
MINUTE 8 OF THE EXPERT PANEL
Invitation to Procedural Conference

Southern Link Inland Port FTAA-2604-1207
21 August 2026

[1] The Panel will convene a procedural conference at **2pm on Monday 24 August 2026**. This conference is procedural only and confined to the following subject matter arising from comments received under s53 and 55:

- a) Legal issues arising from comments received from Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou and the Applicant's legal submissions in response.
- b) Transportation issues for joint expert conferencing ahead of a joint witness empanelment hearing.
- c) Noise issues (including effects on dwellings and horses) for joint expert conferencing ahead of a joint witness empanelment hearing.
- d) Effects on Silver Stream (water quality, freshwater ecology, mahika kai, fishery, and cultural values) and the proposed adaptive management approach. We wish to discuss the merits of scheduling a multi-disciplinary joint expert empanelment hearing.

[2] The topics for discussion will be:

- a) Process for addressing legal issues identified in comments.
- b) Appointment of a specialist acoustics technical advisor to the Panel.
- c) Scheduling of expert witness conferencing and timetable for producing Joint Witness Statements (JWS) and whether those processes require independent facilitation.
- d) Hearing dates, venue, and time for joint empanelment of experts.
- e) Hearing dates, venue, and time for Panel questions on all conditions (in the event the Panel decides to approve the application).

- f) Need for other formal or informal alternative dispute resolution processes (ADR).
- g) Procedures for hearing time if required, including recognising tikanga Māori where appropriate and remote participation.

[3] An invitation to attend the conference has been sent to the following parties' representatives and their identified expert advisors are requested to attend:

- a) The Applicant's representative, planner, transportation, acoustics and freshwater ecology expert.
- b) Dunedin City Council (DCC) representative and transportation and acoustics experts.
- c) Otago Regional Council representative and freshwater ecologist.
- d) NZTA representative and transportation experts.
- e) Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou representative and freshwater expert.
- f) Otago Fish and Game Council, representative only.
- g) White Robe Lodge Limited, representative only.

[4] The Panel has not invited other commenters at this time because we have not identified any procedural matters arising from those comments needing to be addressed at this stage. Additional conferences may be required as we move through the decision-making process.

[5] Invited parties are required to confirm attendance by **9am on Monday 24th August 2026** and the EPA will send a calendar invite and link to the conference. The conference will be recorded and available on the website after the conference. The Panel will issue a Minute confirming directions following the conference.



Cindy Robinson
Expert Panel Chair