## Three Waters Review: outline and outcomes

**What is the Three Waters Review?**

The Three Waters Review was established in mid-2017 by government, alongside the Havelock North Drinking Water Inquiry, as a cross-agency initiative led by DIA to look into the challenges facing our three waters system; and to develop recommendations for system-wide performance improvements.

**What do we mean by the “three waters’’?**

* The term “three waters’’ refers to drinking water, waste water and storm water
* The regulation, ownership and governance of related assets and their management and service delivery make up a complex interconnected three waters system.

**What major outcomes are we seeking?**

* Safe, acceptable (taste, colour, smell) and reliable drinking water
* Better environmental performance for our water services
* Efficient, sustainable, resilient, and accountable water services
* Achieving these aims in ways our communities can afford their water bills.

**What are some of the main challenges for our water systems and communities?**

* Meeting community expectations for water quality, treatment and management
* Meeting regulatory requirements for water quality, treatment and management
* The ability to replace ageing infrastructure or fund and manage new infrastructure
* Declining rating bases in some areas, high growth in others
* High seasonal demand in small tourism centres
* Adapting for climate change and adverse natural events.

**Why does it matter?**

* People want to drink their tap water without becoming ill – or worrying about becoming ill
* Our environment suffers when waste water and storm water are not well-managed
* Communities need to be able to afford the bills for safe drinking water and effective treatment and management of waste water and storm water
* Our image and valuable tourism industry will suffer if we don’t address the challenges facing our three waters system
* We need continuity of water services in the face of climate change and natural disaster
* The ability to fund and deliver water-related infrastructure is critical in addressing housing shortages, supporting urban growth and progressing regional development.

**What is happening now and what are the next steps?**

* Research to provide further data on the three waters challenges
* Engagement with key stakeholders to assist in identifying options and solutions
* Recommendations for system-wide performance improvement are due for consideration by Cabinet by the end of the year (2018).

**How you can be involved and stay up-to-date**

* Information on the review, including background papers, Cabinet papers and the latest research, presentations and updates are posted on the DIA website at: [www.dia.govt.nz/three-waters-review](http://www.dia.govt.nz/three-waters-review); or contact project team at: threewaters@dia.govt.nz