



EVENT BRIEFING

Attending the RCP New Zealand function, 1 May 2025

Date:	28 April 2025	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	REQ-0013049

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon James Meager Minister for the South Island	Attend and speak at 'Revitalising the South: A Conversation on Leadership, Growth and Regional Resilience'	1 May 2025

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Karl Woodhead	General Manager Strategy, Planning and Performance, Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit (Kānoa)	Privacy of natural persons	
Cory Hagenaars	South Island Lead Advisor, Kānoa	Privacy of natural persons	✓

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

Minister's office to complete:

☐ Approved

☐ Declined

☐ Noted

☐ Needs change

☐ Seen

☐ Overtaken by Events

☐ See Minister's Notes

☐ Withdrawn

Comments



EVENT BRIEFING

Attending the RCP New Zealand function, 1 May 2025

Date:	28 April 2025	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	REQ-0013049

Purpose

To provide logistical details and information about the 'Revitalising the South: A Conversation on Leadership, Growth and Regional Resilience' function, being held between 6.00pm and 8.30pm on 1 May 2025 in Dunedin, that you are speaking at.

Recommendations

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) recommend you:

- a **Note** the information in this briefing to support your attendance and speech at 'Revitalising the South: A Conversation on Leadership, Growth and Regional Resilience'.

Noted

Karl Woodhead
General Manager Strategy, Planning and Performance
Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit, MBIE

28 / 04 / 2025

Hon James Meager
Minister for the South Island

..... / /

Revitalising the South: A Conversation on Leadership, Growth and Regional Resilience

1. On 1 May 2025, you will attend and speak at the 'Revitalising the South: A Conversation on Leadership, Growth and Regional Resilience' function (the Function). This will be held at Forsyth Barr House, Level 10, 35 The Octagon, Dunedin, from 6.00pm to 8.30pm.
2. The Function is hosted by RCP New Zealand (RCP) and will be in the form of a 'cocktail event', with speeches and a short question and answer (Q&A) session. Bruce Goodger, Dunedin Manager, RCP, will be the master of ceremonies (MC).
3. The purpose of the Function is to bring together and engage with leading South Island infrastructure stakeholders. The theme of the Function is 'Driving Growth for the South Island'.
4. As Minister for the South Island, RCP are interested in hearing your priorities for the South Island portfolio, feedback you have received from your engagements with South Island stakeholders and perspective on what the Government can do right now to enable faster infrastructure delivery and investment certainty.
5. An itinerary for the Function is included below.

Time	Duration	Session
6.30pm	10 mins	Welcome and opening remarks Bruce Goodger, Dunedin Manager, RCP (MC).
6.40pm	30 mins	Speeches (10 minutes each) Mike Collins, Chief Executive, Business South. Hon James Meager, Minister for the South Island. Jeremy Hay, Managing Director, RCP.
7.10pm	10 mins	Q&A session Facilitated by Bruce Goodger, Dunedin Manager, RCP (MC).
7.20pm	5 mins	Summary and closing remarks Bruce Goodger, Dunedin Manager, RCP (MC).
7.25pm	Networking and refreshments.	




6. Draft speech notes on your ministerial priorities, infrastructure, and driving growth in the South Island are included at **Annex One**.
7. RCP provides independent strategic advice and project management services in the property, infrastructure, and construction sectors. RCP was founded in 1994 and has offices throughout New Zealand, including four in the South Island, as well as one in Vancouver, Canada.
8. RCP has supported a range of construction projects in the South Island, including:
 - Te Kaha, One New Zealand Stadium.
 - New Dunedin Hospital.
 - Queenstown Research & Innovation Centre.
 - Various developments following the Christchurch earthquakes.
9. Information on the Governments' actions to enable economic growth throughout New Zealand, including information on the Canterbury and Southland regions, has been provided

to you previously (briefing REQ-0011634 refers). Information on the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 and City and Regional Deals for Otago, West Coast, Tasman/Nelson, and Marlborough regions is attached at **Annex Two**.

10. Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit (Kānoa) manages \$883.30 million of approved funding across 743 projects in the South Island, and as of 31 March 2025, has paid \$720.20 million into these projects. These investments have attracted a total of \$1,057.10 million in co-funding. A dashboard on Kānoa's investment in the South Island is attached at **Annex Three**.

