

The Treasury

Infrastructure Reference Group: Establishment and Work to Date Information Release

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Cabinet Economic Development Committee

Minute of Decision

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Infrastructure Reference Group: Establishment and Work to Date

Portfolios **Economic Development / Infrastructure**

On 29 April 2020, the Cabinet Economic Development Committee (DEV):

- 1 **agreed** that the Infrastructure Reference Group (IRG), established in response to the current COVID-19 situation, will initially prepare a list of infrastructure projects that are ready (or near ready) for construction, meet certain national/regional benefit criteria, are aligned with government policy, and could be deployed as part of a stimulatory package;
- 2 **noted** that the IRG is not a decision-making body, nor will it attempt to rank projects;
- 3 **noted** that the three guiding principles being used by the IRG are the same as the ones being used in the repurposing of the Provincial Growth Fund;
- 4 **agreed** to the Terms of Reference for the IRG and Crown Infrastructure Partners assisting the IRG, as set out in Annex 1 to the submission under DEV-20-SUB-0056;
- 5 **agreed** to the scope of work proposed for the IRG, as outlined in the paper under DEV-20-SUB-0056;
- 6 **noted** that the report being prepared by the IRG of possible infrastructure and construction projects and programmes that are ready, or close to ready, to get underway is expected to be presented to Ministers in May 2020;
- 7 **invited** the Minister for Economic Development and the Minister of Infrastructure to report back to DEV on the IRG report in May 2020;
- 8 **noted** that Budget Ministers' views will be sought prior to the report referred to in paragraph 7 above, to help ensure alignment with the broader Budget process and priorities;
- 9 **noted** that the IRG will provide a full list of projects that are not included in the final report to the relevant agency for consideration by relevant portfolio Ministers;
- 10 **noted** that some projects are likely to be relevant to more than one portfolio Minister, and that Ministers with cross-government portfolio interests (e.g. Primary Industries, Climate Change, and Urban Development) will therefore be provided with extensive lists of projects relevant to their cross-cutting portfolios;

- 11 **noted** that the Treasury and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment are preparing advice for the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Economic Development on a broader assessment framework for COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund and post-COVID economic strategy;
- 12 **noted** that infrastructure investments have the potential to support several of the government's other goals as outlined in the Economic Plan and across a broad range of portfolios, including Housing, Primary Industries, Conservation, Energy and Resources, and Climate Change;
- 13 **noted** that the Ministry for the Environment is preparing advice for the Minister for Climate Change and Cabinet about opportunities for alignment between the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund and the transition to a clean, green and carbon neutral New Zealand, as outlined in the Economic Plan;
- 14 **noted** that the IRG has provided feedback and recommendations for consideration on the Ministry for the Environment's proposed emergency Resource Management Act/Public Works Act legislative framework, and will provide recommendations on the fast-tracking of government procurement rules and government business case processes in response to the COVID-19 situation;
- 15 **noted** that further advice from the IRG, including recommendations on how a co-ordinated and centralised approach can be adopted to enable projects to be accelerated, may form the basis of a further paper to Cabinet;
- 16 **noted** that any operational funding required by IRG and Crown Infrastructure Partners to seek project information from the industry and prepare the report for Ministers can be funded from within existing appropriations, although a portion of the appropriation will need to be repurposed.

Janine Harvey
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon Grant Robertson (Chair)
Hon Kelvin Davis
Hon Phil Twyford
Hon Dr Megan Woods
Hon Chris Hipkins
Hon Carmel Sepuloni
Hon David Parker
Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Hon Stuart Nash
Hon Iain Lees-Galloway
Hon Jenny Salesa
Hon Damien O'Connor
Hon Kris Faafoi
Hon Shane Jones
Hon Poto Williams
Hon James Shaw
Hon Eugenie Sage

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Officials Committee for DEV