

## Immigration NZ hurry-up

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Immigration NZ officials are being given an official hurry-up as the government seeks to improve the timeliness of visa approvals at least for those who are being permitted to enter the country. Unions were irritated by the latest 'sector agreements' to ease labour shortages, but it is clear the government is concerned about both business backlash and wage inflation caused by its tight immigration stance.

## An inexplicable failure of political nous

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The failure by Revenue Minister David Parker or any of his Cabinet colleagues to foresee the obvious potential for political damage from the proposal to ensure GST is charged on all KiwiSaver provider fees is extraordinary. Worse damage was only averted by the fastest policy U-turn in living memory.

## Luxon rules out Tamaki

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The tedious journalistic practice of trying to trap party leaders into ruling in or out potential coalition partners has started in earnest, with the general election now just a year and a bit away. Christopher Luxon may have been trying not to alienate conservative and Christian right voters by appearing to leave Brian Tamaki's new FreedomsNZ party in play before eventually ruling it out.

## Orange-lite ahead?

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NZ may not move to the green traffic light setting when the government reviews current covid restrictions in about 10 days time, but some relaxations appear inevitable, in particular a reduction in the places where mask-wearing is mandated.

## Qantas muscles in

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Qantas is clearly peeved to see Air NZ trying to build a channel of Australian customers to fly from Auckland on its direct service to New York, starting next month. The Auckland connection has worked well in the past for connections to other US airports for Australians, who find the Auckland transit smoother than changing from domestic to international in Sydney. Qantas will fly a Syd-Akl-NYC route from mid-2023.

## Earnings season

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The earnings season for public companies reporting to June 30 balance dates is largely complete, with significant evidence of resilience across many sectors.

## Parker's eye off the ball on tax again

This week's GST on KiwiSaver fees debacle is the fourth political headache visited on the government by Revenue Minister David Parker this year.

The first was his high level tax principles speech in April, which was assumed at the time to have some prime ministerial imprimatur but now looks more like a rogue action.

Next was the abandonment of proposals that would have amounted, in effect, to a capital gains tax by stealth that sought to claw back tax avoided by company shareholders who declared dividends on retained earnings before the 39c top personal tax rate kicked in.

Next was the embarrassment caused by IRD making cost-of-living payments to offshore and, in some cases, deceased NZers.

That was the subject of a particularly pointed Auditor-General's report, released this week just after Parker announced that more stringent checks were now in place for the second tranche of payments.

The fourth - the firestorm caused by proposals buried in omnibus tax legislation to tax GST on all KiwiSaver providers' fees - is by far the most unusual.

Long-time Parliament watchers have been scratching their heads all week to think of a faster U-turn in the last generation or so. The proposal didn't even last a day, let alone getting to a select committee.

So uncertain was the status of the policy that the new Speaker, Adrian Rurawhe, was stumped when National's Chris Bishop wanted to table relevant documents in the House. It was unclear whether it was still a public document.

Parker is known to be a candidate for retirement at the next election and is likely to have his load lightened in the Cabinet reshuffle promised in early 2023.

His performance in the revenue portfolio suggests he's taken his eye off the ball. It beggars belief that no one saw the political dangers in the proposals. It is almost unseemly the way ministers have sought to blame the IRD. The regulatory impact statement detailed the risks but ministers simply didn't notice them, perhaps expecting that Parker would have raised such a threat.

Soundings in the Beehive on the day, however, found government spokespeople insisting there was no fallout for Parker and that it was all the tax department's fault for faulty advice.

## Immigration hurry-up

Immigration NZ is on notice to speed up the processing of visa applications as frustration mounts among employers and educational institutions attempting to get migrants across the border.

An **incident management team** structure is being used to oversee the changes. In effect, INZ officials are being urged to rethink how rigorously they check every applicant, with a bias towards accepting documentation as likely to be correct, except where there are major red flags.

