



Supporting Sustainable Freedom Camping in Aotearoa New Zealand – Submission Form

How to provide us with feedback

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) is collecting written submissions to gather a range of views on the Government's proposals to improve the management of freedom camping in New Zealand.

This submission form brings together all the questions asked throughout the discussion document *Supporting Sustainable Freedom Camping in Aotearoa New Zealand – Proposed changes to support effective management of freedom camping in New Zealand*.

Please feel free to answer as many or as few of these questions as you wish.

For more information and discussion about these topics please refer to the discussion document available at <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/have-your-say/supporting-sustainable-freedom-camping-in-aotearoa-new-zealand>.

Your submission can be returned by email to responsiblecamping@mbie.govt.nz. Submissions are due by midnight on Sunday 16 May.

Use and release of information

After the consultation period has closed, MBIE will publish a summary of submissions on our website at www.mbie.govt.nz.

We will not be publishing any individual submissions or names of individuals who made a submission. We may wish to include part of your submission in the summary of submissions; in that case, MBIE will first ensure we have your permission to do so.

If you are submitting on behalf of a business or organisation, MBIE will consider that you have consented to the content being included in the summary of submissions unless you clearly state otherwise. If your submission contains any information that is confidential or that you do not want published, you can say this in your submission.

The Privacy Act 2020 applies to your submission. Any personal information you supply to MBIE through your submission will only be used by MBIE for the purpose of producing a summary of submissions. The summary will present themes and no personally identifiable information will be included. The summary will be reported to the Minister of Tourism and be published online.

Submissions may be subject to requests for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). If your submission, or part of it, comes within the scope of an OIA request, MBIE would normally release it (excluding any personal information) to the person who asks for it. If you consider there are reasons for MBIE to withhold any of the information you are providing, please indicate these reasons in your submission.

Your details

What is the name of the person making this submission?

Michael Cowie

If you are submitting on behalf of an organisation, what is the name of that organisation?

Baddeleys and Campbells Beach Ratepayers Association

Is it okay for your organisation's details to be published if we publish which organisations made a submission, or include part of your submission in the summary of submissions?

- Yes, you can publish my organisation's details with information from my submission.
 No, keep my organisation's details confidential.

Can we use information in your submission as a case study in the summary of submissions?

- Yes, you can include information from my submission as a case study in the summary of submissions.
 No, keep my information confidential.

Please provide us with your email address in case we need to contact you about your submission.

Email

Privacy of natural persons

What sector(s) does your submission most closely relate to, if applicable?

For example, the sector in which you may work or operate, or which you represent.

- Accommodation provider
 Rental vehicle business
 Iwi, hapū or Māori organisation
 Individual or camper
 Other Ratepayers Association (*please specify*)
 N/A
- Other tourism business
 Non-tourism business
 Local Government
 Club or club representative (e.g. camping club)

Context to Supporting Sustainable Freedom Camping in Aotearoa New Zealand

How much do you agree that certain types of vehicle-based freedom camping is a problem?

1.1

Please write a (Y) next to the option which applies to you

Strongly agree (Y)	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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What are your views on freedom camping in vehicles?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

1.2

- Is vehicle-based freedom camping an issue in your area?
- Have you observed any specific issues?
- Are there specific behaviours which impact on your use of local amenities/infrastructure?
- What benefits does vehicle-based freedom camping provide for your region?

