



**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,  
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**  
HIKINA WHAKATUTUKI

## South Island Portfolio - Fortnightly Report

<b>Week ending:</b>	1 April 2025	<b>Priority:</b>	Medium
<b>Security classification:</b>	In Confidence	<b>Tracking number:</b>	REQ-0011908
<b>Recipient</b>		<b>Action sought</b>	
Hon James Meager Minister for the South Island		Note the contents of this report.	

**Ministers' and Ministers' Office comments**

## 1. Portfolio Update

<p><b>1.1 Regional Tourism Boost Fund</b></p> <p>Cory Hagenars, South Island Lead Advisor, Strategy, Planning and Performance, Kānoa – Regional Economic Development &amp; Investment Unit (Kānoa)</p>	<p>The Regional Tourism Boost Fund (RTBF) was announced on 20 February 2025. It is a contestable fund providing \$3.00 million to support regions to attract more international visitors and encourage dispersal of international visitors around the country. Funding comes from the International Conservation and Tourism Visitor Levy.</p> <p>Activities funded by the RTBF will be delivered between April and July 2025 and will target Autumn/Winter visitation.</p> <p>The funding is spread across six initiatives to drive international visitor numbers from the top of the North Island to the bottom of the South Island. Most will target the Australian market, with one national initiative designed to encourage visitors from North America.</p> <p>Applications were required to be a collaborative effort led by a Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO). Five of the six initiatives will fund initiatives that will impact the South Island:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$600,000 for a central South Island initiative led by ChristchurchNZ for a winter-focused marketing campaign encouraging Australians to travel to the Canterbury and West Coast regions.</li> <li>• \$170,000 for a top of the South initiative led by Development West Coast for promotional activities encouraging Australians to visit for luxury experiences.</li> <li>• \$350,000 for a lower South Island initiative led by Great South for a marketing campaign encouraging Australians to travel from the Gold Coast.</li> <li>• \$600,000 for a central North Island and Nelson / Marlborough initiative led by WellingtonNZ for promotional activities to visit Wellington and surrounding regions.</li> <li>• \$680,000 for a nation-wide initiative, led by Tātaki Auckland Unlimited, for promotional activities encouraging North Americans to visit and disperse around New Zealand.</li> </ul> <p>Source: <a href="#">Funding to attract more international visitors to regional New Zealand   Ministry of Business, Innovation &amp; Employment</a></p>
<p><b>1.2 West Coast Wildlife Centre invests \$3m in new experience</b></p> <p>Cory Hagenars, South Island Lead Advisor</p>	<p>The West Coast Wildlife Centre has announced a \$3.00 million investment to enhance its facilities. The project funds construction of a new enclosure for the little blue penguins that are unable to return to the wild due to injuries. This initiative aims to provide a safe environment for these penguins, offering visitors an opportunity to engage with and learn about the species.</p> <p>The development is part of a broader effort to boost tourism and wildlife conservation in the region.</p> <p>Source: <a href="#">West Coast Wildlife Centre invests \$3m in new experience   Tourism Ticker</a></p>
<p><b>1.3 South Island Major events</b></p> <p>Kylie Hawker-Green Manager Major Events, Economic Development &amp; Tourism</p>	<p>New Zealand Major Events (NZME) at Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment partners with event stakeholders to attract, deliver and leverage major events to secure benefits that align with Government priorities. NZME also connects the events sector and the operational arms of government, maintains oversight of event risks of relevance to the Crown, administers the Major Events Fund (MEF), and manages these investments.</p> <p><b>Active Major Event matters:</b></p> <p>Commercial Information</p>