It appears the government is starting to bend on migration settings, angering trade unions by announcing an extra 12,000 working holidaymakers entry visas to help ease labour shortages and new 'sector agreements' that will allow workers to be paid below the median wage.

The agreements allow more workers for the aged care sector, construction, meat processing, seafood and tourism sectors.

## Masks off?

The government is preparing the ground for removal of mask mandates in most settings other than public transport.

With spring arriving, covid and flu hospital admissions dropping and - perhaps most crucially - public compliance with ubiquitous mask use falling away, an announcement can be expected within a fortnight.

## Another lesson for Luxon

Having ruled out working with Labour, the Greens, or NZ First, Christopher Luxon then tried to pull the "too soon to talk about it" card when asked if he would contemplate a government dependent on votes from Brian Tamaki's new party.

This is the age-old game the political journalists play in the lead-up to every election, trying to get parties ruled in or out.

Luxon eventually wilted, telling Newstalk ZB's Mike Hosking in an "exclusive" that he thought Tamaki and co were "crazy" and he wouldn't work with them.

By not saying so immediately, Luxon played into the hands of the left by pumping up the impression that he sees the religious right and conspiracy theorists as a constituency where at least some potential National voters are lurking.

## KiwiBank - a pragmatic outcome

The political spin on the Crown's taking 100%

direct ownership of KiwiBank has been that the government is committed to ensuring competition for the 'big four' banks.

The reality is that the deal that saw 47% of the bank sold to the NZ Super Fund and ACC in 2016 had a five year lock-in that expired last October.

At that point, the differing views of the three shareholders - NZ Post being the majority shareholder at 53% - crystallised.

NZSF would have bought more or all of KiwiBank, but both ACC and NZ Post wanted out. The holding was a larger single exposure than suited ACC and Post was not enthusiastic about KiwiBank's inevitable need for capital as it grows.

Given that NZSF wanted unfettered exit rights - allowing either partial or full privatisation - its interest was never going to overcome political hurdles. Even National has confirmed it prefers KiwiBank in state ownership.

The bank is growing organically at present, using retained earnings to meet capital adequacy ratio requirements. It is possible that some of the \$900m-plus that Post will receive from the sale will be recycled back as capital to KiwiBank. Details of the split between capital for Post's own needs and a special dividend to the Crown have yet to be announced.

## Supermarket reform

MBIE has contracted specialist food and grocery sector Coriolis to examine the mechanics of mandatory supermarket divestment.

While little-noticed at the time, partly because it made no oral submissions, Coriolis's submission to the Commerce Commission inquiry appears to have been relatively influential.

In essence, it proposed that the only way to force competition effectively, if required, would be to force divestment once market share by any one player exceeded 23% in a nominated geographic area.

Meanwhile, Consumer Affairs Minister David Clark reannounced most of the policies already known to the sector last week, as the government seeks to milk every possible opportunity to claim anti-inflationary credentials.

The only news in the announcements was that there will be a carve-out from anti-cartel rules for small-scale suppliers to supermarkets, allowing them to negotiate collectively with the supermarket duopoly.

Katherine Rich, the long-standing head of the NZ Food and Grocery Council, has announced she is leaving the position and has not responded to the

suggestion that she may be interested or in line to become the first so-called 'grocery czar', heading the new body that will assess the need for regulation in the sector.

## PNG pact?

There was a somewhat surprised reaction from Canberra when the PM of Papua New Guinea outlined embryonic talks to create a new defence alliance with Australia, which he expected might also include NZ.

The fact that such an initiative is even being tossed around is further indication of the ramped up approach being taken by Australia and NZ to counter Chinese attempts to build Pacific regional influence.

## Xinjiang concern

Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta issued a strongly worded statement expressing "deep concern" about the findings of a UN report on large-scale human rights abuses in the Chinese province of Xinjiang.

## Gaurav who?

Hamilton West MP Gaurav Sharma was expelled from the Labour Party caucus after continuing to attack the party leadership publicly. He continues to issue detailed accusations and self-defence, but the media has moved on. It appears he will sit out the rest of the parliamentary term and then return to his medical practice.

