

Infrastructure Advisory Board Appointments Welcomed

Media Statement

25 May 2009

The New Zealand Council for Infrastructure Development has welcomed the appointment of the eight member National Infrastructure Advisory Board

"Developing our national infrastructure is key to improving New Zealand's international competitiveness", says NZCID Chief Executive, Stephen Selwood.

"Inadequate infrastructure is consistently ranked by the investment and business community as the single most problematic factor to doing business in New Zealand. 1

"We therefore fully endorse the Government's decision to appoint an expert advisory board to provide independent advice to government on infrastructure priorities and policies that will lift New Zealand's standard of living.

"Now is exactly the right time to invest for growth.

"For too long New Zealand's infrastructure has been characterised by a stop start, boom bust, investment cycle,

"Complex decision making, torturous approval and consenting processes combined with insufficient "pay as you go" funding have severely inhibited New Zealand's infrastructure development over the last two decades.

"Not only has this led to inefficient use of the limited tax payer funds, it has resulted in roads with insufficient capacity, inadequate public transport services, a rundown rail network, tenuous electricity transmission capacity, slow broadband speeds, water supplies that fail minimum health standards and insufficient capacity in our hospitals, schools, courts and prisons. 2

"A key priority for the Board is to develop best practice in public procurement processes and maximise collaboration between the public and private sectors.

"We expect the Board to recommend ways to unravel the red tape. It will provide advice on development of a 20 year infrastructure plan that is supported by a committed funding programme.

"These changes will help put in place the infrastructure building blocks needed to lift national competitiveness, improve environmental sustainability and enhance community services", Selwood says.

1: As evidenced by World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness and IMD World Competitiveness reports, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008.

2: For detailed discussion of these issues see NZCID policy paper: Policy Priorities for Advancing Economic Infrastructure in New Zealand

National Infrastructure Advisory Board member profiles:

Dr Rod Carr (Chair) is Vice-Chancellor of the University of Canterbury and a former managing director of Jade Software Corporation. Dr Carr was also Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank and has held senior executive roles at the Bank of New Zealand and National Australia Bank. Dr Carr is currently vice-president of the Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce and is a director of Lyttelton Port Company Ltd and Taranaki Investment Management.

Sir Ron Carter is an experienced consulting civil engineer. He was founding director, chief executive and chair of Beca Group Ltd. Current board positions include Trustpower Ltd, Rugby World Cup 2011 Ltd and Rural Equities Ltd.

Mr Lindsay Crossen was NZ operations manager, then chief executive, for Fulton Hogan New Zealand Group from 1998 to 2008. He is currently a civil engineer with Fulton Hogan and a director of several companies. He is also an executive committee member of Roothing NZ.

Dr Arthur Grimes has been a Reserve Bank director since 2002. He is a senior fellow of Motu Economic & Public Policy Research Trust, chairman of Hugo Group, and adjunct Professor, University of Waikato.

Dr Terence Heiler is an engineer with many years experience as a consultant and engineering researcher (NZAEI Lincoln College Director). He has management and governance experience including seven years as a director of Landcare Research Ltd.

Mr Rob McLeod is the managing partner of Ernst & Young New Zealand and has been a specialist tax practitioner for more than 20 years. He is an experienced director and is currently a member of the Taskforce on Maori Economy, the Capital Market Development Taskforce

and the independent Ministerial Advisory Panel for the recently announced Defence Review.

Mr John Rae is chairman and managing director of the Stevenson Group. Mr Rae has been involved in banking in New Zealand and London in various treasury and capital market roles and has a background in private equity, venture capital and corporate finance transactions. Mr Rae is currently chairman of the New Zealand Council for Infrastructure Development.

Mr Alex Sundakov is executive director of Castalia. He is an economist who has worked at the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, the International Monetary Fund, and The Treasury.