

Your Comment on the Wellington International Airport Southern Seawall Renewal application

Please include all the contact details listed below with your comments and indicate whether you can receive further communications from us by email at substantive@fastrack.govt.nz

1. Contact Details			
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.			
Organisation name (if relevant)	Department of Conservation		
First name	[REDACTED]		
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Postal address	PO Box 10420, Wellington 6140		
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Email	fast-track@doc.govt.nz and [REDACTED]		

2. We will email you draft conditions of consent for your comment			
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Note: All comments will be made available to the public and the applicant when the Ministry for the Environment proactively releases advice provided to the Minister for the Environment.



Jenni Fitzgerald

Fast-Track Applications Manager

Acting pursuant to delegated authority on behalf of the Director-General of Conservation.

Date: 10/03/2026

Note: A copy of the Instrument of Delegation may be inspected at the Director-General's office at Conservation House Whare Kaupapa Atawhai, 18/32 Manners Street, Wellington 6011

Comments on a fast-track consenting application

Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 section 53

To: The Expert Panel

From: Department of Conservation (DOC)

Regarding fast-track project: Wellington International Airport Southern Seawall Renewal

Fast track Reference: FTAA-2510-1118

1. Overview

- 1.1 Wellington International Airport Limited ('WIAL' / 'the Applicant') proposes to renew Wellington International Airport's southern seawall, which has reached the end of its functional life.
- 1.2 The project involves establishing two construction yards (Moa Point and Miramar Golf Course) and using them, along with an existing construction yard (George Bolt Street), for storage and construction activities; renewing of the southern seawall with rock and Cubipods; remediating the eroding eastern bank with rock protection; establishing two new kororā colonies to support kororā habitation and breeding; and catching, handling and relocating native lizards and kororā.
- 1.3 Various activities relating to the southern seawall renewal, including the seawall itself, the Moa Point Yard, the proposed lizard release site to the seaward side of Moa Point Road, and the beach area leading to a culvert accessing the Stage 1 kororā colony are located on land that is subject to the Reserves Act 1977. While these reserves are defined as public conservation land in section 4 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act), they are vested in and administered by Wellington City Council (WCC). The proposed activities require a concession. This is because 'concession' is defined to include a 'Reserves Act approval', both of which are defined in Schedule 6, clause 1 of the Act.
- 1.4 The Applicant seeks approvals that would otherwise be sought under the Resource Management Act 1991, Wildlife Act 1953, Reserves Act 1977, and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.
- 1.5 The Applicant has facilitated discussions with their experts and DOC staff (including its ecology experts). The engagement has been constructive, and many issues have been resolved and/or appropriately addressed to DOC's satisfaction.
- 1.6 In accordance with sections 53(2)(k) and 53(2)(m)(i) of the Act, the Director-General of Conservation (D-G) has been invited to comment on the substantive application. Statutory

delegations are in place for DOC to provide commentary on behalf of the D-G. These comments focus on bringing together outstanding issues, including as raised in DOC's section 51 report.

2. Department of Conservation advice

- 2.1. This assessment has been confined to actual and potential effects of the proposal on marine mammals, marine ecosystems, lizards, kororā and other avifauna. Accordingly, DOC has not commented on the Application's consistency with the wider statutory framework. Comments on the Reserves Act approvals are also included.
- 2.2. The assessment has been informed by expert advice from DOC technical advisors. The credentials of these advisors are provided in **Appendix A**.
- 2.3. Overall, DOC is primarily concerned with potential adverse effects on marine mammals, though notes that these can be adequately addressed through changes to the proposed Marine Mammal Management Plan and associated consent conditions. DOC also notes that an additional wildlife approval is likely to be required for the proposed management of avifauna on site.

