

7 November 2018

Chris White
Infrastructure Body Consultation
The Treasury
PO Box 3714
WELLINGTON 6140

via email: infrastructure@treasury.govt.nz

Dear Chris

A new independent infrastructure body

Thank you for the opportunity to submit regarding The Treasury's consultation document 'A New Independent Infrastructure Body' dated October 2018.

Through our three membership brands, the Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Business Central and ExportNZ, our organisation represents around 3,000 businesses across the central and lower North Island. Our organisation is one of the four regional organisations that make up the Business New Zealand family and is also accredited through the New Zealand Chambers of Commerce network.

The Wellington Chamber of Commerce has been the voice of business in the Wellington region since 1856 and advocates policies that reflect the interest of Wellington's business community, and the development of the Wellington economy as a whole.

Business Central represents employers and provides employment, health and safety, and human resources advice, and advocates policies that reflect the interest of the business community.

As a member of Business NZ, we support their submission from John Carnegie and have picked out some of the key aspects of Business NZ's positions that are particularly important to our members.

Recent Budgets have significantly increased government capital spending, but improvements to infrastructure planning, procurement, and construction are still needed. We therefore support the establishment of an independent infrastructure body. Independence from day-to-day political direction is a key concept differentiating the new

body from past incarnations. While there will always be the need for some funding decisions to be made by politicians, as is proper when allocating the Crown's limited resources, significant shifts in government priorities should only be undertaken on the basis of rigorous economic analysis.

The primary objective of the new body should be the planning, construction and use of infrastructure as an enabler of economic growth. The new entity should build experience and capability within the infrastructure sector, particularly in the areas of asset management and procurement. By giving the body responsibility for supporting government agencies and local councils in planning and delivering major infrastructure projects, it should boost the effectiveness of the money this country already spends.

The new body should be responsible for building a pipeline of projects in order to match private sector expertise whether it is in finance, engineering or construction to the range of projects New Zealand needs. Improving our roads, water supplies, and the like is vital to New Zealand remaining a great place to do business and raise a family. And in places like Wellington, resilience in the event of natural disasters is vitally important. The impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly relevant in many areas too.

Our infrastructure is stretched in many areas, and the need for high-quality, long-lasting upgrades is becoming increasingly urgent. We look forward to the new independent infrastructure body contributing to future economic growth and community wellbeing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Milford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

John Milford
Chief Executive
Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Business Central