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

- Rodney Council enforced the Reserves Act 1977 by allowing NO CAMPING on the Reserves at Campbells and Baddeleys Beaches
- Auckland Council (2010) ignored the Reserves Act 1977 and erected signage allowing freedom camping for self-contained campers (2 nights) on the Reserves at both beaches
- This caused huge problems for local people and day trippers wanting to use the beaches for recreational purposes
- Campervans, caravans and tents were erected along the beach front at both beaches making access extremely difficult. Up to 6 vans would form close networks blocking all access to the beach
- Public toilets were used for washing dishes, clothes and people
- In 2020, the Ratepayers Association employed a Queens Counsel who informed Auckland Council of the legal situation regarding freedom camping on Council controlled recreational reserves
- The Council then removed signage allowing freedom camping and erected a sign at each beach prohibiting freedom camping
- This has solved the problem to some extent but motorhomes, caravans and tents still attempt to camp ignoring the new signage
- There is a 24/7 liquor ban at each beach. This is often ignored by freedom campers
- Yes – freedom camping has been a major problem at both beaches, although it has lessened with the prohibiting signage. The Association believes 2 more signs are required at each beach (there were 3 signs allowing freedom camping at each beach – now only 1 at each prohibiting camping)
- Freedom campers leave the beach front littered with rubbish, light fires, defecate and abuse toilet facilities
- Freedom camping in our region has been to the detriment of local camping facilities
- In a 30km radius from Baddeleys and Campbells Beaches there are approximately 15 sites legally available for camping
 - 6 in carparks (Goat Island, Mathesons Bay, Snells Beach, Algies Bay, Warkworth and Wellsford RSA)
 - 5 in Council owned camping grounds (Pakiri, Whangateau, Tawharanui, Martins Bay and Sullivans Bay)
 - 4 in privately owned camping grounds (Pakiri, Matakana, Sandspit and Algies Bay)
- Perhaps freedom campers should be directed to Council and private camping grounds providing an economic benefit to these businesses

- This would alleviate the problem of freedom campers taking over public carparks and recreational reserves.

How much do you support the proposal to make it mandatory for vehicle-based freedom campers to use a certified self-contained vehicle?

2.1

Please write a (Y) next to the option which applies to you

Strongly agree (Y)	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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Do you support this proposal?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

2.2

- Do you consider this option will improve camper behaviour?
- Will this option support or improve tourism outcomes in your region?
- Will this option decrease pressure on the environment and local government infrastructure?
- Are there impacts of this proposal that you are concerned about?

- This certification should be carried out at Vehicle Testing Stations to overcome the current situation of purchasing self-containment stickers off the internet
- The practice of Campervan Hire Companies offering customers refunds if they don't use the van toilet needs to be changed. This would ease the abuse of public toilets
- Many cars, station wagons and vans have self-containment stickers but have no toilet or grey water containment and end up polluting the environment.

How might this proposal impact you?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

2.3

- Will this proposal increase or decrease the likelihood of you camping?
- Will this proposal have a direct financial impact on you or your business?
 - If yes, please indicate if this is a personal or business expense, and quantify how much you estimate it would impact you.
- Will this option increase or decrease the attractiveness of visiting other regions in New Zealand?

- Freedom camping has been causing problems in New Zealand for some time with numerous Councils legislating bylaws to control the numbers and locations

What things should Government consider to implement this option?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

2.4

- What exceptions should Government allow under this proposal?
- Do you have any ideas about how this proposal could be implemented?
- Should this option be considered alongside other options proposed in this discussion document?

- The Government needs to consult Councils, who need to consult local Boards who need to consult Ratepayers Associations to come up with legislation that is acceptable to all
- Or we could follow the Australian example by banning all freedom camping to increase the use of Motor Camps
- There should be **NO EXCEPTIONS** with Councils having inspectors checking Freedom Camping sites daily (am/pm) to check vehicles comply with the required legislation

How much do you support the proposal to make it mandatory for freedom campers to stay in vehicles which are certified self-contained, unless they are staying at a site with toilet facilities (excluding public conservation lands and regional parks)?

3.1

Please write a (Y) next to the option which applies to you

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree (Y)
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Do you support this proposal?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

- Do you consider this option will improve camper behaviour?
- 3.2 • Will this option support or improve tourism outcomes in your region?
- Will this option decrease pressure on the environment and local government infrastructure?
- Are there impacts of this proposal that you are concerned about?

- The aim of the legislation must be for all vehicles to be certified self-contained
- The aim of the legislation must be to lessen the abuse of local public toilet facilities and stop pollution of the environment

How might this proposal impact you?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

- Will this proposal increase or decrease the likelihood of you camping?
- 3.3 • Will this proposal have a direct financial impact on you or your business?
 - If yes, please indicate if this is a personal or business expense, and quantify how much you estimate it would impact you.
- Will this option increase or decrease the attractiveness of visiting other regions in New Zealand?

What things should Government consider to implement this option?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

- What do you think is required to achieve this option?
- 3.4 • What exceptions should Government allow under this proposal?
- How far from toilet facilities should a person be able to freedom camp if not in a vehicle with a toilet? e.g., 100 metres, 200 metres?
- Should this option be considered alongside other options proposed in this discussion document?