3. Assessment

Marine Mammals

Values present

- 3.1. DOC is primarily concerned about effects on the marine mammal species that are classed as Threatened under the NZ Threat Classification System or the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and/or those species frequently or regularly seen in or near the Wellington Harbour (including Lyall Bay) and the nearby coastal marine area. As marine mammals can travel hundreds or thousands of kilometres for key life functions, DOC considers it appropriate to consider the species at a wider spatial scale than that of Lyall Bay.
- 3.2. At least nineteen marine mammal species are known to be present in the Wellington region. Eleven of these species have been sighted in or near the Wellington Harbour. The occasional presence of other species remains a possibility.
- 3.3. All marine mammal species are protected under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (1978).

- 3.4. The key species of concern most likely to be present in Lyall Bay are orca (Threatened – Nationally Critical), bottlenose dolphin (Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable), Hector’s dolphin (Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable), NZ fur seal (Not Threatened), and common dolphin (Not Threatened). Migratory southern right whale (Threatened – Nationally Increasing) and humpback whale (Endangered – Oceania subpopulation only) have a seasonal presence during winter. Leopard seal (NZ non-resident native – Migrant) have an occasional presence.
- 3.5. Common dolphin have been observed foraging and socialising in Lyall Bay, particularly in summer. Mother-calf pairs are often seen and will be particularly vulnerable to disturbance.
- 3.6. Orca sightings occur throughout the year, often close to shore. Orca have been observed feeding and resting in the area.
- 3.7. Hector’s dolphin are found only in New Zealand and occur occasionally in the area, likely from the closest resident population of Hector’s dolphin in the Marlborough Sounds. Hector’s dolphin have the most sensitive hearing of all the species that occur in the area.
- 3.8. Bottlenose dolphin have an occasional presence, with some reports of apparent foraging.
- 3.9. The southern right and humpback whales that are occasionally sighted are likely using the area as a resting habitat during migration.
- 3.10. NZ fur seal haul out to rest in the area.
- 3.11. DOC notes that the assessment of values is based primarily on opportunistic sighting data due to the absence of systematic research and/or long-term marine mammal monitoring specific to Wellington’s south coast and harbour. Opportunistic sighting data is unlikely to be fully representative of marine mammal species occurrence, regular distribution patterns or critical habitat use (e.g. we know NZ fur seal are present and underrepresented in the data). The available data can inform us of broad spatial and temporal patterns but is insufficient to identify critical habitat areas at fine scales.

Effects on marine mammals

- 3.12. The Marine Ecological Impact Assessment (MEIA; Part B.11 of the application documents) states that marine mammal species occurring regularly in Lyall Bay (common dolphin, NZ fur seal and orca) are likely using the bay for foraging and are transitory. We note that the assessment does not consider resting behaviour (e.g. hauled out fur seal, leopard seal and migrating baleen whales) or socialising behaviour (e.g. observed in common dolphin). Both behaviours have important biological functions and should be considered when assessing potential impacts.

- 3.13. The effects of underwater noise can affect marine mammals in a variety of ways. Impacts include permanent or temporary auditory injury, auditory masking / reduction of listening space (i.e. reducing the distance over which marine mammals can communicate, which may also affect detection of predators and prey), habitat displacement and behavioural changes to resting, foraging or social interactions.
- 3.14. Changes to behaviour due to disturbance may have downstream biological consequences. Disturbance to animals during foraging and breeding is considered to present the greatest potential for significant impact, as both behaviours are fundamental to reproductive success.
- 3.15. To the best of DOC's knowledge, there is no comparable real-world data available for underwater rock-milling in a coastal zone. Consequently, the underwater noise modelling included in the MEIA is an estimate based on measured in-air sound levels for rock milling. The model estimates that a shutdown zone of 20 m is sufficient to avoid causing auditory injury in the most sensitive hearing group (which includes Hector's dolphin), and that a behavioural response would be expected at distances of up to 250 m.
- 3.16. DOC highlights that both the underwater noise modelling and the thresholds for auditory injury rely on estimates. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) (2024) *Technical Guidance for Assessing the Effects of Anthropogenic Sound on Marine Mammal Hearing* represents current best practice internationally. The NMFS guidance groups analogous species into hearing groups, with noise thresholds for injury based on real-world data where available and informed estimates where data is lacking. For example, the thresholds currently used for Hector's dolphin are based on harbour porpoise data. However, recent research on Hector's dolphin during pile-driving operations in Lyttelton Harbour after the Christchurch earthquakes indicates that Hector's dolphin may have higher hearing sensitivity than harbour porpoises, leading to avoidance reactions at greater distances than expected. Therefore, a conservative approach to managing potential impacts is warranted. Measurements of actual underwater noise produced by rock milling are essential to inform mitigation measures and shutdown zones outlined in the Marine Mammal Management Plan.

