

Submission - Incorporated Societies Bill

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To: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)
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About SocialLink

SocialLink exists to provide value adding support for non profit social sector groups, organisations and entities through information gathering, analysis and actions that facilitate networking, collaboration, learning, research and advocacy. Our vision is to have a valued and well connected social sector in Tauranga Moana.

General Position

SocialLink in general supports the Exposure Draft for the Incorporated Societies Bill to replace the Incorporated Societies Act 1908, which is now 108 years old. We support the proposed four year transition period as well as the proposed measures intended to strengthen the overall governance structures of incorporated societies.

SocialLink also supports the requirement for incorporated societies to have a model constitution, elected officers, key contact person and increased accountabilities. Our support for these changes principally arises from SocialLink's support for enhancing the capability, performance, resilience and effectiveness of incorporated societies and the invaluable work they collectively undertake throughout New Zealand, more often in vulnerable communities.

SocialLink believes it is important for incorporated societies to operate within sound governance structures with robust processes and quality governance leadership.

Specific Concerns

- a) The lack of capacity for time and resource scarce community organisations to manage compliance under the proposed new requirements.
- b) The threat to attracting and retaining quality unpaid Officers to organisations, particularly with the increased Officer duties, accountabilities and compliance obligations under the new Bill.
- c) The low level of wider consultation around the proposed changes and inadequacy of the MBIE roadshows which were restricted to main centres only.

Recommendation

MBIE develop a significant 'transition resource kit' for incorporated societies which is supported by regionalised training workshops, to effectively step incorporated societies through the transition process to compliance. We believe it is important the transition resource kit should be supported by training to make it accessible and it is delivered throughout Aotearoa New Zealand and specifically the regions, who often miss out.