



# BRIEFING

## Freedom camping – Summary of submissions

<b>Date:</b>	24 August 2021	<b>Priority:</b>	Low
<b>Security classification:</b>	In Confidence	<b>Tracking number:</b>	2122-0652

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Stuart Nash <b>Minister of Tourism</b>	<p><b>Note</b> the contents of this briefing.</p> <p><b>Note</b> the attached summary of submissions on your four proposals to support sustainable freedom camping in Aotearoa New Zealand.</p>	30 August 2021

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)				
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact	
Richard Davies	Policy Director, Tourism Branch	Privacy of natural persons	-	-
Fraser Pearce	Senior Policy Advisor, Tourism Policy	04 897 5174	Privacy of natural persons	✓
Chloe Miller	Graduate Policy Advisor, Tourism Policy	04 901 4166	-	-

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

Minister's office to complete:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved             | <input type="checkbox"/> Declined            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noted                | <input type="checkbox"/> Needs change        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seen                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's Notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn           |

Comments



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### Purpose

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To provide you with the final summary of submissions received on your discussion document, 'Supporting sustainable freedom camping in Aotearoa New Zealand'.

### Recommended action

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The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment recommends that you:

- a **Note** that on 9 April 2021 you released a discussion document seeking public feedback on your four proposals to support sustainable freedom camping in Aotearoa New Zealand, and that public consultation closed on 16 May 2021.
- b **Note** that officials provided you with an interim findings paper on 30 April 2021.
- c **Note** that this briefing includes the draft summary of all submissions received (attached as Annex one), and a summary of these findings in this briefing

*Noted*

- d **Agree** that your Cabinet colleagues be provided a copy of the summary of submissions as a part of ministerial consultation, but that a shorter one-page annex be included in the final Cabinet paper that is lodged.

*Agree / Disagree*

Richard Davies  
**Policy Director, Tourism Branch**  
Labour, Science and Enterprise, MBIE

24 / 08 / 2021

Hon Stuart Nash  
**Minister of Tourism**

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## Background

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1. On 29 March 2021, Cabinet agreed to the public release of a discussion document for your four proposals to improve the sustainability of freedom camping in New Zealand. Public consultation on your four proposals was open between 9 April and 16 May 2021, and included targeted consultation with local government, industry and camping organisations.
2. The four proposals you sought feedback on are:
  - a. Proposal 1: Make it mandatory for freedom camping in a vehicle to be done in a certified self-contained vehicle.
  - b. Proposal 2: Make it mandatory for freedom campers to stay in a vehicle that is certified self-contained, unless they are staying at a site with toilet facilities.
  - c. Proposal 3: Improve the regulatory tools for government land managers.
  - d. Proposal 4: Strengthen the requirements for self-contained vehicles.
3. You also sought feedback on how the rules should apply to people experiencing homelessness, and what the transitional arrangements should be.

## Key findings from the submissions

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### Certain types of vehicle-based freedom camping is a problem

4. Overall there is general agreement from the public that certain types of vehicle-based freedom camping is a problem, with around 60 per cent of respondents agreeing with the problem definition you set out in the discussion document. The top five issues identified by stakeholders include:
  - a. Staying in uncertified vehicles
  - b. Litter
  - c. Waste
  - d. Overcrowding
  - e. Staying too long.
5. Many submitters also note that the issues caused at freedom camping sites are not always the fault of freedom campers; and identified locals or day trippers as the cause.

### There is support for your proposed direction of change for freedom camping

6. There is support for the introduction of a new rule for freedom camping in vehicles, from both the public and most key stakeholders. This is because:
  - a. around 60 per cent of individuals support for Proposal 1, and 55 per cent of individuals expressed support for Proposal 2
  - b. many individuals who support Proposal 1 also support Proposal 2.
7. While local authorities and industry support Proposal 1 and/or Proposal 2, camping organisations (organisations which represent people who camp) do not support either proposal, and are more opposed to Proposal 1.

### **There is support for a new regulatory regime**

8. Just under 50 per cent of individual submissions support Proposal 3. The likely reason for this lower level of support is that some parts of Proposal 3, such as new grounds for confiscation of vehicles, are not supported by respondents.
9. However, there is clear support for the introduction of a regulatory regime across all key stakeholder groups – including local authorities, industry, camping organisations and community groups.

### **There is less support to strengthen the requirements for certified self-contained vehicles**

10. Only 35 per cent of individual submitters support Proposal 4. Feedback received from key stakeholders, submissions and public meetings indicates that this lower level of support is due to submitters' concern that Proposal 4 would require all self-contained vehicles to have permanent black water tanks. We consider that your modified proposal to allow fixed cassette toilets with a removable black water tank, but prohibit portable toilets, is therefore likely to see greater levels of support.
11. Just over 60 per cent of submissions from key stakeholders show greater support for stronger requirements for self-contained vehicles. Support from local authorities and community organisations was the strongest, while camping organisations consider the current requirements for self-contained vehicles either about right, or too restrictive.

### **Infrastructure and funding are essential**

12. Many key stakeholders, including most local authorities, note that there needs to be additional funding and/or infrastructure to support the sustainable management of freedom camping. In particular, the Responsible Camping Fund, which has not been renewed for this summer, was identified by some councils as the key intervention by government to support sustainable freedom camping.

### **Next steps**

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13. MBIE recommends you share the final summary of submissions with your Cabinet Economic Development colleagues as a part of the ministerial consultation process, rather than lodging it. This is because the summary of submissions is over 50 pages long. MBIE can instead include a short, 1-page annex to include for lodgement.
14. Once Cabinet has considered the final policy proposals in October 2021, MBIE intends to publish the full summary of submissions alongside the proactive release of the Cabinet paper, Cabinet minute and Regulatory Impact Statement on the final policy decisions. Officials intend to include the final policy decisions made by Cabinet in the version of the summary of submissions that is published.

### **Annexes**

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Annex one: Summary of submissions on four proposals to support sustainable freedom camping in Aotearoa New Zealand

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