## Damp squib

About 2,000 people protested at Parliament over a range of issues ranging from covid policies to NZ's participation in the UN.

The rally became a vehicle for Destiny Church leader Brian Tamaki to claim the creation of a coalition of fringe parties, Freedoms NZ, to contest the next election, although some of the parties immediately said they weren't part of it.

The frontpeople for the alt-right, online outlet Counterspin Media, Kelvyn Alp and Hannah Spierer, were arrested for allegedly circulating footage from the March 19 2019 Christchurch mosque attacks. They are currently waiting further arraignment and are banned from using social media.

It appears that while there is still plenty of life in the issues that motivated the protests that ended violently at Parliament earlier this year, the prospects of a unified "movement" emerging are fading. 🇳🇿

## RBNZ board

Newly appointed RBNZ director **Rodger Finlay** declined reappointment as chair of NZ Post, 53% owner of KiwiBank (for the time being) when his term expired in June. The dual appointments had been the subject of concern relating to potential conflicts.

Fellow RBNZ director **Byron Pepper** also resigned from insurer Ando's board to avoid any perception of conflict.

**DOMESTIC ECONOMY**

## Flood damage

Damage from flooding and slips in the Nelson region is devastating and will take years to repair, according to initial assessments.

NIWA meteorologists said the atmospheric river responsible for the floods around the country in the last fortnight was the strongest ever for an August month since records began in 1959. Only an event in July 1998 exceeded it in terms of atmospheric vapour content.

For the next three months, NIWA expects a La Niña pattern will deliver warmer than average temperatures for all regions, marine heatwave conditions are occurring offshore of many regions and river flows are expected to return to near normal across the country.

“A battle ground of pressure features will make seasonal rainfall predictions challenging. However, there will be long, dry spells with a couple of heavy rainfall events in the coming months.”

## Labour market

85% of employees in the EMA and **nib NZ Annual Workplace Wellbeing Survey** experienced tiredness, while 63% felt anxious and 69% had difficulty concentrating. One in four employees reported they intend to change jobs in the next 12 months.

## Economic indicators

**The ANZ-Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence Index rose 3 points in August** to 85.3, well off the survey's long-run average of about 120. A net 17% of households thought it was a bad time to buy a major household item, an 8 point rise on the July result.

**Stats NZ data showed a 2.3% fall in seasonally adjusted retail volumes in the three months ended June.** Economists had been forecasting a rise of 1.7% in volumes, as consumer spending was expected to bounce back after the initial hit of omicron, which had knocked retail spending by 1% in the first quarter of the year.

Reserve Bank governor **Adrian Orr** said weak retail sales data shows monetary policy is working but he doesn't expect the economy to go into recession. He was commenting at the annual central bankers' retreat at Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

**Xero's Small Business Index for July 2022** said sales fell 1.5% y/y in July, down from a 4.4% y/y growth in June. Xero estimated that taking into account inflation the real sales drop for small businesses is closer to -8.8% y/y.

There were 4.7% more jobs in small businesses than

there were a year ago, the third successive month that job growth has been above the long-term average of 3% y/y. Wages rose 6.2% y/y in July, down slightly from a historic high of 6.7% y/y in June.

**Seek** said job ads across its platform increased by 1% in July and are 9% higher y/y. Applications per job ad rose 5% from the month prior. The industries to record the biggest m/m increase in job ads were consulting & strategy (+17%), community services and development (+6%) and mining resources & energy (+4%). The hospitality and tourism industry recorded a second consecutive month of job ad decline in July, dropping 9%.

**BNZ forecast a bounce in growth for the second quarter of this year**, which would avoid recession in 2022. But it predicts a modest contraction in growth for the second and third quarters next year. BNZ is forecasting inflation to fall to an annual rate of 3.7% by mid-2023 from its current peak at 7.3%.

## Housing

Mortgage applications fell 25% in July compared with a year ago and new residential mortgage lending is down 40%, according to **Centrix** data. The average size of mortgage fell by 11%, (\$65,000) from July last year.

