

Couple devastated after sheep killed in dog attacks P3



The Northern Advocate

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Coastal car-free zones

New bans in place for vehicles on a number of Northland beaches



Vehicles are now banned from specific areas of Northland's beaches under toughened rules. Each summer, thousands of vehicles drive on the region's 3200-kilometre coastline.

The new rules kicked in on Tuesday as part of the newly operative December 2023 Northland Regional Plan (operative in part).

The plan, signed off by the Minister of Conservation in October, was formally voted into effect by Northland Regional Council (NRC).

General rules applying to all of Northland's beaches have been beefed up to help protect biodiversity such as shorebirds and shellfish.

The plan also includes new mapped vehicle exclusion zones with additional requirements.

Vehicles will not be allowed to drive on a beach or parts of a beach inside an exclusion zone.

NRC group manager of environmental services Ruben Wylie said the new rules meant the driving of vehicles would be allowed to continue on most of the region's beaches, if certain conditions were met.

"Key among these conditions is the protection of sensitive habitats and



Beachgoers regularly drive along stretches of Northland's 3200km coastline.

Photo / Michael Cunningham

People will need to be mindful when driving on beaches.

Ruben Wylie

native plants and animals. "People will need to be mindful when driving on beaches to avoid sites that contain shellfish beds, bird nesting or roosting sites and indigenous vegetation, such as seagrass and saltmarsh."

Vehicle use in the new exclusion zones had been further restricted to manage the risk to significant ecological areas and threatened species, he

said. Any vehicles driving on beaches where they shouldn't now risk fines of up to \$500.

Vehicles cannot drive on pipi and cockle beds, or damage beds of other types of shellfish such as tuatua or toheroa.

However, vehicles harvesting Ninety Mile Beach mussel spat are exempt.

The Regional Plan also states vehicles can only be on beaches if there is no disturbance or damage to indigenous or migratory bird nesting or roosting sites.

They cannot drive across seagrass meadows, saltmarsh, or mangroves or their aerial roots.

Access to the foreshore is only allowed via authorised or existing lawful vehicle access points.

Vehicles are not allowed to be driven in these exclusion zones, other than for specified exceptions.

These include rescuing or burying a stranded whale or for mobility disability access (if displaying a mobility card).

They also include accessing private property and launching or retrieving boats – although that must be done at the foreshore's "closest practicable point".

"It is not anticipated to involve using vehicles to travel hundreds of metres to the 'best' or preferred area," the plan states.

Wylie said the new Regional Plan rules applied only to the area of the beach below high tide, in line with the regional council's functions under the Resource Management Act.

"In some places, rules administered by a local council or the Department of Conservation may also apply.

NRC was working with these agencies, police and tangata whenua on the implementation of the new rules, he said.

There would be a big emphasis on

continued on A2



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Where athletes always win

To celebrate Christmas, each day for 12 days the *Advocate* is sharing a Northland charity or organisation that supports the community. In turn, you can learn how to help them this festive season. Today, we speak to the Special Olympics Whangārei.

Karina Cooper

Few people may know that Special Olympics Whangārei has a connection with the 35th president of the United States, John F. Kennedy. Or to his sister, at least.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver started Special Olympics in the US in 1968, and since then the organisation has spread to 193 countries around the world.

Special Olympics Whangārei and Dargaville chairman Martin Barrie said despite this famous link, many people never hear about the global organisation, dedicated to inclusion and creating community.

Flying under the radar wasn't intentional, he explained.

"Our Olympics are not, however, about the best three but about all our athletes – the mental and physical hurdles they must overcome to enable them to compete.

"For this reason, you may get a bit confused at our games because quite often, the last athlete across the line gets the biggest cheer and they deserve it."

Barrie said Special Olympics gives people with intellectual disabilities a reason to "walk with their shoulders back, a spring in their step and the confidence" to look people in the eye and "say: I am worth it."

He said the club's motto – "For the athlete by the athlete" – was a driving force.

"We advocate for the athlete to take centre stage and have a say in the running of it."

The club has more than 60 athletes with a wide range of intellectual disabilities such as Down syndrome, autism, and the genetic disorder fragile X syndrome.

They take part in athletics, indoor bowls, ten-pin bowling, swimming, basketball, and football.

Barrie said finding volunteers with an interest in sport and sharing their skills with the athletes, each of whom comes with their own qualities and challenges, can be tough.