About the audience

11. Approximately 100 stakeholders are expected to attend the Function, including:
 - local government representatives
 - key leaders from the property, health, and education sectors
 - local iwi.
12. Bruce Goodger, Dunedin Manager, RCP will be MC for the Function.
13. Biographies of key attendees are below:

	<p>Jeremy Hay, Managing Director, RCP</p> <p>Jeremy has been with RCP since 1997.</p> <p>He has an architectural background, with a Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Auckland.</p> <p>Jeremy is also a trustee at Waka Pacific Trust and Keystone New Zealand Property Education Trust.</p>
	<p>Mike Collins, Chief Executive, Business South</p> <p>Mike was appointed Chief Executive of Business South in July 2021.</p> <p>Prior to his appointment, he was an Executive Director at Southern District Health Board from 2016 to 2021.</p> <p>Mike also serves as a director on the New Zealand Skills and Technology Otago Polytechnic Board.</p>
	<p>Bruce Goodger, Dunedin Regional Manager, RCP</p> <p>Bruce has been with RCP since 2012, starting as a Senior Project Manager before taking on his current role as Dunedin Regional Manager in 2021.</p> <p>Bruce has a background in construction and studied construction management and quantity surveying at the University of Otago.</p>

Risks and mitigations

14. No risks identified.

Logistics

15. You will be met on arrival by Jeremy Hay. His contact details are below:

Name	Position / organisation	Telephone
Jeremy Hay	Managing Director, RCP	Privacy of natural persons

Communications / Media

16. No media will be present at this event.

Annexes

Annex One: Draft speech notes – “Revitalising the South”

Annex Two: Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 and City and Regional Deals for Otago, West Coast, Marlborough, and Tasman/Nelson

Annex Three: Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit managed Investments in the South Island

Annex One: Draft speech notes – “Revitalising the South”

You will be introduced by Bruce Goodger, Dunedin Manager, RCP.

Your allocated speaking slot is 5-10 minutes, with an additional 10-minutes Q&A.

INTRODUCTION

- It is a pleasure to be here this evening as Minister for the South Island at an event very close to my heart – ‘Revitalising the South’.
- The South Island has huge potential. I knew this coming into the role, and this has been strengthened through the various engagements I have had since becoming Minister for the South Island.
- In my role as Minister for the South Island, I want to make sure that the South Island economy gets its fair share of economic growth and job creation so that we can all benefit from the opportunities and prosperity that economic growth provides us.

GOING FOR GROWTH

- Today I would like to discuss how this Government is working hard to unlock New Zealand’s potential and make our economy grow faster, and more importantly, **my priorities for economic growth for the South Island**.
- In February of this year, the Government released our *Going For Growth* approach, released by the Honourable Nicola Willis in the newly created role of Minister for Economic Growth.
- Economic growth is key to raising living standards, creating higher-paying jobs and delivering the vital infrastructure and public services New Zealanders want and deserve. That’s why earlier this year this Government created the Economic Growth portfolio and the *Going For Growth* approach.
- *Going For Growth* sets out five pillars to drive our push for economic growth – **developing talent; competitive business settings; promoting global trade and investment; innovation, technology and science; and infrastructure for growth**.
- Our economic potential will be unleashed by focusing on the five pillars and fostering investment, innovation and taking calculated risks. Removing barriers and creating incentives empowers businesses to drive growth, ensuring market forces fuel prosperity.

The South Island

- Through my role as Minister for the South Island my primary objective is to advocate for and coordinate policies which will stimulate economic growth, ensuring the South Island’s substantial contribution to New Zealand’s overall economic success.
- I have three key areas to focus on for the South Island portfolio, which are directly linked to *Going For Growth*. These are:
- **Aiming to double our exports and lift the contribution to GDP:** This means not only increasing the amount we export but increasing the value of our exports.