**CoreLogic** said the average house value to income ratio dropped to 8.5 in the three months ended June from 8.9 in the first quarter, but was still well above the pre-covid rate of 6.6, and the long-term average of 6.0.

The number of properties for sale showed the biggest year-on-year jump since Trade Me began collecting records, in July, while prices continued to drop according to the latest Trade Me Property Price Index. The national average asking price was \$910,450 in July, down 2% compared with June.

**KiwiBank's annual housing market survey** said the country will start accumulating a surplus of housing over the coming years as projected building activity outstrips rising demand.

**BNZ** and **Westpac** became the latest banks to announce increases to the cost of floating rate loans. BNZ will increase the rate on its floating rate loans from 6.39% to 6.79% on Sept 9.

Westpac will increase its variable home loan rates by 46 basis points, taking its floating rate to 6.85%. **Kiwibank**, **ANZ** and **ASB** all recently announced increases to floating home loan rates.

**Supply issues** may be abating slightly, but building product inflation is continuing with suppliers expecting price hikes of 9% in the coming six months. Housing material prices rose 32% in the past year. ■

## CORPORATE ROUND-UP

## Primary Sector

**Fonterra** trimmed 25c per kgMS from its forecast farmgate milk price to a range of \$8.50 to \$10, taking the midpoint to \$9.25. The advance payment rate of \$5.70 remains unchanged. **Fonterra** also created a start-up with a Dutch multinational **Royal DSM** working on commercialising non-cow dairy proteins.

**Delegat Group** and **Foley Wines** both reported weaker profits in the June year as economic headwinds and global shipping delays continued to bite. Delegat had an 11% decline in its operating profit to \$58.1m from \$65.2m in the prior year. Foley Wines reported an ebitda decline of 3% to \$7.8m.

**Landcorp** (trading as **Pāmu**) reported ebitdar of \$75m for the June year, a 23% increase on the previous year.

The kiwifruit NZ is sending to export markets this year is the worst since some fruit was likened to bland potatoes 20 years ago, and many customers are upset, **Zespri** chief executive Dan Mathieson said. Growers voted not to expand production of the **SunGold** variety outside of NZ.

**Comvita** recorded revenue of \$209m for the year to June with net profit after tax \$12.8m, a 35% lift.

**Scales** reported underlying net profit of \$25.6m, down from \$29m in the prior year, but was more positive about the year ahead.

**Ingham's** said its NZ's annual revenue lifted 1.2% to A\$398.4m (NZ\$441.2m) as price increases helped offset inflationary pressures.

## Energy and resources

**Meridian Energy** announced a net profit of \$664m for the June 2022 financial year, up 55% from last year's \$428m. That profit included a \$214m gain on the sale of its Australian business.

**Genesis** reported its best operating earnings since it was partially privatised with a result of \$440.3m, but said rising costs would have to flow through to power bills.

**Vector** reported a 17.3% drop in net profit for the June 2022 year which it attributed to a \$40.2m goodwill impairment of its LPG business. It reported adjusted earnings of \$510.0m, down \$3.5m.

**Channel Infrastructure** is on track to resume dividend payments after it ended refining oil at Marsden Point and moved to an import-only operation. Demand for jet fuel is at its highest level since 2019. Demand is now above 50% of pre-covid levels and continuing to recover.

## Banking, finance and insurance

**The Reserve Bank** is seeking feedback on the second

and final consultation on the review of its policy for branches of overseas banks.

**Heartland Bank** announced a \$200m equity raise to help retire debt used for its recent Australian acquisition, and fund growth. The dual-listed bank reported a record net profit of \$95.1m.

**NIB Holdings'** NZ arm increased premium revenue to NZ\$312.6m. Underlying operating profit decreased 5.1% to \$25.4m from last year's \$26.8m.