But, more importantly, finding volunteers with a real desire to walk alongside club members and encourage them to realise their potential and grow was key.

"We are woefully short of volunteers. All we ask is an hour a week. Believe me, it becomes addictive," Barrie said.

The club is gearing up for the 2025



Swimming is one of the key sports at Special Olympics Whangārei.

We advocate for the athlete to take centre stage.

Martin Barrie

Special Olympics National Summer Games to be held in Christchurch, and is looking for ideas to help it afford sending the group of 50 participants south.

"We would welcome donations, but would rather raise these funds ourselves," Barrie said.

"If you can come up with novel ways to fundraise and maybe support us, we would be so grateful."

● Anyone able to volunteer or help with fundraising is encouraged to contact Barrie at martinbarrie10@gmail.com



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Dog attacks kill 13 sheep

Couple devastated after two dogs target their flock

Avneesh Vincent

A Whangārei couple are devastated after a pair of roaming dogs mauled 13 of their sheep during two attacks in the past three weeks.

Gabriel Henry and his partner Kim Booth woke up around 3am last Thursday to an "unusual squealing" noise coming from their paddocks. It wasn't until morning that they found five of their sheep lying lifeless in a mutilated condition.

The morbid sight wasn't a first for the couple as they had previously lost eight of their sheep to a dog attack in November.

"Although I didn't see our sheep get attacked this time. I do remember seeing a big black dog chasing one of them in the middle of the night during the first time," Henry said.

Back then, he recalls waking up to a similar eerie squeal he heard last week and after he headed down to his paddock, he discovered the mangled remains of his dead sheep everywhere.

At the same time, he reportedly saw two people walking at a distance and suspected the dogs belonged to them. He couldn't catch up to the duo as he stayed behind to comfort the remaining sheep which survived.

"That night I couldn't sleep well and woke up every moment I heard something. The next day, I took the dead sheep to the vet who confirmed through the bite marks that there were two dogs involved - one big and another a small one," Henry said.

His partner Booth said they have had enough after the second attack. "While some surviving sheep are still reeling from the injuries they sustained during the attack, others are living in fear."

The couple decided to go public to share their concerns with the community and hold the dogs' owners responsible.

Their neighbour Sue Steven also lost sheep last Thursday, although



Otaika couple Kim Booth and Gabriel Henry are still reeling from shock after they lost 13 sheep to dog attacks.



Kim Booth says their surviving sheep are still recovering from the injuries sustained during the dog attacks.

Photo / Michael Cunningham

she said only a couple were killed.

Steven, who lives behind the Otaika Valley School, said she had woken up to the sound of "dogs barking" but couldn't locate the canines in the dark.

However, after sunrise she found her sheep lying in the paddock with their legs in the air and throats ripped out.

"This is the first time something like this has happened to me. I feel that whoever owns these dogs knows

what's happening because their dogs must have been covered in blood when they went home.

"And once dogs get a taste of sheep, they will keep coming back," she said.

Council manager for health and bylaws Reiner Mussle said while they have no firm leads on the dogs responsible, two suspected stray dogs were filmed on the school grounds around the same time as one of the attacks.

"A letter with pictures of these dogs

has been distributed to see if they can be identified. By this, we hope to reach a large number of people and in the meantime continue our investigations," Mussle said.

Steven's neighbour Henry said people who own stock should remain vigilant.

"And irresponsible dog owners should be held accountable as it's not the dog's fault but the one who trained them."

Federated Farmers Northland president Colin Hannah said in rural farms it was not uncommon to hear of dogs mauling sheep.

He recalled a time when he had to shoot two rabid dogs from a neighbouring property who killed 31 lambs on his farm in Waikato.

"Although for urban-centred farms, trapping would be more suitable and safer. And Whangārei District Council's Animal Control team would be able to help with it," he said.

Both Henry and Steven said they had already contacted Animal Control and were waiting to hear back from them.

Elephants go missing

Police are looking for two elephant statues that went missing from a Whangārei property between Monday night and Tuesday morning. The statues are about knee height and weigh 4 to 5kg each. Police said the pot plants atop them were left on the ground at the start of the owner's driveway. Anyone with information can call 105 or Crime Stoppers on 0800 555 111, and reference the file number: 231212/2092

Paintball call-out

Police were called to a firearms incident in Onerahi on Tuesday night that turned out to be a person spotted shooting a paintball gun at a tree. Police said there were no injuries or arrests.