Marine Mammal Management Plan

- 3.17. The Applicant has commissioned the development of a Marine Mammal Management Plan (MMMP; Part G.09 of the application documents) to detail the appropriate management responses to ensure any adverse effects on marine mammals are minimised. DOC considers that the MMMP provides a good basis for mitigating impacts of underwater noise, with provision for adaptive management of shutdown zone size (i.e. the distance at which rock-milling shuts down when marine mammals are present) based on real-world

validation of model predictions. Furthermore, DOC agrees with the conservative approach of managing noise based on the most sensitive hearing group (Hector's dolphin).

- 3.18. However, given the presence of marine mammals within Wellington Harbour and the nearby coastal marine area and given the potential for adverse effects on marine mammals from underwater noise, DOC seeks some further amendments to the MMMP. These amendments are intended to provide greater clarity around proposed mitigation measures, ensure a precautionary approach is adopted where there are areas of uncertainty, and ultimately ensure adverse effects on marine mammals are adequately managed.
- 3.19. DOC's greatest concern relates to the observation methodology described in Section 4.2.1 of the MMMP. DOC does not consider that using solely visual observations at night will give confidence that all marine mammals will be detected, as conditions are likely to be less than optimal (e.g. wind, swell, sea state, weather conditions and light availability all affect the likelihood of detecting a marine mammal). Torches and thermal binoculars have a narrow field of view, increasing the likelihood that marine mammal presence will be missed, especially if there is only one marine mammal observer (MMO). Detail is lacking on the type of torch to be used, and thermal binoculars may struggle to detect smaller marine mammals due to weather and sea conditions, fast surfacing times and small body size. Further, if a marine mammal is not sighted and tracked promptly, or if it surfaces for the first time within a small MMOZ (Marine Mammal Observation Zone) (currently proposed to be 20 m), it will likely be within the zone for auditory injury to occur before the MMO can confirm their sighting and communicate to the rock miller operator to shut down. Complementary visual and acoustic monitoring would yield the highest detection rates and give greater confidence that a marine mammal will be detected in time for mitigation actions to be taken and be effective.
- 3.20. DOC seeks that the MMMP be amended to explicitly state that underwater noise measurements (to validate estimated noise levels) will be undertaken by an experienced underwater acoustician and be undertaken concurrently with the beginning of works to avoid confusion about timelines or potential impacts on marine mammals due to unmitigated noise. This may otherwise be addressed as a new condition of consent.
- 3.21. DOC considers that the MMOZ should include a buffer to give greater confidence that marine mammals are outside the range where injury may occur. A MMOZ of 20 m is currently proposed with adaptive management of the MMOZ size based on real world underwater noise measurements. An adaptive management approach is supported, however, as there are still unknowns regarding species-specific hearing ranges for injuries, DOC considers that shut down zones should include a buffer to give greater confidence

that marine mammals are outside the range where injury may occur. A conservative approach would be to use a shutdown zone which mitigates behavioural responses, currently estimated at 250 m (the distance at which noise is 120 dB re 1 μ Pa), and has the added advantage of mitigating potential impacts on behaviour. The MEIA notes that the 250 m zone is 'confined well inside Lyall Bay in front of the seawall'. DOC recommends this be reconsidered within the MMMP.