## Telecommunications, media and entertainment

**Spark** posted a net profit of \$410m, up 7.6% over the previous period's \$381m, and a final dividend of 12.5cps, taking the annual return to 25cps and signalled plans to lift that to 27cps in FY23. Following the \$900m capital injection from the sale of its passive tower assets, Spark is also promising a \$350m on-market share buyback. Another \$350m will be invested back into its digital services arm and the rest will be used to offset lease liabilities.

**Chorus** declared a final dividend of a 21cps, taking the annual return to 35cps for FY22, up from 25cps a year earlier. This is expected to climb to 42.5cps in the 2023 financial year, and 47.5c the following year – a 90% increase on the 2021 year.

**Sky TV** will pay a full-year dividend of 7.3 cps, its first in some years. Net profit for the 12 months to June 30 was up 41% to \$62.2m as revenue increased 4% to \$736.1m.

**SkyCity** posted a net loss of \$33.6m in the 12 months to June 30 from a profit of \$155.8m the year before. FY21 was buoyed by a large insurance payment on the convention centre fire, and settlement with **Fletcher Building** over delayed construction.

**NZME** reported a net profit of \$8.5m in the six months ended June, up from \$6.2m in the prior comparable period.

**Google** launched its News Showcase platform in NZ, striking deals to pay a lineup of local publishers for journalism content.

**Vista Group International** said the fragile position of cinema chain Cineworld didn't reflect the status of the wider cinema industry, but the software firm will continue to monitor the situation.

## Wholesale and retail

**Woolworths NZ** food sales rose 5.8% to \$2.7b in the 52 weeks ended June 26, but earnings before interest and tax shrank 12.5% to \$316m. The NZ unit accounted for about 11% of the Australian group's A\$2.69b Ebit, and ASX-listed Woolworths' net profit of A\$1.5b (NZ\$1.6b) was up 0.7% on the prior year.

## CORPORATE ROUND-UP

**Woolworths NZ** announced its first wholesale access deal following government announcements threatening to regulate if voluntary terms cannot be secured. The deal is with the Huckleberry chain of organic food stores, which will access organic product via Woolworths/ **Countdown**.

**Tupperware** is closing its NZ business after almost 50 years of selling its products here.

**Mighty Ape** accounted for 21.2% of its parent, Australia's **Kogan Group's**, gross profit for the financial year ended June 30 2022 with a net profit of A\$7.3m. Mighty Ape's revenue was A\$163.4m, 22.7% of Kogan's total turnover of A\$718.5m.

### Transport

**Port of Tauranga** reported net profit of \$111.3m in the 12 months ended June 30, up 8.7% on the previous year. The result was largely driven by the port itself, with a 16.2% decline in earnings from subsidiary companies and associated businesses such as its stakes in Northport, PrimePort and Coda.

**Qantas** announced a new direct flight between Auckland and New York. The Sydney-Auckland-New York route is set to take off in June 2023, initially three times a week. **Air NZ's** inaugural service to New York City starts next month. The Qantas move is seen as a spoiling tactic to prevent Australian travellers being tempted onto Air NZ from Australia - a traditional point of high competitive tension between the trans-Tasman rivals - before Qantas begins direct flights to NY from Sydney, likely mid-decade.

**Air NZ** reported an ebitda loss of \$725m, widening from \$444m in the prior year. While revenue lifted 8% to \$2.7b, operating earnings fell from a \$334m surplus last year to a \$4m loss. The company offered no guidance for the year ahead because of volatile trading conditions, fuel prices and potential further covid disruption.

**Move Logistics** will pay about \$15.2m for bulk liquid transporter Fluidex Transport, as a 'bolt-on' to its business. Move reported a loss of \$3.1m for the year to June 2022, despite a 5% increase in revenue to \$349.1m, from \$332.3m for the year before.

**Freightways** acquired Australian courier business **Allied Express** for A\$160m in cash and shares. The deal was announced as Freightways reported net profit of \$70.2m, up 46.4%, for the year to June 2022. This was reduced due to its **Big Chill Distribution** acquisition payment. Excluding that payment, earnings were \$130.2m, up 1%.