Free bus services

Last-minute Christmas errands will be a little bit easier with free buses on December 22. All CityLink services, plus BusLink services that run on Fridays, will be free of charge thanks to Northland Regional Council and bus operators. Passengers are advised to check the CityLink Whangārei and BusLink websites for up-to-date timetables, and are reminded the buses do not run on public holidays.

Bussing to the beach

Summer bus runs that allow easy access to the beach are back this year. The buses will run between Whangārei and Ocean Beach and Ruakākā Beach every Thursday, from December 21 to January 25, at \$5 each way. The Ocean Beach bus leaves Rose St at 10am, returning at 2.30pm, while the Ruakākā Beach bus departs Rose St at 11.15am and returns at 2pm on Thursdays.

Save that water

Retailers in the Far North are helping the council remind residents and visitors about water conservation with a drier-than-usual summer predicted. Far North District Council signs are displayed outside several shops, service stations, and food outlets this summer where council water supplies are provided. At present, there are no water restrictions in the Far North.

Driving refreshed

Northland Road Safety Trust is hosting its next fatigue stop tomorrow. Barista Rodolfo will be making free coffee for drivers who stop to take a break. There will also be free snacks and giveaways. The stop can be found on SH1 opposite Uretiti (northbound side) from 11am until 4pm as long as the weather holds. The stop aims to encourage safe and refreshed driving on the region's roads.

Vehicles now banned on some Northland beaches

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education around the new conditions this summer, before enforcement.

Important next steps included working with communities around education about the new maps.

Langs Beach-based Northland Regional Council (NRC) councillor Rick Stolwerk said the new rules would be

greatly appreciated by the public. The Ruakākā community had been waiting a long time for them.

Councillor John Blackwell said it was important implementation was sorted ahead of the Christmas rush, when huge numbers of visitors, mostly from Auckland, headed north.

This would otherwise lead to residents enforcing the rules, which

would be chaotic.

Councillor Peter-Lucas Jones (Te Aupōuri, Ngāi Takoto) said aspects of Ninety Mile Beach needed care when it came to vehicles on the beach.

Jones is an NRC representative on the co-governed Te Oneroa-a-Tōhē (Ninety Mile Beach) Board.

He said landowners were looking closely at beach access across the

large areas of privately-owned Māori land behind Ninety Mile Beach.

It was important the public realised access across this land was a privilege not a right.

Whānau had closed some points of access.

Issues of liability when the public crossed private Māori land were part of their considerations.

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From almost worst to nearly first as pump pain relents

Peter de Graaf of RNZ

Petrol prices have plummeted in Whangārei following the arrival of a cut-price outlet in what used to be New Zealand's most expensive city for filling the tank.

Earlier this year, the Commerce Commission launched an investigation into petrol pricing around the country, singling out Whangārei for its sky-high prices despite being just up the road from the Marsden Point fuel import terminal.

Now, however, Whangārei is the cheapest place to fill up in Northland, and its prices are also significantly below the Auckland average – a reversal of the situation just a few months ago.

Tuesday's lowest price for 91-octane in Whangārei is just under \$2.58 a litre.

That compares to prices of up to \$3.16 when RNZ checked out the city's petrol stations in late September.

Tracey Risetto, chairwoman of the Automobile Association's Northland Council, put the turnaround down to the arrival of competition.

She said Allied Petroleum had recently added self-service petrol pumps to what had been just a truck stop in Kioreroa Rd, in an industrial area near the city's transfer station.

"All of a sudden their prices were 10, 15 cents a litre cheaper, which caused a lot of demand, and I think the rest of the market has had to match them."

Risetto said the price drop backed up her belief that it was competition, or a lack thereof, that had led to Whangārei's previously high prices.



Petrol prices at BP Riverside in September this year.

Photo / Michael Cunningham

WHAT DO YOU THINK?
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a nationwide petrol price investigation.

The commission wrote a "please explain" letter to fuel companies in September after finding a wide variation in prices between, and even within, cities with no obvious explanation.

At the time, Whangārei mayor Vince Cocurullo said logic dictated that motorists closest to the import terminal should be charged the lowest petrol prices.

Instead, for reasons he could not fathom, it was the other way around.

Cocurullo said it was unfair, given Northland's high rates of deprivation and lack of public transport outside Whangārei's city limits.

A spokesperson for the Commerce Commission said investigators met representatives of all fuel importing companies in September and October, and had since been assessing the price explanations they provided.

