

Report 00.323

9 May 2000

File: E/6/18/3

[Report 2000.Env 00.323:JB.lw]

Report to the Environment Committee
from Dr Jane Bradbury, Divisional Manager, Environment

Divisional Manager's Report

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee about the activities and progress of the Environment Division and about any matters which have arisen since the Committee's last meeting.

2. Manager's Reports

The Department Managers' reports and the Divisional Accountant's report are attached.

3. Fundamentals of Marine Oil Pollution Response

Together with Mike Bodnar, Section Leader Communications, I attended a beginner's course on Marine Oil Pollution Response last month. This was run, and paid for, by the Maritime Safety Authority. The course lasted for three days and I was initially sceptical about the benefit I, and the Council, would receive from such a course. However, I must say it was extremely interesting and useful. It certainly raised my awareness about this Council's responsibility for oil spills. Although I would not be confident that any boom that I put out would work – now at least I know the reasons behind our response actions. The course also made me more confident that our proposal to develop an Incident Control Centre is the right way to go.

4. Sustainable New Zealand Association

On 10 April 2000, Councillor Buchanan and I attended a meeting about the establishment of a Sustainable New Zealand Association. The attendees came from local and central government, as well as voluntary organisations and the private sector. After much discussion it was finally agreed that we needed to identify what central government departments, local government and other sectors are currently doing within New Zealand on Agenda 21. Another meeting is scheduled for mid to late July to discuss the findings of the research.

What is remarkable to me is the interest in Agenda 21 and sustainable development. This new government appears to be behind the concept, although the meeting did identify that there was a need for central government to make more positive statements in this regard. However, the recent announcement that New Zealand means to ratify the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change by May 2002 is some proof that this government is willing to take positive action to achieve sustainable development.

During our discussions for the Long Term Financial Strategy, some Councillors questioned the appropriateness of the term "sustainability". I liked the way that Chris Patten described it in a recent Reith Lecture. He said "we need everyone to realise that we have to live here on earth as though we are intending to stay for good and not just visiting for the weekend".

5. Te Reo Maori

As part of our efforts to develop a more meaningful relationship with the iwi of the region, five managers from the Environment Division, along with the General Manager, are taking a course in Maori language. We are all having a lot of fun and finding it interesting. We will let you know how we are progressing.

6. Eisenhower Fellow

Together with John Allard, I recently hosted John Hodges-Coppel, a 2000 Eisenhower Fellow. John is Planning Director of the Triange J Council of Governments in North Carolina. This is along the lines of our United Council system, with some thirty councillors from authorities with populations ranging from 250,000 to 400! The area is undergoing a lot of growth and some of the problems made our pale into insignificance.

7. Recommendation

That the reports from the Divisional Manager, the Departmental Managers and the Divisional Accountant be received.

Report prepared by:

JANE BRADBURY
Divisional Manager, Environment

Attachments