### Manufacturing and construction

Shares in **DGL** tanked in ASX trading after the

company announced a three-fold increase in profit for FY22 but offered weak guidance. The shares fell from A\$2.88 on Wednesday, when the result was announced, to A\$1.55 by close of trade on Thursday. Revenue rose to A\$369.8m (NZ\$413.3m), ebitda was up 133% at A\$65.6m, and underlying net profit almost tripled to A\$33.6m in the year to June. The company said it had instituted an ESG review, in part in response to CEO **Simon Henry's** "inappropriate" comments about MyFoodBag founder **Nadia Lim**, earlier this year.

**F&P Healthcare** is investing \$275m on a 105-hectare site in South Auckland to establish a second research and development and pilot manufacturing facility.

**Vulcan Steel's** full-year revenue rose 33% to \$972.7m, up from \$731.5m a year earlier. Net profit increased to \$124m in FY22, up from \$64.8m.

**Winton** recorded net profit of \$31.7m for the June year, down from \$46.1m a year earlier when the residential property developer's settlements peaked. Gross margin widened to 45.5% from 32.4%.

**Steel & Tube** reported a net profit of \$30.2m for the year ended June, up from \$15.4m the previous year. Its gross margin rose to 22.3% from 20.4% as normalised earnings rose to \$47.9m from \$19.7m.

### Courts, legal and regulation

**Fuji Xerox NZ** and its former auditor, **EY**, reached out of court settlement in a five year dispute over audit negligence allegations.

An Auckland man was charged for allegedly submitting 42 false covid-19 wage subsidy applications worth \$1.88m. The Serious Fraud Office said this was its first wage subsidy fraud case. There were 10 other ongoing investigations into alleged subsidy abuse.

The SFO sought leave to appeal the decision in its **NZ First Foundation** prosecution.

### Service industries and healthcare

**Metlifecare** reported a 74.2% drop in annual net profit, largely because the increase in the value of its properties was smaller than in the previous year. It reported a \$78.7m net profit for the year ended June, down from \$304.4m the previous year.

**Ebos Group's** revenue increased from A\$8.7b in 2020 to A\$10.7b in 2022. Underlying earnings were up 19% and underlying net profit by 21.3% to A\$228.2m.

**AFT Pharmaceuticals** plans to license IP developed in NZ to develop a topical treatment for strawberry birthmarks in children. The venture will involve

Massey Ventures, a commercial subsidiary of Massey University, and the Gillies McIndoe Research Institute.

## Tourism

**Tourism Holdings** hopes it has reported its last loss now that borders have reopened with a net loss of \$2.1m in the 12 months ended June, narrowing from a loss of \$14.5m in the prior financial year. Total revenue was down 4% at \$345.8m.

**Accor Hotels** wants to add 10 hotels to its brand, taking its NZ footprint to 55 owned or managed properties. Tauranga is the top of its priority list.

## Property

**Summerset Group** bought two properties in NZ and one in Australia for more than \$600m.

**Property for Industry** reported a 91% fall in first-half profit to \$23.8m after a reduction in valuation gains. Its portfolio is now valued at \$2.19b, up from \$2.17b at last June.

**NZ Rural Land Co** delivered a record net profit after tax of \$39.7m for FY22, up from \$15.1m on the prior year.

## Corporate actions

The **2022 Directors' Fees Report** said the median non-executive directors' annual fee rose 3.1% to reach \$51,529 in 2022, up from \$50,000 in 2021. This was less than the 7.1% increase in 2021, and less than the median wage increase of 4% in the year to June 2022.

## Capital markets

**Plexure** will shift its primary listing to the ASX and be renamed **Task Group Holdings**, completing a reverse takeover that began last August.

**NZX's** revenue was up 8.8% at \$46.2m and operating earnings increased 2.8% to \$17.4m, but net profit fell 3.2% to \$7.4m.