"Our view remains that differences in costs alone do not explain the observed differences in retail fuel prices within and between cities," the spokesperson said.

"We continue to work with importers to further clarify our understanding of what is driving these price differences, and are conducting further analysis into local competitive dynamics across the country."

The Commerce Commission expects to publish further findings on the country's petrol price anomalies next year.

Whangārei also experienced a dramatic drop in petrol prices when Gull, then a relatively small New Zealand-owned business, first opened an outlet in the city several years ago.

In 2022, however, Gull was sold to an Australian equity company, which lifted its pump prices into line with the major players.

Competitor fuels sharper pricing

"We've had one new competitor in the town and it's definitely changed the prices," she said.

"We've seen similar things further north when Waitomo and Allied have opened outlets.

"They've driven prices down by charging a more user-friendly price than the big players."

Staff at the AA's Whangārei office had been urging customers to install the Gasp app on their phones so they could take ownership of where they bought their fuel.

Risetto said it was great timing for Whangārei motorists who had been hit by the high cost of living or who were planning to head away for the

Christmas holidays with boats or caravans.

A drop in international oil prices and rising Kiwi dollar had also helped bring down the cost of filling up.

Earlier this year, the inexplicably high cost of filling up in Whangārei was one of the factors that prompted the Commerce Commission to launch

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Iwi, hapū unite to save coast

Their case for a far-reaching customary marine title will go to High Court

Mike Dinsdale

A group of Far North iwi and hapū have united to take a landmark case to the High Court, seeking customary title over a large swath of the coastline to protect the moana for all.

A spokesman for the group, Reuben Taipari, said the hapu and iwi have been concerned for generations about the degradation of the sea, and if granted, customary marine title (CMT) would benefit everybody in the Far North, as well as visitors and tourists who want to visit the area.

On Thursday, 11 of 12 applicants, including the nine hapū of Ahipara, Te Aupōuri, Te Rarawa, Ngāi Takoto and Ngāti Kahu, agreed to collectively apply for a High Court case for the takutai moana of Te Hiku o Te Ika.

The groups signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to go forward together in an application for a High Court case in the next two years.

Taipari said under the Marine and Coastal Area Act 2011, most clients would have had hearings closer to 2040 if this case had not been lodged six years ago.

He said the area that is united covers all of Te Oneroa-a-Tōhē down to the Hokianga.

The benefits of a CMT would potentially give the iwi and hapu veto rights on resource consent applications; conservation permission right



Tamaki Legal lawyers present the memorandum of understanding to the Ahipara gathering of Far North iwi and hapū who are taking a claim for customary marine title to the High Court

for conservation activities, the right to create planning documents, rights concerning certain minerals, rights concerning newly found taonga tūturu (an object that relates to Māori culture, history, or society), and the right to be consulted on marine mammal watching permits and restrict access to wāhi tapu sites.

Taipari said the level of unity among the group was unprecedented in the almost 20 years he has been working on the issue.

"I've been waiting more than 17 years to get this level of traction, and to be able to get to this stage is significant."

He said having the the iwi and

hapū gain CMT over the area would benefit everybody, and they were already working with Pākehā experts to work alongside the cultural aspects of the plan.

"This is about protecting the moana for everybody in our community. And we want to get everybody to help protect the moana for the next generations."

Taipari said he welcomed any debate from people who had concerns that hapū and iwi having CMT would be detrimental to them.

"I welcome anybody who wants to learn more and find out how [it will affect them], but the aim is to make the moana a better, more sustainable

place for everybody to enjoy."

He said while Māori have much cultural knowledge and expertise about the moana, other ideas were always welcome regarding how to enhance the marine environment and protect marine life.

"It's the moana and it's there for everybody, and we have a role to play to ensure it's protected so it's there for our tamariki and mokopuna," Taipari said.

"I'd encourage any discussions with people wanting to know more. But if it's just about beating down on Māori, I'm not interested in that. We're working for the long-term future of the moana, and it's about working

This is about protecting the moana for everybody in our community. And we want to get everybody to help protect the moana for the next generations.

– Reuben Taipari

together – our cultural expertise and Pākehā expertise – for the good of everybody.

"If somebody has questions, or wants more understanding on how this will benefit everybody ... I'm happy to sit down with them and work with them to help."

From here, the application will be submitted and accepted by the High Court and a hearing date will be set.