- 3.22. Observer experience is one of the key factors in detecting marine mammals and is particularly important given monitoring for marine mammals will take place in less-than-optimal visual survey conditions. Therefore, DOC seeks that greater detail is included in the MMMP as to the MMO training provider and the experience of the MMO.
- 3.23. Regarding the soft start procedure detailed in Section 4.2.3 of the MMMP, DOC seeks that rock milling starts at low intensity before ramping up; agitating the rock miller in water will produce a different noise compared to milling rock.
- 3.24. Section 4.2.4 of the MMMP requires further detail around visual observation intervals. If the MMOZ remains small (for example, 20 m as currently proposed), a constant visual watch is required as the delay between a marine mammal being observed and equipment shut down will increase the risk of a marine mammal being within a distance for hearing injury to occur.
- 3.25. DOC seeks that Section 4.2.5 of the MMMP be amended to include non-equivocal wording requiring that if a marine mammal is detected in or near the MMOZ, rock milling will stop immediately. DOC recommends that this requirement is also included as a condition of consent as it is fundamental to the management of adverse effects on marine mammals.
- 3.26. More generally, DOC seeks that equivocal wording throughout the MMMP is replaced with definitive wording so that procedures are explicitly stated. For example, the use of 'should' instead of 'will' in Sections 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 creates ambiguity for the contractor and for administering agencies about what is required, and what is optional.
- 3.27. DOC recommends section 4.3 of the MMMP be amended to include detail of the specific information to be recorded by the MMO. At a minimum this should include date, time, species, number of animals, proximity to MMOZ, whether a shutdown was necessary and, if applicable, the length of the shutdown required.

Marine Ecosystems

- 3.28. During pre-lodgement consultation DOC raised concerns regarding loss of intertidal habitat, lack of monitoring to assess marine habitat recovery, and loss of valuable species

(primarily pāua and rock lobster). DOC's concerns have been addressed during subsequent discussions with the Applicant, with no outstanding concerns remaining.

- 3.29. DOC notes that the Applicant has agreed to monitor the recovery of the subtidal reef ecology of the Southern Seawall and seeks minor amendments to the associated resource consent conditions to improve clarity and identify the intention of monitoring. This is detailed further in Section 4 below.

Avifauna (other than kororā)

Effects on avifauna

- 3.30. DOC considers that the applicant has adequately identified avifauna species present at or near the site and agrees that the three species representing the primary avifauna values of concern for this proposal (excluding kororā) are banded dotterels (*Charadrius bicinctus bicinctus*), variable oystercatcher (*Haematopus unicolor*), and kārearea (*Falco novaeseelandiae ferox*).
- 3.31. DOC has reviewed the updated Avifauna Management Plan (AMP), dated January 2026, and is of the view that the surveys undertaken and the proposed methodology, mitigation, monitoring, and reporting measures are generally appropriate.
- 3.32. The primary outstanding concern relates to the proposed use of nest cages as a mitigation measure. DOC recommends that nest cages are not implemented as they are not consistently effective at protecting nesting birds and, in some cases, can increase predation risk. Furthermore, the installation of nest cages can cause nest abandonment if not carried out with exceptional care and ongoing management.
- 3.33. It is noted that the airport grassland area (where use of nest cages is proposed) already benefits from predator control targeting both mammalian and avian predators. This existing management reduces predation risk—the intended purpose of nest cages—without introducing the additional disturbance or direct interference associated with cage installation. If the applicant considers the current predator control insufficient, a safer and more reliable mitigation approach would be to increase the scale or intensity of existing predator control efforts, rather than introducing nest cages.

Wildlife Act Authority

- 3.34. The Applicant's current plan focuses primarily on deploying dissuasion measures to prevent any adverse effects on avifauna, with contingency measures for managing eggs (nests) and chicks if dissuasion is unsuccessful and birds attempt to nest within the construction site or surrounding areas. Any such intervention would require a wildlife approval under the Wildlife Act 1953.

