

## Overview of recent history of Auckland governance

### Current arrangements

- Current local governance arrangements for Auckland are complex. There are eight local authorities: seven territorial authorities and the Auckland Regional Council. Five of the territorial authorities have community boards. In total there are 261 elected members.
- In addition to these organisations, central and local government organisations are responsible for decision-making and service delivery for Auckland infrastructure

### History of Reforms

- There is a long history of both statutory and voluntary changes to Auckland's local governance arrangements.
- Modern reforms commenced with the establishment of the Auckland Regional Authority (ARA) in 1963. The ARA was New Zealand's first multi-functional regional body. Responsibilities included metropolitan planning, regional roads, buses, bulk water and wastewater, airport operations, milk distribution, and ports management. It raised funding from rates collected by territorial authorities.
- In 1989, the national amalgamation of local government units reduced the number of Auckland territorial authorities from 29 to seven. Thirty community boards were established to represent the interests of local communities. The ARA was succeeded by the Auckland Regional Council (ARC). Power boards, harbour boards and airports were reconstituted as companies. The territorial authorities received the relevant energy company and airport shares, while the ARC was given 80% of the shares in Ports of Auckland Limited.
- In 1992, the Auckland Regional Services Trust (ARST) was established to take over the ARC's non-regulatory functions, ie, Watercare Services Limited (WSL), Yellow Bus Company and Ports of Auckland shares. The ARC was effectively restricted to environmental protection.
- In 1998, ARST was dissolved and its assets were transferred to a new organisation, Infrastructure Auckland (IA). IA also received rail and ferry assets and railway stations, including Britomart. WSL was transferred to the six territorial authorities receiving its services. Auckland Regional Transport Networks Ltd was established as a joint venture by the territorial authorities to own passenger transport infrastructure and receive IA grants.
- The ARC was required to prepare a regional growth strategy. The strategy, completed in 1999, established the metropolitan urban limit for urban development and future land use.
- The Local Government Act 2002 empowered both regional councils and territorial authorities with broader responsibilities to promote the well-being of present and future communities.
- In 2004, legislation abolished IA and established the Auckland Regional Transport Authority (ARTA) and Auckland Regional Holdings (ARH) as council-controlled organisations. ARTA was established to integrate local government transport funding bids and to manage contracts with public transport service providers. IA assets were transferred to ARH.
- In 2007, a Regional Sustainable Development Forum (RSDF) was established to take a leadership role in the stewardship of the Auckland Sustainability Framework, Regional Growth Strategy and to oversee the development of the 'One Plan' - a single infrastructure plan for the Auckland region. The RSDF comprises representatives of local and central government, and tangata whenua.
- In July 2007, the Government announced its decision to establish a Royal Commission on Auckland Governance. The Royal Commission is due to report to the Governor-General by 31 March 2009.