	<p>Commercial Information</p> <p><i>MEF investment under consideration - South Island based Supercars round</i></p> <p>Government has an existing \$5.00 million MEF investment in the 2024-2026 Taupō Super 400 (Supercars Championship events). Supercars owners have proposed introducing a second South Island based round to be held the weekend after the Taupō event to extend international visitor stay. They have applied for a \$5.90 million MEF investment to provide funding for the South Island based event to be held in 2026 and to deliver both the Taupō and South Island events in 2027-2028.</p> <p>Supercars conducted a venue selection process identifying Ruapuna Motorsport Park in Christchurch as the host venue if investment is approved. Commercial Information</p> <p>The Taupō and Christchurch 2026-2028 events are forecast to generate Commercial Information</p> <p>Officials will present the Minister of Tourism and Hospitality with investment advice on this opportunity the week beginning 31 March 2025. We will provide an update through this fortnightly report once a decision has been made.</p> <p><i>MEF applications and active prospects</i></p> <p>Commercial Information</p>
<p><b>1.4 Regional gross domestic product: Year ended March 2024</b></p> <p>Privacy of natural persons</p> <p>Lead Domain Analyst, Data Service Delivery, Data, Insights and Intelligence, Corporate and Digital Shared Services</p>	<p>On Tuesday 25 March 2025, Stats NZ released <a href="#">Regional Gross Domestic Product (RGDP) for the year ended March 2024</a>. The nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the South Island grew 5.8 per cent to \$93,250 million, and its contribution to the total GDP increased for the third year in a row, to 22.5 per cent.</p> <p>In terms of regional economic growth, the performance of the South Island regions was polarized in the year ended March 2024. While West Coast (7.9 per cent), Otago (6.3 per cent) and Canterbury (6.0 per cent) were the top 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> fastest growing regional economies, Tasman/Nelson (3.9 per cent) was the slowest growing region in New Zealand. It is worth highlighting that Canterbury has overtaken Wellington as the second largest regional economy in 2024.</p> <p>As for the industry profile, Manufacturing contributed the most (11.6 per cent) to the South Island economy, followed by Construction (9.4 per cent) and Owner-Occupied Property Operation (9.0 per cent) in the year ended March 2023. Manufacturing was also the largest contributor to the regional economies for most South Island regions, apart from Otago and the West Coast. Construction was the largest industry in Otago (10.7 per cent), while Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services was the largest in the West Coast (15.9 per cent).</p>

	Industry	Canterbury	Marlborough	Otago	Southland	Tasman/ Nelson	West Coast
	Accommodation	\$383m	\$34m	\$409m	\$64m	\$58m	\$40m
	Administrative and Support Services	\$844m	\$68m	\$334m	\$56m	\$182m	\$17m
	Agriculture	\$2,670m	\$452m	\$789m	\$1,251m	\$269m	\$240m
	Construction	\$4,281m	\$216m	\$1,840m	\$459m	\$614m	\$174m
	Education and Training	\$1,888m	\$94m	\$1,035m	\$254m	\$242m	\$66m
	Financial and Insurance Services	\$1,917m	\$49m	\$354m	\$183m	\$151m	\$35m
	Food and beverage services	\$719m	\$50m	\$382m	\$101m	\$153m	\$33m
	Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	\$2,335m	\$383m	\$1,179m	\$793m	\$411m	\$381m
	Health Care and Social Assistance	\$3,472m	\$216m	\$1,231m	\$482m	\$550m	\$159m
	Information Media, Telecommunications and Other Services	\$2,153m	\$107m	\$789m	\$291m	\$273m	\$92m
	Manufacturing	\$4,804m	\$833m	\$1,055m	\$1,500m	\$814m	\$325m
	Owner-Occupied Property Operation	\$3,732m	\$361m	\$1,676m	\$521m	\$755m	\$192m
	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	\$4,156m	\$124m	\$1,032m	\$250m	\$475m	\$46m
	Public Administration and Safety	\$1,565m	\$122m	\$478m	\$154m	\$161m	\$52m
	Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	\$3,154m	\$270m	\$1,251m	\$426m	\$621m	\$123m
	Retail Trade	\$2,180m	\$166m	\$789m	\$344m	\$371m	\$98m
	Transport, Postal and Warehousing	\$2,155m	\$189m	\$747m	\$360m	\$367m	\$98m
	Wholesale Trade	\$2,232m	\$80m	\$328m	\$207m	\$258m	\$34m
<b>1.5 Regional Council Updates</b>	There are no Regional Council Updates.						