- 3.35. Whilst DOC acknowledges that the likelihood of interventions being required is low, there remains a possibility that they will be required, and it is therefore recommended that a wildlife approval is obtained prior to works commencing to ensure that proposed mitigation measures can be lawfully implemented if needed. If nest cages are to be used, these will also require wildlife approval.
- 3.36. If the applicant wishes to address the additional wildlife approval through the FTAA the process outlined in section 62 of the FTAA may be appropriate. Alternatively, the Applicant can contact DOC and seek advice on next steps, which may include completing a wildlife approval application through the Department's standard process. This would mean the issue can be addressed without impacting timeframes for Panel decision-making.

Kororā

- 3.37. Having reviewed the updated Kororā / Penguin Management Plan (KPMP), dated December 2025, DOC is of the view that the surveys undertaken, and the proposed methodology, mitigation, monitoring, and reporting measures are generally appropriate.
- 3.38. However, as detailed in its section 51 Report, DOC recommends that the proposed number of GPS devices is specified and that the KPMP includes a requirement that current best practice for PIT tagging be used. Additional fencing and/or netting is recommended along movement corridors to the north of the construction area to minimise penguin mortality that may result from increased interactions between displaced penguins, vehicles and dogs.

Lizards

- 3.39. DOC has reviewed the updated Lizard Management Plan (LMP), dated 30 January 2026, and is of the view that the lizard survey and corresponding management plan provide a good level of effort, consideration and detail. The baseline survey and subsequent recommendations for management provide a well-considered approach that provisions for the relevant species detected and describes a salvage approach that is appropriate in terms of methods, tools, duration and intensity. The LMP provides clear parameters for survey and salvage activities, along with triggers for enhanced predator management and monitoring.
- 3.40. However, as detailed in the section 51 Report, DOC recommends making minor amendments to the LMP and associated conditions to ensure that there are adequate triggers for adaptive management, that contingency actions are refined, that the Accidental Discovery Protocol contains adequate detail, and that the threat status of Northern spotted skink (*Oligosoma kokowai*) is updated to At Risk – Uncommon. It is also noted that

landowner approval from WCC must be secured to enable lizard release at Wahine Memorial Park (Tarakena Bay).

Reserves Act Approval

- 3.41. DOC is responsible for administration of the Reserves Act 1977 and is therefore the administering agency for approvals sought. However, for this application WCC is responsible for the administration of the reserves which are vested in WCC. The Act reflects this responsibility in s 51(2)(a) by not requiring a report from the Director-General of Conservation for concessions on land that is not vested in the Crown (as in the present case).
- 3.42. While no conditions specific to the Reserves Act approvals sought have been provided by the applicant, it is understood these are being developed by WCC and WIAL and are likely to resemble the standard Reserves lease and occupation licenses (included in the application as D.05).
- 3.43. DOC acknowledges that WCC is best placed to provide specific advice about the appropriate conditions. However, it is noted that there are some provisions in Schedule 6 Part 1 of the Act relating to the Minister of Conservation's obligations that may be relevant to the management of the approval once granted. Where necessary, DOC will provide comments on the relevant conditions under section 70 of the Act should the draft decision be to grant.

4. Comments on conditions

- 4.1. There has been and continues to be constructive engagement between DOC and WIAL on the resource consent conditions for this Application. Discussions around outstanding issues are still occurring. To assist the Panel, any remaining areas of contention are identified below with additions underlined in red and deletions ~~struck out in red~~.
- 4.2. The Applicant has proposed conditions requiring that works be undertaken in general accordance with specified plans. DOC recommends that any reference to 'general' be removed as it introduces a significant degree of uncertainty and scope for change at a later date. If there are truly minor changes required, these can still be considered to be in accordance with the application, plans, etc. This recommendation is of relevance for Conditions GC.1, ECO.37, ECO.47, LV.1, LV.5, LV.9, LV.12, and LV. 16.
- 4.3. For clarity, DOC recommends that the specific date of the management plans be included in Condition GC.4 once they have been approved by the Panel. DOC also notes that, for

the management plans identified in Condition GC.4, it is currently unclear who the 'relevant Manager(s)' are for certifying any amendments to the management plans, as authorised by Conditions GC.9 and GC.10. This should be clarified in the consent conditions. For completeness, DOC notes that an amendment to the LMP or Kororā management plans would need to be certified by the Director-General of Conservation in order to constitute an amendment to the wildlife approval.

