

**MINUTE 6 OF THE EXPERT PANEL**

Report received from Panel's technical advisor (ecological) and updated directions  
for expert conferencing (ecology)  
Takitimu North Link – Stage 2  
[FTAA-2507-1085]

13 January 2026

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[1] This minute records that the Panel has received a report from its technical advisor (ecology) which will be circulated to the participants attending the expert conferencing (ecology) scheduled for Tuesday 20 January, to assist with that process. It also provides updated directions in relation to that expert conference.

**Technical report – ecology**

[2] The Panel has received a report dated 13 January 2026 from its technical advisor, ecology, Graham Ussher. That report provides advice to the Panel in relation to a number of the ecological issues which are the subject of the agenda circulated by the Panel for the purpose of the ecological expert conferencing, which was prepared with the assistance of Graham Ussher.

[3] The Panel considers that it would be useful for the purposes of the expert conferencing for all conferencing participants to review Mr Ussher's report prior to preparing their statements of position for conferencing. The Panel has directed the EPA to provide a copy of Mr Ussher's report to those parties for that purpose.

[4] Mr Ussher's report sets out a number of matters which he considers should be the subject of a further information request. The Panel is meeting tomorrow to

consider this matter and will issue any further information requests considered necessary under s67 of the Act following consideration of this matter.

### **Expert conference directions**

[5] The Panel's Minute 3 relating to the expert conferencing proposed that the Panel's technical advisor Mr Ussher would provide a brief statement of his opinion on the agenda items to the conference facilitator (Marlene Oliver) by midday on Monday 12 January. Given Mr Ussher has now provided his more fulsome report to the Panel, which the Panel has directed be circulated to the conference participants, Mr Ussher is no longer required to provide a summary statement.

[6] To assist with the expert conferencing timeline, the experts for all other parties attending the ecology expert conference, including the applicant, should now circulate their summary statements of position by **midday Friday 16th January 2026** in response to the conference agenda and Graham Ussher's report.

[7] The purpose of the position statements is to assist with preparation for the expert conference and these statements will be circulated by the EPA to registered participants on **Friday afternoon 16 January 2026**.

[8] The remaining directions relating to the expert conference contained in Minute 3 paragraph [12] [g] –[j] remain in place.

Mary Hill  
Takitimu North Link – Stage 2 Expert Panel Chair