writers' preferred spellings, terminology, and format and so may diverge from the underlying style.

**1.38** Unless there is likely to be confusion, the names of councils are usually shortened by dropping the word "council". Thus "Rodney District" may refer to the local authority organisation or, in contexts such as discussion of boundary changes, to its geographical area and communities. A glossary of abbreviations and terms relating to local government is provided in Appendix E.

**1.39** English-language explanations for Māori terms are provided in each chapter as footnotes. A more complete glossary of Māori words and phrases appears as Appendix F. This includes some names of relevant groups and place names in the context of this report.

**1.40** Macrons are used for terms such as hapū, Māori, and rūnanga in a general context in the text but are not added to direct quotations; nor are they added to place names and organisation names that are defined in formal contexts without macrons (hence, perhaps, Tāmaki isthmus but Tamaki-Maungakiekie Ward; Āwhitu Peninsula but Awhitu Peninsula Landcare Group; Ngati Whatua as a submitter but Ngāti Whātua in general discussion).