

14 May 2021

Submission from David Firkin – Secretary/Treasurer - NZMCA Lake Taupo

I personally don't believe a great deal needs to be changed as long as the current rules are ENFORCED. Many Councils fall behind the ball park in this regard.

That the NZMCA Self Containment rules and regulations be considered as the starting point.

That all Self Containment Officers nationally be trained using approved materials thus ensuring that any nationwide variances in the standard are avoided. This must be monitored to ensure consistency. For example WOF & COF stations nationwide are notorious for variations in standards.

The available infrastructure needs to be established to support freedom campers. For example it has taken 6 years for the Taupo District Council to agree to the provision of a much needed additional Dump Station despite significant financial assistance from the NZMCA. As at this date it has still not been constructed! Toilets here are unavailable after 10pm presumably for security reasons. There are not enough of them, strategically placed. What is wrong with security cameras at the main toilet entrances monitored by community patrol in the local Police Station. This is currently being done to monitor street cameras in Taupo town 24/7. Other regions of NZ suffer from similar problems.

I have no aversion whatsoever to the use of PORTA POTTIES IN RV'S as long as they are used. To insist that all toilet facilities in RV's be permanently plumbed is ridiculous and would result not only in many vans being put off the road, but considerable cost to owners who have vans in which it could be done.

Rental companies need to be liable for collecting fines from their customers who are caught breaking the rules. Rental companies should be given the responsibility for ensuring all their customers know the rules before they depart the depot and that the penalties will be significant should they be broken.

Make the fines severe as a disincentive to breaking those rules - \$500 minimum, up to \$1000.00 per offence.

EFFECTIVE EDUCATION of both locals and overseas visitors is paramount to the success of any new initiatives.

The establishment of a Register sounds good in theory, but is it really necessary? It would appear that the cost of both establishing and the ongoing maintenance of same will be passed on to RV owners. Just a further financial burden, small that it may be seen by the government department involved.

Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to have my say on this important matter. In addition to this personal submission I support all points made by Hans van Summeren as below.

Kind regards David Firkin NZMCA 27749 Contact No. Privacy of natural persons

Submission from Hans van Summeren – Chairman – NZMCA Lake Taupo

Number 1: It was mentioned during the meeting that an administration fee of \$125 would be charged every 4 years. The reason given for that is the setting up and administration of a database. We believe that that is way too expensive. If for example we are dealing with 80.000 vehicles that will average out at 20.000 certifications per year representing an income of \$2.5 Million per annum. Once the infrastructure (server hardware, software etc.) has been paid for, you will need to pay staff to enter the data, plus ongoing maintenance. If it can be done online, hardly any staff is required to do the job. The overall cost will therefore be small fraction of the \$2.5 Million.

NZMCA have around 50K vehicles in their self-containment database and around 58K paying members.

If the National Vehicle database was to be used, only a few self-containment data entry fields would need to be added and so linked to each vehicle entry when it is self-contained.

The database in whatever shape or form should be accessible by NZMCA Park Custodians, because they are the ones that check vehicles when they are parked in the NZMCA Parks.

Number 2: It is mentioned often that Councils should not have to pay for freedom campers despite the significant moneys these people spend in their towns.

Why not introduce an airport tax of \$20 per overseas visitor. If for example there are 3.5 Million visitors each year that will bring in $3.5 \text{ M} \times \$20 = \70 Million , which can be used to provide toilet facilities, waste management and enforcement staff. This assumes that these moneys go to an applicable fund & not the consolidated fund. When most of the facilities and infrastructure is in place little additional money will be needed for managing freedom camping.

Number 3: Why is it that campers in tents and homeless people are exempt from the rules?

They can cause the same problems and even worse because they often have no toilet facilities or waste containers at all. We believe that there should be an addition to the “responsible freedom camping” rules and regulations to address these people and that they should only be able to freedom camp close to toilet facilities.

Number 4: Dedicated Council and Rental Companies should have the power to fine the people not adhering to the rules and should have the means to collect fines.

We believe that confiscating vehicles is way too harsh, but fines should be at very least \$500. The companies that rent out vehicles must be given the responsibility to educate their customers whether they be from overseas or local tourists.

Number 5: The current NZMCA Self Containment Officers should be registered and to be able to continue certifying vehicles.

Number 6: We think that the present rules for self-containment are sufficient and any currently certified vehicle should be able to be re certified using the present standard for the remainder of its life..

NZMCA self-containment officers in general provide their service for free. When you introduce another body of private officers there will undoubtedly be charges incurred..

Number 7: We know that a lot of day trippers and locals leave behind human waste and rubbish. How often do we see litter along the roadsides, thrown out of motor cars. If caught these people need to be fined similarly.

On the whole Kiwi freedom campers are very conscious of caring for their environment. We need to be mindful that it is a basic right that “Everyone lawfully in New Zealand has the right to freedom of movement in this country”.

It has been reported that some Councils in NZ force people to stay at camping grounds because the latter complain they need the business.

Number 8: Many public toilets around the country are closed during the evening/night, which just further adds to the problem.

Many thanks and kind regards,

Hans van Summeren

Chairman NZMCA Taupo Area, on behalf of the NZMCA Taupo Area Committee