- 4.4. In addition to the point above, DOC recommends minor redrafting to Condition GC.9 to clarify the definition of 'minor amendments' and to align with advice provided on the wildlife approval conditions:

(a) The Consent Holder may make minor amendments to the certified management plan(s) at any time. ~~For the purpose of this condition, a 'minor amendment' is either a small change to the content of the management plan(s) which has either no or a de minimis adverse environmental effect or is a change which would result in an improved environmental outcome.~~ Any such amendments to the management plan(s) must be such that the plan(s) remain consistent with the objectives of the management plan(s) and continue to be in accordance with the resource consent conditions.

(b) The Consent Holder must submit, in writing, any minor amendment(s) to the certified management plan(s) to the relevant Manager(s) at least 10 working days prior to when the works associated with the amendment are to be implemented. The Consent Holder must maintain a record of all minor amendments.

(c) If the Consent Holder is notified by the relevant Manager(s) that it considers the amendment is a material amendment, the Consent Holder must consider the amendment in accordance with Condition GC.10.

For the purpose of this condition a 'minor amendment' is either:

- (a) a small change to the content of a management plan(s) which has either no or a de minimis adverse environmental outcome; or*
- (b) a change which would result in an improved environmental outcome.*

- 4.5. As detailed above and within the s 51 Report, DOC seeks that contingency actions be refined in the LMP. It is recommended that Condition ECO.4(i) be amended as follows:

Details of post-works lizard management, lizard monitoring and contingency actions (where required), and reporting.

- 4.6. To better align with the wildlife approval conditions, DOC recommends that the written confirmation required under Condition ECO.7(b) also be provided to the DOC Operations Manager for Wellington (wellington@doc.govt.nz).

4.7. DOC seeks that Condition ECO.19 is amended to require that the annual monitoring survey is also provided to the DOC Operations Manager for Wellington (wellington@doc.govt.nz). DOC also recommends that Condition ECO.19 be amended to include a requirement that the annual lizard monitoring survey report also includes any actions for improvement undertaken in the previous year (if any).

4.8. To improve clarity, DOC recommends that Condition ECO.22 is amended as follows:

*The objective of the AMP is to minimise potential adverse effects of construction activities, including disturbance, within the Project Area on the breeding success of native avifauna species other than kororā / little blue penguin (*Eudyptula minor*, which is the subject of a separate management plan).*

4.9. DOC seeks that Condition ECO.61(d) be amended to require the monitoring reports also be provided to the DOC Operations Manager for Wellington (wellington@doc.govt.nz).

4.10. It is recommended that Condition ECO.65 is amended to include a requirement that the MMMP include details regarding reporting requirements.

4.11. As noted above, DOC seeks that a new consent condition be included in the Marine Ecology section of the consent conditions requiring that if a marine mammal is observed in or near the MMOZ, rock milling must cease immediately.

4.12. Also noted above, DOC seeks a new condition requiring that initial noise measurements begin concurrently with the start of rock milling if this is not otherwise updated in the MMMP.

4.13. DOC seeks that Condition ECO.67 is amended as follows to recognise the additional species that may exist and to clarify the intent of the condition:

The Consent Holder must undertake an underwater marine ecology survey of the Southern Seawall after 2 years of the completion of construction works at the Southern Seawall. The survey must be undertaken by or under the direction of a SQEP (marine ecologist). The purpose of the survey is to:

(a) Assess the rate of recolonisation of biota to contribute to understanding of ~~biota colonisation on the ecosystem value of~~ artificial structures; and

(b) Assess whether subsequent monitoring is required to understand recovery.