## 2. Hon. James Meager - Upcoming Ministerial Items – Minister for the South Island

### 2.1 Upcoming Meetings, Events and Ministerial Visits

Event details	Event	Event Details
04/04/2025	Business Canterbury Ministerial Briefing, University of Canterbury meeting, and University of the Third Age Members Event	<p>You will attend and speak at the Business Canterbury Ministerial Briefing event at Business Canterbury's offices in Christchurch.</p> <p>Following this you will meet with Cheryl de la Ray, Vice-Chancellor, University of Canterbury (UC). This meeting is an opportunity to be briefed on the contribution UC is making to local communities, key challenges and opportunities anticipated in the future, and how UC can align its expertise and resources with your vision and priorities for the South Island.</p> <p>You will then attend and speak at the University of the Third Age Christchurch member's event.</p> <p>A briefing has been provided to you (briefing REQ-0010628 refers).</p>
08/04/2025	Meeting with Hon Simon Watts (at the Beehive)	<p>You will meet with Hon Simon Watts to discuss the South Island Portfolio and its relevancy to the Local Water Done Well initiative, City and Regional Deals and Energy.</p> <p>A briefing is being prepared for you.</p>
09/04/2025	<p>Connecting Canterbury: Strengthening Infrastructure for Growth (the Events series) (Sudima, Christchurch)</p> <p>Meeting with Christchurch NZ (BNZ Centre, Christchurch)</p> <p>Meeting with Tā Tipene (Ngai Tahu, Show Place, Addington)</p>	<p>You will attend the first event, which is a strategy workshop attended by a mix of local government representatives, infrastructure and transport experts, business leaders, policy makers, and industry stakeholders.</p> <p>Nick Legget, Chief Executive of Infrastructure New Zealand, will introduce you, where you will give the opening address.</p> <p>You will meet with Christchurch NZ, the Regional Economic Development Agency for Christchurch, to discuss their economic development plans.</p> <p>Following this you will meet with Tā Tipene to discuss regional development and opportunities in Murihiku Southland.</p> <p>A briefing is being prepared for you.</p>

10/04/2024	Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) for Zone 5 and 6 meeting	You will speak at the LGNZ, for Zone 6 and 6. This will be an online meeting. Details are to be confirmed. A briefing is being prepared for you.
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## 2.2 Upcoming Briefings and Aides Memoire

Due to MO	Tracking Number	Product
04/04/2025	REQ-0010626	Meeting with Hon Simon Watts, 26 March 2025
07/04/2025	REQ-0011634	Connecting Canterbury – Strengthening Infrastructure for Growth
08/04/2025	REQ-0010010	2024/25 Supplementary and 2025/26 Main Estimates – Vote BSI- South Island
08/04/2025	REQ-0012050	Attending the LGNZ zone 5 and 6 meeting
18/04/2025	REQ-0012144	Key Stakeholders and Events for the South Island Portfolio <span>Note: briefing was cancelled</span>

## 2.3 New Written Parliamentary Questions

New items are indicated in red.

Due date	Tracking number	Requester	Summary of request
04/04/2025	15384 (2025)	Francisco Hernandez	What advice, reports, briefings, aide memoires, or any other documents has the Minister or any member of their Office received, if any, during the week beginning 24 March 2025, by title and date?

## 2.4 Ministerial correspondence received

Due date	Tracking number	Requester	Summary of request
11/04/2025	JMC-148	Privacy of natural persons (member of the public)	Requests information regarding the South Island Portfolio and infrastructure projects under the portfolio.
11/04/2025	JMC-120	Privacy of natural persons (member of the public)	Asks about your responsibilities as Minister of the South Island.

## 2.5 Official Information Act requests received

Due date	Tracking number	Requester	Summary of request	Status
07/04/2025	MOIA-REQ-0011337	Privacy of natural persons	Requests titles and dates of any reports or briefings provided to your office.	In progress