"This is significant in our efforts to fight and win our more than 20-year battle for our foreshore and seabed since 2002, which [culminated in] the famous foreshore and seabed hikoi [in] 2004.

"To come together is a sign of the times that Māori are now experienced and understand how this process works. Success is our inevitable goal.

"I am indebted to the 11 registered applicants who have agreed to this MOU on good faith, and we will respect and work together as much as possible."

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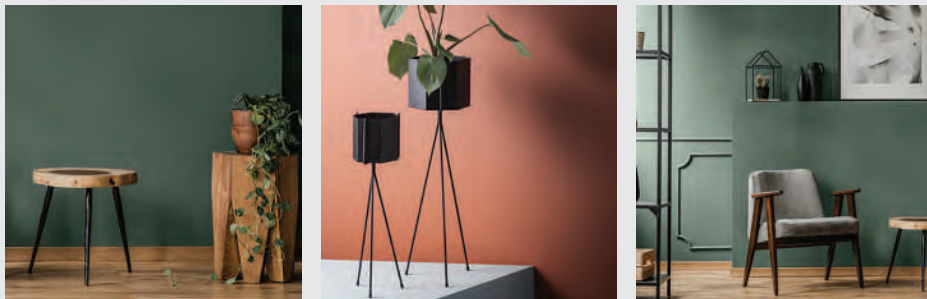
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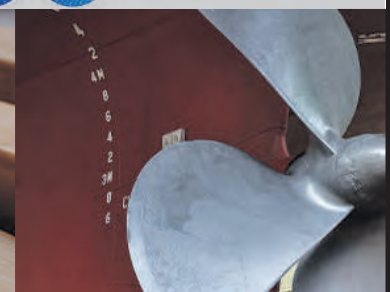
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\$15 billion pandemic spend-up slammed

Auditor-General, John Ryan, has heavily criticised the \$15 billion infrastructure fund during the Covid-19 pandemic, saying the previous government should have ensured better transparency and value for money.

The Labour-led coalition government announced the \$12b New Zealand Upgrade Programme (NZUP) and the \$3b Shovel-Ready Programme (SRP) in 2020 to shore up the economy and invest in long-term infrastructure.

Ryan said decisions were made in challenging circumstances and sometimes did need to be made quickly, but in the case of the NZUP “the scale and stated significance of these investments, the limited information available to Ministers, and the multi-generational impact of the investments warranted considerably more rigour”.

The fund invested in hospitals and schools as well as \$8.7 billion into transport: Roads, rail, public transport, walking and cycling.

He said officials worked hard to meet expectations and warned several times about risks including possible cost overruns and delays, but it was unclear how ministers assessed or managed those risks.

This included a warning from the



John Ryan

Infrastructure Commission that large-scale infrastructure projects were not effective for stimulating the economy. Costs for

some programmes had since increased significantly, leading in some cases to delays or rescoping.

Full business cases were not always available or up to date, even when the project’s planning was more advanced, he found.

His office was unable to find specific investment criteria to help agencies identify appropriate projects for funding, and agencies were asked to provide investment options in “extremely tight timeframes”, so ministers had too little information to ensure value for money.

The office’s staff could find very little information about how other considerations like regional impacts or effects on Māori, Pacific people or others had been assessed, and key stakeholders like Auckland Transport were sometimes not fully consulted over projects they had responsibility for.

Ryan says the public has a right to expect more and has made three recommendations for Treasury.



Properties in Lower Hutt were damaged when a severe thunderstorm hit the area on Tuesday.

Photo / Marty Melville

Hutt cleans up after ferocious storm

There’s a big clean-up ahead for people in Lower Hutt after a thunderstorm roared through on Tuesday afternoon, smashing windows, lifting roofs and uprooting trees.

Hutt South MP Chris Bishop is praising locals who rushed to get children to safety during the ferocious storm.

Howling winds and heavy rain pelted the Wellington region about 3pm.

Bishop said Lower Hutt teachers raced to get students, who were leaving for the day, back inside out of harm’s way.

“I met one teacher who got flung against a tree by the force of the tornado. He told me that a lot of teachers were gathering children up and taking them back inside the classroom.”

Some builders pulled some children walking home into the safety of a shipping container to wait out the storm, Bishop said.

Others Bishop spoke to said “the tornado just went straight through their garage, just literally obliterated their garage”.

