

Charities Commission registers its first group application

Te Kotahitanga o Te Arawa Waka Fisheries Group is the first group of charities to become a registered 'single entity' under the new Charities Act.

Rotorua-based Te Kotahitanga o Te Arawa Waka Fisheries Trust Board is the 'parent' organisation which has led the application process and will act on the group's behalf. Other group members are Te Arawa Fisheries Limited, and Te Arawa Fisheries Holding Company Limited.

The Group encourages and provides training and education in fisheries management and conservation for Te Arawa.

Parent entity Chairperson Don Bennett said that the Group was happy with the registration process, and said that 'convenience' was their main reason for applying as a group, particularly in terms of managing administration and compliance obligations.

Applying to register a group of charities under the Charities Act is a two-stage process, which involves making an initial submission to the Charities Commission to treat the organisations as a group, then filling out a group application form.

To learn more about applying to register as a group visit http://www.charities.govt.nz/guidance/group_registration.html.

1000th charity registered – many more applications yet to be received

We recently registered our 1000th charity – congratulations to the Blenheim Assembly Of God Trust Board! The Trust Board carries out educational and charitable works in accordance with the constitution of the church.

Approximately 1,800 further applications have been received by the Commission and are currently being readied for analysis to ensure they meet the Charities Act's criteria. Anecdotally, we are aware that many charitable organisations know about registration, but are holding off for various reasons, or simply 'haven't got round to it'.

If this sounds like your organisation, we strongly advise you to make a start on your application now to avoid uncertainty around tax exemptions and the longer processing times that are likely to occur as our application queue grows. Many charities who are now registered have told us that once they started, it wasn't as hard as they expected!

Remember, our contact centre is here to help you with any questions you might have. You can email them on info@charities.govt.nz or call our freephone 0508 242 748.

Reappointment of Charities Commission board members

We are pleased to announce that the Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector Hon Luamanuvao Winnie Laban has reappointed three of the Charities Commission's board members for a second term of three years. Appointees are Frank Claridge, Ian Calder and deputy chair Judith Timpany, who between them have a wealth of professional and volunteer experience in the community and the charitable sector.

The appointments of the other four board members will be reviewed at different times to ensure we always have experienced people on our Board. To view the profiles of our board members visit

<http://www.charities.govt.nz/about/board.htm>.

Website offline briefly in September

Just a reminder that we will be doing some maintenance and installing some planned improvements to the website in September. We will let you know the exact timing closer to the date in a special *Update Newsflash*.

Annual meeting venues confirmed

Venues for the Commission's annual meetings (being held during November and December this year) have now been confirmed – so please mark them in your diary now.

As we are still in the relatively early stages of registering charities, we warmly welcome all registered and unregistered charities to attend and ask questions or make comments or submissions.

Details about the programme will be provided closer to the dates.

Wellington

Monday 19 November, 2pm - 4.30pm
National Library of New Zealand Auditorium
Corner of Molesworth and Aitken Streets (street level entrance on Aitken Street)

Christchurch

Wednesday 28 November, 2pm - 4.30pm
Canterbury Horticultural Hall
Hagley Park South, Riccarton Ave

Dunedin

Thursday 29 November, 2pm - 4.30pm
Dunedin Public Art Gallery Conference Room
30 The Octagon

Auckland

Monday 3 December, 2pm - 4.30pm
Fickling Centre
546 Mt Albert Road, Three Kings

Tauranga

Tuesday 4 December, 2pm - 4.30pm
Bureta Park Motor Inn, Redwood Room
Vale Street, Otumoetai

We look forward to seeing you there!

Tips from our registration analysts

Incorrect or incomplete applications cause delays and re-work. To ensure your application gets through the process as quickly and easily as possible, we urge you to check your application carefully before sending it in or submitting it online to us.

If you're not sure about anything, check our online help (i.e. FAQs and 'Tips for applying', and 'Fact sheets' – all links from the homepage), email info@charities.govt.nz or call our free information line 0508 242 748.

Here are some issues our registration analysts would like applicants to be aware of:

- *Only approved, final versions of the forms are acceptable* – some people are sending in draft copies of the application forms or designing their own versions. These will not be accepted by the Commission.
- *If you are already registered with the Companies Office your "legal name" is the full name you are already registered under* – The "legal name" of your organisation that you write on your application form must match the full name you are registered under with the Companies Office if you are already an incorporated society, incorporated as a board under the Charitable Trusts Act or a company. It is important to get this right. For a full explanation and other information on 'the name of your organisation' see <http://www.charities.govt.nz/guidance/name.html>. You can also check your legal name on the Companies Office website at www.companies.govt.nz.

- *Registered charities must fill out a Notification of Change Form to report any changes – After you have applied but before your organisation has been registered it is acceptable to write a letter notifying us of any changes to your application details. However, once registered, you need to fill out a Notification of Change Form. You must let us know about changes (including the date when the change comes into effect) to any of these six key areas: the name of your charity; address for service; balance date; rules; purposes of your charity; a change in the officers.*

You can find the Notification of Change Form on our website at http://www.charities.govt.nz/news/forms/bw_form_3.pdf. You will also be able to fill out the form online once we upgrade the Charities Register later this month. If you prefer, you can request a paper copy by emailing info@charities.govt.nz or by calling us on freephone 0508 242 748.

For more information on 'what do when something about your charity changes' visit <http://www.charities.govt.nz/news/factsheets/changes.htm>.

Translated guidance notes in six languages

Remember that translated guidance notes for Forms 1, 2 and 3 are now available in six languages - Korean, Māori, Samoan, Tongan, Chinese (traditional) and Arabic (found at

<http://www.charities.govt.nz/news/forms.htm>). Copies of 'A Guide to the Charities Act' (found at http://www.charities.govt.nz/news/charities_act.htm) are also available in these languages.

You can download any of these translations from our website, or to request copies email info@charities.govt.nz or call our freephone 0508 242 748. (You can also request a Language Line translator through this number – they speak 31 languages!).

Update readership survey

Update now has more than 4,200 subscribers, and we value your opinions! We'd like to invite your feedback on its content, frequency and usefulness. Please consider completing our readership survey by Friday 14 September – it takes just five minutes and will help us to ensure we respond to your information needs. We are very receptive to your thoughts and suggestions. We will let you know the results of our survey once they have been compiled.

Why not complete the survey now? Click on http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=bs7GOCvfSTGFE_2fx4q5GqtA_3d_3d to have your say!