## People

**Fonterra** appointed **Chris Rowe** as acting chief financial officer from October, replacing **Marc Rivers** who is leaving at the end of the year.

**My Food Bag** founder **Cecilia Robinson** was re-elected to the company's board.

US-born billionaire **Julian Robertson**, who invested in NZ golf lodges at Kauri Cliffs and Cape Kidnappers, died aged 90.

Synlait Milk said nutritionals and ingredients director, **Martijn Jager**, will be leaving following changes to the structure announced last month. 

## A win for Winston

One of outgoing Speaker Trevor Mallard's last acts in the role was to apologise for issuing a trespass notice against Winston Peters during the occupation of Parliament grounds. Peters took a case over the move after Mallard dropped the notices. The Speaker told the High Court in Wellington the warning was "unreasonable and irrational" and "an unjustifiable limitation" on Peters' right to freedom of movement. The court's decision is pending.

Mallard resigned as Speaker to become ambassador to Ireland and Adrian Rurawhe was elected as his replacement. Greg O'Connor was appointed Deputy Speaker. In Parliamentary business, much time was taken by the Estimates Debate and to pass the Oranga Tamariki Amendment Bill, which remains deeply unpopular in the sector and opposed by the Greens. It is one of the few bills where Labour has used its outright majority in Parliament to pass legislation against the opposition of all parties.

Members' Days this year will also be watched with some interest as at some point Labour will have to take a stance on two anti-mining bills.

- *Italics denote update from previous edition of Hugovision*
- *A full compendium of the legislation before the House is available on The Hugo Group website, [www.thehugogroup.com](http://www.thehugogroup.com)*

## Bills introduced

**Coroners Amendment Bill** - Introduced Aug 24. Reduces the time being taken with coronial processes.

**Crown Minerals (Prohibition of Mining) Amendment Bill** - Introduced Aug 11. Member's bill from the Greens' Eugenie Sage. Would ban permits for prospecting, exploration and mining and access arrangements over conservation lands and waters. It would also ban all new coal mines or extension of existing mines anywhere in NZ.

**Prohibition on Seabed Mining Legislation Amendment Bill** - Member's bill from Te Paati Māori's Debbie Ngarewa-Packer, introduced Aug 4. Would ban seabed mining consents and retrospectively withdraw existing seabed mining consents and exploration rights.

**Housing Infrastructure (GST-sharing) Bill** - Member's bill from Act's Brooke van Velden, introduced Aug 4. Proposes 50% of GST revenue from new builds go to the consent-issuing council to help cover the infrastructure costs associated with new housing developments.

**Self-contained Motor Vehicles Legislation Bill** - Introduced Aug 25. Sets up a new regulatory regime for self-contained vehicles and freedom camping.

## Bills in progress

**Accessibility for New Zealanders Bill** - Introduced July 28. First reading Aug 2 opposed by Greens and Te Paati Māori. Referred to the Social Services and Community Committee with a longer than usual report back date of May 16 2023.

**Animal Welfare Amendment Bill** - Introduced Sept 21.

## LEGISLATION

Implements a ban on the export of livestock by sea by April 2023. *Committee stage on Aug 23 interrupted with the government inserting technical amendments it was unable to make in select committee.*

### **Construction Contracts (Retention Money)**

**Amendment Bill** - Introduced June 1 2021. *Second reading Aug 23 with all parties in support.*

### **Local Government Electoral Legislation Bill**

Introduced July 26. Omnibus bill addressing various local government election issues. *First reading Aug 2 opposed by National and Act, referred to the Governance and Administration Committee.*

**Plain Language Bill** - Member's bill in the name of Rachel Boyack introduced Sept 23 2021. *Reported back Aug 12 with National's minority report saying the bill was a waste of time and creates new bureaucracy.*

**Screen Industry Workers Bill** - Introduced on Feb 18 2020. Rolls back some of the provisions of the so-called 'Hobbit' laws. *Reported back Aug 6 2020 with changes. Second reading Aug 23 2022 with National and Act opposed.*