He was thankful there has been no loss of life, and Lower Hutt will come

together to clean up the damage, he said. “People are doing exactly what you’d expect in times like this – looking after each other and making sure they wrap around each other, which is good.”

A big change was needed as a society to cope with these types of weather events – of which there would be more in the future, he said.

Two children were taken to Hutt Hospital after being injured in the storm, one in a serious condition.

Te Whatu Ora says one was discharged, but the other has been admitted to the children’s ward.

Warning sounded over any moves to defund Covid-19 vaccine

A vaccinologist has warned that restricting access to the Covid-19 vaccine could send a message that it is no longer important.

Covid-19 vaccines and boosters have always been provided free-of-charge – but that funding commitment is due to expire at the end of June next year.

It is possible the government could move to a more targeted approach like with flu vaccines – where only vulnerable populations get them for free.

Prime Minister Christopher Luxon told Morning Report whether or not some people might be charged for Covid-19 vaccinations later next year was one of a raft of issues new Health Minister Shane Reti was looking into.

But Helen Petousis-Harris from the University of Auckland said if people were required to pay for the vaccines

New wave of Covid infections could last to Christmas

Book a Covid-19 booster before Christmas if you’re at risk: That’s the message from health officials, as another wave of the virus looks set to keep going into the holidays.

The past few weeks have seen Covid hospitalisations creeping back up towards levels seen at the start of the year.

Now, summer social gatherings

could further increase infection numbers and put vulnerable populations at risk, Te Whatu Ora director of public health Dr Nicholas Jones said. “It’s likely to continue, probably, through to at least Christmas,” he said.

The booster is being recommended for anyone aged 65 or over, Māori and Pasifika people aged

50 and older, the immunocompromised and pregnant women.

“These groups are recommended to have a summer 2023-24 booster irrespective of the number of previous doses they’ve had, so long as they have completed the initial two doses and it’s been more than six months since their last booster or Covid-19 infection.”

themselves it would create a “substantial obstacle to actually people getting vaccinated”.

Vaccines which were not funded “no matter how good they are” were not perceived as being as important, she said. However, if vaccines were

“free and easy to get, that makes a huge difference”.

New Zealand is experiencing its fifth wave of Covid-19, but Petousis-Harris said it was not just acute infections that needed to be taken into account. The burden of people

developing Long Covid also needed to be weighed, she said.

“There’s a lot of reasons why we want to see good coverage.”

And while protection from existing Covid-19 vaccine formulas was beginning to wane, the newer vaccines

were more effective against current variants, she said.

“There are new formulations and we expect to see those shortly in New Zealand; they’re going to do a better job.”

Medsafe last week said it had accepted applications for the latest updates of the Pfizer and Novovax Covid-19 vaccines and would begin reviewing them.

Luxon told RNZ he believed Pharmac funding for some vaccinations needed to continue.

However he could not say whether funding for Covid-19 vaccinations for those at lower risk of infection would continue after June. Reti on Sunday told the *Herald* that Pharmac funding for both Covid-19 vaccines and antivirals was due to come to an end on 30 June, 2024.

– RNZ

Listen to Toni’s favourite Christmas songs and carols now on

iHeartRADIO

TONI STREET’S
FESTIVE
FEELS PLAYLIST

Coast
96.4FM

Heat on Govt over smoking laws

Protesters descend bearing 47,000-signature petition

More than 45,000 Kiwis have voiced opposition to a Government decision to repeal globally acclaimed Smokefree legislation.

About 1000 people gathered in front of Parliament in Wellington.

In Auckland, about 500 marched to Act leader David Seymour's electorate office.

An amendment to the Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Act was set to ban the sale of tobacco to anyone born after January 1 2009, cut the number of retailers, and restrict the amount of nicotine allowed in cigarettes.

Māori public health group Hāpai Te Hauora presented a petition signed by about 47,000 people, urging the government not to go through with the repeal, to Te Pāti Māori co-leader Debbie Ngarewa Packer at Parliament.

Interim chief executive Jason Alexander said most of the country was united on the issue and the Government was repealing laws that would protect future generations.

"[The Government has indicated] they are supportive of achieving Smokefree 2025, however, their actions say otherwise – rejecting implementation of all three measures of this legislation vastly impacts the health of all communities, particularly Māori and Pacific."

The "Put Profit before People – Stop the Repeal of Smokefree Legislation" petition calls on the Government to halt the repeal of the



Protesters opposed to the repeal of smoke-free legislation took to the streets in Auckland and Wellington yesterday.