4.14. For clarity it is recommended that Condition ESC.28 is amended as follows:

The Consent Holder must ensure that any discharges to the CMA do not give rise to any of the following, more than 15 m from the point of discharge:

- a. ~~The production of a~~Any conspicuous oil or grease films, scums or foams, or floatable or suspended materials;
- b. Any conspicuous change in the colour or visual clarity of the water in the CMA;
- c. Any emission of objectionable odour;
- d. Any significant adverse effects on aquatic life.

5. Summary

- 5.1. As detailed above, DOC has some concerns about the management of potential adverse effects on marine mammals as currently detailed in the MMMP. DOC has recommended a number of amendments be made to the MMMP primarily to ensure that marine mammals are identified before they reach the zone for auditory injury to occur, and to ensure that a precautionary approach is adopted where there remains uncertainty about potential adverse effects.
- 5.2. DOC's remaining concerns relating to marine ecosystems, lizards, kororā and other avifauna can be resolved through recommended minor amendments to conditions.
- 5.3. It is noted that additional wildlife approvals are required for the proposed management of eggs (nests) and chicks and for nest cages if the Applicant intends to use these. DOC welcomes further discussions with the applicant around the need and process for seeking a wildlife approval outside of the Fast-Track process.
- 5.4. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

6. Appendices

Appendix A – Technical Expert Credentials

Appendix A: Technical Expert Credentials

DOC has relied on the advice of the following technical experts:

- a. Chloe Corne (Marine Mammals)
- b. Helen Kettles (Marine Ecosystems)
- c. Troy Dahya Makan (Avifauna - excluding kororā)
- d. Dave Houston (Kororā)
- e. Jacqui Wairepo (Lizards)

Their credentials are set out below.

Chloe Corne

My name is Chloe Corne (MSc). I have been employed as a Technical Advisor (Marine Mammals) by the Department of Conservation (DOC) since 2025. I provide evidence-based advice to mitigate the impacts of human activities (primarily tourism, aquaculture and coastal infrastructure construction) on marine mammals in accordance with DOC's legislative responsibilities. Additionally, I assist with curating the NZ Cetacean Sightings Database and the NZ Strandings Database.

Prior to my current role, I was the DOC Project Lead for Marine programmes in Fiordland (2014-2025), where I managed the long-term Fiordland bottlenose dolphin monitoring programme and a five-year humpback whale research project. I managed marine mammal compliance and education programmes and provided local technical advice to mitigate the impacts of tourism, research and resource consents on marine mammals in Fiordland.

I have over fifteen years' experience working in collaborative marine mammal research and conservation, with extensive fieldwork experience (i.e., >3000hrs sea time). This includes leading teams and/or participating in vessel- and land-based visual and acoustic marine mammal surveys in remote tropical, sub-tropical and temperate environments in New Zealand and abroad.

I attained a Master of Science (Marine Science) degree with Distinction from the University of Otago (2024). My MSc research involved collecting and analysing visual and acoustic monitoring data to describe post-whaling humpback whale distribution and to model habitat use in relation to potential foraging and resting habitats in Fiordland. I am a co-author on multiple peer-reviewed scientific papers. I am well qualified to comment on the potential impacts of underwater noise and on field methods for marine mammal surveys.

Helen Kettles

I am a Senior Technical Advisor for the Department of Conservation. I hold the degrees of Bachelor of Science (1998), and a Master of Science with First Class Honours (2000), both in the Biological Sciences from the University of Waikato.

I have worked for the Department since November 2000, prior to which I had a temporary contract as a coastal ecologist for Waikato Regional Council in Hamilton. With the Department, I have held roles as the regional marine advisor for Southland and the Subantarctic Islands, Taranaki, Wellington, Hawkes Bay and the Chatham Islands. For the past 13 years I have held a national advisor role with a particular focus on nearshore and estuarine ecology.

I have a broad range of experience in coastal and marine resource management. I have had involvement with many coastal activities, including port developments, breakwaters, major

roading proposals, coastal discharges, artificial reefs and marine energy infrastructure with many in the Wellington region during my 6 years as the regional marine advisor. I was a scientific diver for 16 years and for 4 years I led the Taputeranga Marine Reserve monitoring programme.

