



David Smol
Board Chair
New Zealand Institute for Earth Science Limited
By email to: Privacy of natural persons

Dear David

ANNUAL LETTER OF EXPECTATIONS FOR 2025/26

I am writing to outline additional expectations for your role as Chair of the **New Zealand Institute for Earth Science Limited (ESI)**, in support of the Government's broader science, innovation and technology (SI&T) reforms.

These expectations build on those outlined in your appointment letter sent on 14 May 2025, which remains the primary reference for your governance responsibilities and performance expectations, including ensuring financial sustainability.

The overarching objective of the Government's science reforms is to improve the contribution of science and innovation to the economic growth and the wellbeing of New Zealanders. The merging of CRIs and the planned transition to Public Research Organisations creates a real opportunity to enhance the role your organisation can play in achieving this goal.

In addition to the expectations of your aforementioned appointment letter, I expect the Board to:

- Proactively leverage the Government's investment in science for improved economic outcomes for New Zealanders, aligned with Government priorities.
- Promote innovation and commercial outcomes through partnerships with end users and co-investment with the private sector.
- Strengthen integration and alignment of the broader science system, in particular with universities.

These expectations are intended to support the successful establishment and operation of the new Crown Research Institutes and to ensure alignment with the Government's strategic objectives.

I also expect ESI to successfully develop and implement its transition plan, including confirming its new name and branding, and to submit a draft to my office by 1 October 2025.

I expect that this plan will outline how ESI will approach rationalising its operational and physical footprint to ensure that it will make effective and efficient use of infrastructure and

resources. This includes leveraging existing eResearch services, such as those offered by Research and Education Advanced Network New Zealand Limited and New Zealand eScience Infrastructure.

Integration with Meteorological Service of New Zealand Limited (MetService)

As part of the Weather Forecasting System changes agreed by Cabinet, I expect ESI to continue integration with MetService over the coming months. I also expect ESI to ensure the successful acquisition of MetService as a wholly-owned subsidiary once legislation permitting this receives Royal Assent.

Please keep my officials informed of your progress throughout the year, including any areas where priorities are not being advanced as intended.

Finally, there is a government drive for improved visibility of the outcomes and impact achieved by the investment of government funding. I expect you to adopt clear and transparent indicators that give visibility over how outcomes and impact are being achieved now and into the future.

If you need further clarification, please contact Michael Bird or Nicola Scott.

Yours sincerely

Hon Dr Shane Reti
Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology
On behalf of shareholding Ministers

cc John Morgan, Chief Executive, ESI, by email to: john.morgan@niwa.co.nz