Photos / Azaria Howell, Alex Burton

Over 45,000 whānau are united in their opposition to the Government's purported backdoor dealings with the tobacco industry.

Hone Harawira

Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products (Smoked Tobacco) Amendment Act.

It emphasises the need to prioritise people over profit and calls for the full implementation of the smoke-free legislation, with Māori leadership at the forefront of its recommendations.

Hāpai Te Hauora tobacco control advocacy lead Leitu Tufuga, emphasised supporting the retention of smoke-free legislation was a clear choice for whānau, who believe in creating a smoke-free generation and securing a healthier future for Kiwis. The petition underscores the potential to save 5000 lives a year from

tobacco-related harm and conserve \$1.3 billion in the budget.

Hone Harawira, from the National Smokefree Taskforce, emphasised the awareness within Māori whānau, Pacific, and vulnerable communities about the far-reaching implications of the repeal.

"Over 45,000 whānau are united in their opposition to the Government's purported backdoor dealings with the tobacco industry," he said.

The repeal would exacerbate existing inequities, whereas prioritising public health could save and protect countless lives.

"Smoking killed my mother at an

early age. It is utterly cynical to use addiction as a way of funding tax cuts," he said.

"I see the harms of tobacco addiction every day. The vast majority wish they had never started.

"It is a myth that this is a question of free choice. We must do everything that we can to reduce the power of cigarettes over people and their health outcomes."

Te Roopu Tupeka Kore, alongside Tala Pasifika and rangatahi, will be present to hand over the petition.

Organisers stressed the importance of a response from Health Minister Shane Reti.

Retirees test medicinal cannabis

Pierre Nixon

A Christchurch-based medicinal marijuana company is leading New Zealand's first clinical trial testing medicinal cannabis as a substitute for pain and sleep medication in aged-care facilities.

Aether Pacific Pharmaceuticals (under its Medical Kiwi brand) has penned a deal with Waikato-based aged care provider Kingswood Healthcare to undertake the trial.

"Disrupted sleep patterns, and the negative health effects that stem from poor sleep, have been cited by industry professionals as a major problem area that continues to afflict many patients in the aged-care sector," Aether Pacific Pharmaceuticals chairman Aldo Miccio said.

"The study aims to determine the existence of any general improvements in the quality of life amongst aged-care residents caused by the use of medicinal cannabis.

"The company is confident that the study may unlock a new use case for medicinal cannabis products in place of commonly used treatments."

At the centre of the trial is Kingswood Healthcare, which has several aged-care centres in the North Island, specialising in psychogeriatric and dementia care. The privately-owned centre also operates retirement homes in Matamata and Morrinsville.

Kingswood healthcare director Rocco Pienaar said: "We are focused on delivering the highest standard of care to our residents and this trial

will pave the way for the potential introduction of an innovative care pathway to improve quality of life through better and more consistent sleep patterns."

As well as sleep medication, the trial will test medicinal cannabis as a replacement for painkillers.

"Analgesics or painkillers have been known to have long-term side effects including liver, kidney, heart and blood circulation issues, amongst others, while opioid-based painkillers can also lead to chronic addiction problems," Miccio said.

The medicinal cannabis used in the trial will be sourced through Aether Pacific Pharmaceuticals subsidiary, Medical Kiwi, based in Christchurch, while the study is organised through APP's dispensary business, the Pain Clinic.

Scuppered: Govt declines to fund Cook Strait mega-ferries

The Government has declined KiwiRail's request for an extra \$1.47 billion for portside infrastructure needed for Cook Strait's new ferries.

KiwiRail says it cannot proceed without further Government funding and its board will now oversee the wind-down of the project and review plans for the Cook Strait connection.

KiwiRail was replacing its increasingly unreliable and ageing Interislander fleet with two new rail-enabled ferries under the Inter-island Resilience Connection project (iReX). The last publicly available cost estimate for the new ferries and the portside infrastructure was \$1.45 billion.

Finance Minister Nicola Willis said yesterday that KiwiRail had requested an additional \$1.47 billion,

a component of which had been agreed to in-principle by the previous government, to address cost escalations related to associated harbour infrastructure.

She said only a fifth of the total cost was now associated with the core project of replacing the ageing ferries.

"Ministers do not have confidence that there will not be further increases and are concerned about the continued significant cost blow-outs and the changing nature of the investment they are being asked to make.

