

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Wairarapa Tararua's water entity officially launched today**

The establishment of Wairarapa Tararua's new water organisation reached a major milestone today with the launch of the entity, and the announcement of its Board and company name, Waiti Waters, at an event in Masterton.

"Today's event represents both a new beginning for the organisation, and a recognition of the hard work that has been done by Councils on water reform options over a number of years" says Craig Bowyer, Chair of the Stakeholders' Forum.

"This change will deliver benefits for the Wairarapa and Tararua communities through more sustainable water services, greater access to finance to support necessary infrastructure investment, and the establishment of a large new infrastructure employer in the region" Bowyer says.

Councils and iwi partners, Rangitāne and Ngāti Kahungunu, were proud to announce the new company's board of directors today, led by Adrienne Young-Cooper as the inaugural chair. Board members Clive Rundle, Jo Hayes, Maria Robertson and Sir Paul Collins have joined Young-Cooper to oversee the new entity.

The Board was appointed by the Stakeholders' Forum (the representative body of the four shareholding Councils and iwi partners) with the Forum thrilled by the calibre of Directors the opportunity attracted, who between them bring extensive experience in infrastructure, public sector and water industry governance, commercial and financial capability plus strong connections to the region and its wider communities.

Board chair Young-Cooper says in its Local Water Done Well reforms, the government gave communities the choice about the future of their water services. Wairarapa Tararua's commitment to a regional approach is significant and is important to recognise.

"Collaboration has been key to getting us to today – I thank our four Councils and iwi partners for their work in this space over the past few years. It is through them choosing to work together on a regional basis that we now have this plan, and this new entity, in place."

Waiti Waters was named in consultation with mana whenua, with Waiti representing the Matariki star associated with freshwater and the importance of freshwater for supporting life and wellbeing. The name also represents the partnership Councils, and the new company have with the region's iwi and the commitment to continuing to work together.

Moving forward, the Waiti Waters Board will now work together alongside Councils to establish the new organisation over the next 15 months and transition across Council water services, before it begins operations from 1 July 2027. The transition plan for the next 15 months is set out in the four Councils' Water Services Delivery Plans submitted to the government last year.

**Fast facts:**

- Waiti Waters will cover the four districts with approximately 25,000 connections.
- Waiti Waters will manage water assets with a value of approximately \$700m and a capital investment programme of \$400m over ten years
- The infrastructure currently contains 1322 kilometres of pipes; 14 reservoirs filled with fresh drinking water; 69 pump stations; 31 water and wastewater treatment plants across the four districts
- Waiti Waters will be operation on 1 July 2027.
- Waiti Waters is overseen by a stakeholder forum made up of representatives from each of the four shareholding Councils and two iwi – Masterton District Council, Carterton District Council, South Wairarapa District Council and Tararua District Council and Rangitāne and Ngāti Kahungunu.

**Editors please note:** Since 2019, Wellington Water Ltd (WWL) has managed water, wastewater, and stormwater services for South Wairarapa District Council. From 1 July 2026, WWL will operate as Tiaki Wai (Metro Water) to serve several Wellington councils, and South Wairarapa District Council will exit Wellington Water. This creates a one-year gap for South Wairarapa District Council before Waiti Waters is operational from 1 July 2027. Beginning in July 2026, water services to South Wairarapa District Council will be provided by Citycare Water and then from July 2027, South Wairarapa's water services (along with water services for Masterton, Carterton and Tararua Councils) will transfer to Waiti Waters. South Wairarapa's new arrangement with Citycare Water was also announced this week.

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