- The South Island makes up around 23 per cent of New Zealand's population and 22 per cent of the national GDP. By increasing productivity, expanding market access, and enhancing global competitiveness by strengthening key industry, the South Island can be a hub for economic growth.
- ***Investing in resilient, reliable infrastructure which supports growth:*** The South Islands' infrastructure is vulnerable to natural disasters and disruptions, so it is key that we ensure the South Island has the resilient and future-focused infrastructure necessary to drive economic growth, support communities, and mitigate the impacts of natural disaster.
- ***Enhancing and improving delivery of core public services:*** It is critical that the South Island has improved core public services, including healthcare access and workforce retention, and enhanced law and order services.
- Keeping the South Island economy moving and connecting the right people and resources together will help improve living standards and economic outcomes. We all see the potential of sectors in the South Island in contributing to this.
- The South Island has huge potential. This was highlighted in ASB's recent Quarterly Regional Scoreboard, where the South Island secured the top four places for economic growth and performance, with Otago in first place, Canterbury in second, Tasman in third, and Southland taking the fourth place.

INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

- I want to return to talk about investing in Infrastructure, for two reasons – the importance for getting us on track, and that this is an event hosted by RCP, who I know have been providing their infrastructure expertise in the South Island for more than three decades, delivering solutions tailored to regional needs.
- New Zealand's infrastructure deficit is limiting productivity and higher living standards. According to the International Monetary Fund, closing New Zealand's infrastructure gap could increase real GDP by as much as 0.8 per cent in the long term.
- New Zealand faces several challenges in delivering world-class infrastructure. It has become too difficult to build in New Zealand, with complex and inefficient resource management and regulatory processes having slowed down project approvals and delivery. The affordability of large-scale infrastructure projects remains a key issue, necessitating innovative funding and financing solutions.
- I know the South Island faces infrastructure funding challenges, including for its large roading network and its community infrastructure which is managed and delivered by local councils. Additional infrastructure is also needed to support the resilience of key sectors, such as tourism infrastructure to support high visitor numbers in regional destinations with small populations, and water infrastructure for agriculture.
- The Government has set up and is delivering the \$1.2 billion Regional Infrastructure Fund to invest in regional growth initiatives to grow local economies and create jobs, and passed the Fast-track Approvals Act to speed up consenting decisions of projects with significant regional or national benefits.

- By the end of 2025 we intend to have completed a 30-year National Infrastructure Plan and finalised the first City and Regional Deal between central and local government to support collaboration for long-term infrastructure investment.
- As a Government, we can't do this on our own. We need to lean on the experience and expertise of organisations like RCP, who have been involved in managing and advising infrastructure projects across the South Island from Dolomite Point to the new Dunedin Hospital.
- For too long the focus has been on delivering highly bespoke projects in small Southern regions where reinventing the wheel seemed like the only option. If we are to get serious about growing productivity in New Zealand, and we are, we need to focus on solutions that are developed at the national level but optimised and delivered at the local level. That's where we need to work in partnership with each other.

THANKS/CONCLUSION

- Thank you for the opportunity to talk to you this evening. I look forward to working across central and local government and with regional stakeholders to ensure the huge potential of the South Island is realised.
- I look forward to engaging with you over the course of this evening, and over the coming months, on how we can work together to realise the potential of the South Island.
- Thank you.

Annex Two: Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 and City and Regional Deals for Otago, West Coast, Marlborough, and Tasman/Nelson

Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

The Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 was enacted on 23 December 2024. Schedule 2 includes a list of 149 projects¹ which can apply directly for consideration. Of the 149 projects:

- Fifteen are in the Otago region.
- Four are in the West Coast region.
- Three are in the Tasman/Nelson region.
- One is in the Marlborough region

Otago

Sector	No. of Projects
Housing and Land Development	10
Mining and Quarrying	2
Renewable Energy	2
Aquaculture and Farming	1
Total	15

West Coast

Sector	No. of Projects
Housing and Land Development	1
Mining and Quarrying	2
Renewable Energy	1
Total	4

Tasman

Sector	No. of Projects
Housing and Land Development	2
Infrastructure	1
Total	3

¹ In October 2024, the Government released high-level information on 149 projects it decided to list in the Fast-track Approvals Act: [Government press release: "Fast-track projects released"](#).

Marlborough

Sector	No. of Projects
Aquaculture and Farming	1

[IN-CONFIDENCE] City and Regional Deals

Councils were invited to submit a City and Regional Deal (CRD) proposal by 28 February 2025.

Confidential advice to Government

Otago

Confidential advice to Government

West Coast:

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government




Marlborough:

Confidential advice to Government



Tasman/Nelson

Confidential advice to Government



Annex Three: Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit managed Investments in the South Island