- **ALL** campervans and caravans should be certified with black and grey water holding tanks

How much do you support the proposals to improve the regulatory tools for government land managers?

4.1

Please write a (Y) next to the option which applies to you

Strongly agree (Y)	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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Do you support this proposal?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

- 4.2
- Are there any specific parts of this proposal you support or propose?
 - Do you consider this option will improve camper behaviour?
 - Will this option support or improve tourism outcomes in your region?
 - Will this option decrease pressure on the environment and local government infrastructure?
 - Are there impacts of this proposal that you are concerned about?

- **ALL** campervans and caravans should be certified with black and grey water holding tanks
- However, totally disagree with allowing any exceptions

How might this proposal impact you?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

- 4.3
- Will this proposal increase or decrease the likelihood of you camping?
 - Will this proposal have a direct financial impact on you or your business?
 - If yes, please indicate if this is a personal or business expense, and quantify how much you estimate it would impact you.
 - Will this option increase or decrease the attractiveness of visiting other regions in New Zealand?

What things should Government consider to implement this option?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

- 4.4
- What would you like to see in practice?
 - Should this option be considered alongside other options proposed in this discussion document?
- Freedom camping has been causing problems in New Zealand for some time with numerous Councils legislating bylaws to control the numbers and locations
 - The Government needs to consult Councils, who need to consult local Boards who need to consult Ratepayers Associations to come up with legislation that is acceptable to all

- Or we could follow the Australian example by Banning all freedom camping to increase the use of Motor Camps
- There should be **NO EXCEPTIONS** with Councils having inspectors checking Freedom Camping sites daily (am/pm) to check vehicles comply with the required legislation

What would be an appropriate penalty?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

- Should non-compliant vehicles be confiscated? If so, under what conditions?
- 4.5 • If vehicles are confiscated, what conditions should be placed on returning the vehicle?
- Should fines be similar to those for not holding a valid Warrant of Fitness for a motor vehicle?
- What levels should fines be set at?
- Who should collect a fine?

- Imposing fines for camping in an illegal area
- Confiscation of non-compliant vehicles – returned with bond repaid after made compliant
- Licensing of rental companies who must be compliant or license is cancelled
- Local Government inspectors to implement and collect fines
- Airport Authorities alerted to unpaid fines which must be paid before leaving New Zealand

Do you think that the requirements for self-containment should be strengthened?

5.1 Please write a (Y) next to the option which applies to you

Yes (Y)

Neutral

No

Is the current standard fit for purpose?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

5.2

- Should there be a requirement that self-contained vehicles have fixed toilets?
- Should there be specific reference to the types of vehicles that can be self-contained?

- No the current standard is NOT fit for purpose
- All toilets should be fixed with black and grey water holding tanks

Who should certify to the Standard?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

5.3

- Should any Plumber registered under the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 1976 be able to certify to the Standard, or should certifiers be separately recognised and licensed?
- Once a vehicle has passed its initial certification, should other entities be able to re-certify it?

- Certification should be carried out by Vehicle Testing Stations to ensure consistency

What transition arrangements should be in place?

When answering this question you may like to think about:

- 6.1
- How long should Government give people to upgrade or dispose of their vehicles?
 - Should currently certified self-contained vehicles be exempt from any new rules?
 - Are there any other transition arrangements we should consider?

- There should be a transition period of one year
- All vehicles (certified or not) need to be certified according to the new legislation

How could Government ensure vulnerable groups are not further disadvantaged?

- 6.2
- Could Government make homelessness exempt from any new regulatory system? What might this look like?

- There should be **NO EXCEPTIONS**

7.1 **Is there anything else on the proposed changes or discussion document you would like to mention?**

CONCLUSION

In most New Zealand locations there are numerous Council owned and privately owned Motor Camps. Councils also have land available for the creation of freedom camping sites that are not recreational reserves. By placing all freedom campers in such locations would mean:

- Economic benefit to site providers
- Free up public carparks
- Stop the taking over of prime sites (beach fronts, lake fronts, tourist attractions)
- Prevent the pollution of prime sites
- Give the public access to enjoy such prime sites
- Reduce the abuse of public facilities (Council provided toilets)