I spent five years on the New Zealand Marine Science Society Council, with three years as secretary, and have presented several academic papers at national and international conferences. I have presented evidence on marine ecological values at a number of Environment Court and Council hearings. I have authored or co-authored various reports relating to marine ecology including a large Foveaux Strait rocky reef survey, a New Zealand biogenic habitats literature review and a status report of lower North Island estuaries.

Troy Dahya Makan

I am employed at the Department of Conservation/Te Papa Atawhai (DOC) as Senior Technical Advisor. I have held this position since 2013, providing advice on threatened species management as well as supporting some of the key systems we have, to manage wildlife. I am a member of the Tara Iti (Fairy Tern), Hihi and Shore Plover Recovery Groups.

I am a trained ecologist with a Master of Science (First Class Honours) majoring in Conservation Biology, and I studied Hihi (Stitchbird) on Little Barrier and Kapiti Islands for my master's thesis.

I have over 25 years' experience in the field of ecology and wildlife management. I have significant experience working in a range of threatened bird species research and management programs including Tara Iti, Hihi, Shore plover, Kokako, Kea, Kiwi, Black Robin and Chatham Island Oystercatcher.

Dave Houston

I am a Technical Advisor for the Department of Conservation, a role I have held since 2012. I have held other technical and field roles with the Department since 1987.

I hold a Diploma of Parks and Recreation Management from Lincoln University. I am a member of Birds New Zealand (The Ornithological Society of New Zealand Incorporated).

I have more than 35 years of experience in the research and management of New Zealand penguins, including yellow-eyed, Fiordland crested, Snares crested, erect-crested and little blue penguins (kororā).

I gained 16 years of experience monitoring, managing and researching kororā at Oamaru. I was instrumental in the creation of the Oamaru Blue Penguin Colony and set up the long-term monitoring of the penguin population there to monitor the potential impacts of site development and tourism. I have co-authored publications in peer-reviewed journals reporting on monitoring results. I also developed the nest box widely used around New Zealand to provide supplementary or replacement nest sites.

I have experience in the identification of kororā nests in structures such as rock walls, and in the rescue and rehoming of kororā when construction activities or natural events have threatened or destroyed nest sites.

I am one of the founders of and regular contributors to the biennial Oamaru Penguin Symposium, a forum developed to discuss the research and management of kororā.

Jacqui Wairepo

Jacqui Wairepo is an experienced herpetologist, having worked with indigenous lizards since 2010, and holds a Master's Degree in Conservation Biology (1st Class Hons) in lizard-based research. Jacqui has worked as a specialist herpetologist since 2016, having gained a high level of experience in lizard management and research on projects throughout New Zealand. Jacqui has been a Northland-based independent wildlife and herpetological specialist since late 2021. Jacqui is experienced in the conservation management and/or ecological requirements of a high proportion of Not Threatened, At Risk and several Threatened lizard species throughout the North and South Islands.

Jacqui is known to all members of DOC's national lizard TAG (Technical Advisory Group) and has been a named authority on numerous Wildlife Act Authority permits since 2016. Jacqui's experience with herpetofauna includes all aspects of survey, salvage, translocation and population management for a wide range of skink and gecko species throughout New Zealand. Jacqui has also led and been involved with numerous surveys for Hochstetter's frogs throughout Auckland and Northland. During her years as a Consultant Jacqui has worked on national infrastructure and large-scale development projects for roading, wind farms, solar farms, dams and rural developments. Jacqui has prepared and implemented Lizard Management Plans for projects throughout the country both small and large-scale, as well as preparing evidence for multiple hearings for nationally significant infrastructure projects. Jacqui has been a SRARNZ member since 2013 and also sits on the SRARNZ Council and serves as the SRARNZ Secretary. Jacqui is also a member of the New Zealand Ecological Society.