## Bills passed/defeated

**Data and Statistics Bill** - Introduced Oct 11 2021. Repeals the Statistics Act 1975 following a review of statistics legislation. The select committee process was dominated by submissions from a wide range of notable people and organisations regarding concerns about privacy issues and Statistics NZ's powers to collect and store information from a range of sources without those who originally providing the data knowing its end use. The committee made a number of changes acknowledging these concerns but the thrust of the bill remains intact. *Second reading completed May 17 with all parties in favour. Committee stage completed July 27. Committee stage completed July 27. Third reading Aug 2 with Act and Te Paati Māori opposed.*

**Electricity Industry Amendment Bill** - Introduced Sept 9 2021. Implements parts of the Electricity Price Review's recommendations. This includes creating of a small electricity consumer advocacy agency a levy to fund it. It also moves parts of regulation from statute to the Electricity Code to make it easier to change and allow lines companies to widen the scope of their business. It also gives the energy minister power to alter the code if unhappy with progress on implementation. *Reported back on March 22 with minor changes including limiting the period of time the minister could used powers to alter the code. Second reading on May 17 with just National opposed. Committee stage completed Aug 23 and third reading Aug 25 with National and Act opposed.*

**Firearms Prohibition Orders Legislation Bill** - Introduced Dec 14 2021. Introduces firearms prohibition orders to try and address some limitations with the Arms Act that might enable a high-risk person to legally

access or use firearms or restricted weapons, associate with people in physical possession of firearms. *First reading Feb 9, supported by all parties and referred to the Justice Committee. Reported back July 29 with minor amendment. National objected that the bill did not go far enough. Second reading Aug 4, committee stage and third reading on Aug 9 with all parties in favour.*

### **New Zealand Bill of Rights (Declarations of Inconsistency) Amendment Bill**

Introduced March 18 2020. Provides a mechanism for the Executive and the House to consider, and, if they think fit, respond to, a declaration of inconsistency made under the NZ Bill of Rights Act or the Human Rights Act. *First reading on May 27 and referred to the Privileges Committee, opposed by National. Report back due by March 4 2021. Reported back on Sept 30 with minor changes and National now accepting it is a worthwhile piece of legislation. Second reading May 11 with all parties in favour. Committee stage and third reading passed with no opposition.*

**Oranga Tamariki Amendment Bill** - Introduced Nov 25. *Second reading on July 27 with all parties strongly opposed except Labour. The focus for opposition was changes to oversight provisions. Committee stage completed Aug 11. Third reading completed Aug 23 with no changes in parties' positions.*

### **Overseas Investment (Forestry) Amendment**

**Bill** - Introduced May 31. Reverses the 2018 relatively permissive special forestry test in the Overseas Investment Act and applies the Act's existing, but more stringent, benefit to NZ test to overseas investments that will result in converting land-use to production forestry. *First reading on June 7 with all parties in favour and sent to the finance and expenditure committee with an Aug 1 report back date. Reported back Aug 1 with only minor and technical changes though MPs noted the concerns of submitters that the new definition and test would be overly complex and problematic saying this could be sorted out with proper administration. Second reading Aug 9, committee stage Aug 10 and third reading Aug 11 with all parties in favour.*

### **Repeal of Good Friday and Easter Sunday as Restricted Trading Days (Shop Trading and Sale of Alcohol) Amendment Bill**

Introduced May 19. Member's bill in the name of Chris Baillie. Seeks to remove the restriction on trading and selling alcohol on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. *First reading Aug 3 and voted down by 81 to 37 votes.*

**Three Strikes Legislation Repeal Bill** - Introduced Nov 11. Repeals elements of the Sentencing and Parole Reform Act 2010 that create what is commonly known as the three strikes law. *First reading on Nov 17 opposed by National and Act and sent to the Justice Committee. Reported back May 16 with minor changes. Second reading completed June 7 with National and Act opposed. Committee stage completed and third reading concluded with no change in parties' position.*