"Furthermore, agreeing to KiwiRail's request would reduce the Government's ability to address the cost pressures impacting on New Zealanders, fund other essential projects and get the Crown's books back in order," she said.

University of Auckland academics complain of unsafe workplace

More than 100 academics at the University of Auckland have signed a letter to the leadership that says high-profile staff are not being protected by the university.

Some of the academics said they no longer felt comfortable speaking publicly or to media for fear of threats and harassment.

The open letter, signed by 129 academics, followed an Employment Court hearing in which high-profile microbiologist Siouxsie Wiles argued the university had failed to protect her from a "tsunami of threats", which followed her commentary on the Covid-19 pandemic.

A ruling has yet to be made in that case. The university has argued its management provided extensive support to Wiles and it did not breach its obligations towards her.

Its lawyers argued the university cannot control all threats – especially

those made on social media – and it is doing its best to minimise and manage them.

The open letter to the University Council says in the absence of a court ruling, academics "remain exposed to psychological and physical harm while carrying out our work".

"As racist, transphobic, anti-Semitic and Islamophobic hate has been rising globally, we are particularly concerned for marginalised groups including Māori, Pacific, transgender and non-binary colleagues.

"We are also concerned that recent politicised conversation around gun control, free speech, and hate speech legislation, as well as public questioning of equity-oriented initiatives in university education (such as [Māori and Pacific Admission Scheme] Mapas), is likely to embolden fringe elements."



Microbiologist Siouxsie Wiles has taken legal action against the University for Auckland.

While the signatories were from a range of departments, many were scientists or public health experts who had been targeted for abuse during the pandemic.

Professor Nicola Gaston, of the university's physics department, said some had pulled back from public life.

"A lot of the stories have been that they work in an area that is contentious and they have been asked by media to comment on their work and said no because they don't feel they

will be supported by the employer."

The letter claimed the university's staff risk intervention team, SRIT, which supports staff who face external threats, was not fit for purpose. It also questioned whether the recommendations from a recent security audit had been fully implemented.

The group of academics also sought assurances from the council that it understood its health and safety responsibilities.

The academics referred to an all-staff email by vice-chancellor Dawn Freshwater during the court hearing in which reminded everyone "of the ways in which we provide support for staff to keep themselves safe". The letter says: "This suggests the university conceptualises health, safety and wellbeing related to our work to be our responsibility, rather than theirs. Yet under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, we understand it is

our employer who has the primary responsibility to protect us from harms arising from our work."

In a statement, the university said the institution and vice-chancellor fully understood the responsibilities of employers and took these responsibilities seriously.

The statement said SRIT "functions effectively" and was supporting up to 15 staff members a year.

"We encourage all staff experiencing any form of threat or harassment to seek SRIT support."

The university reiterated that all recommendations made in an audit by Quantum Security Services had been implemented.

Those recommendations included developing the SRIT and proactively advising staff about external harassment, offering social media monitoring, and liaising with WorkSafe to discuss best practice.

Opinion

EDITORIAL

Christchurch flights a boost for tourism

The sight of a Dreamliner passenger jet, adorned with a silver fern, landing at Christchurch Airport on Sunday – direct from San Francisco 11,100km away – was roundly welcomed by New Zealand's beleaguered tourism industry.

United Airlines, which already flies into Auckland, has become the first US carrier going straight into the South Island, home of many of the prized jewels in New Zealand's globally envied tourist crown.

Air New Zealand was the last airline to link Christchurch to the States but that service was grounded more than 20 years ago.

United's flights should take off and bring much-needed, cashed-up American tourists to the Mainland, and its biggest centre, Christchurch, which has been afflicted by a nightmare decade.

Quakes, floods, fires, and a terror attack dealt a series of blows to the Garden City before the Covid-19 global pandemic dealt an almost killer shot.

With its doors flung wide open, Christchurch is hoping direct routes from United will help get the city – which acts as a gateway to the South Island, including the tourist mecca of Queenstown, as well as Kaikoura and its whale watching, the starry skies of McKenzie Country, the glaciers, national parks and great walks – back up and running.

The ongoing rebuild from the devastating 2010-11 Canterbury earthquake sequence has resulted in new and vibrant tourism and visitor attractions, including the world-class Riverside Market, the spectacular year-old convention centre Te Pae (which generated \$50 million in direct economic value in its first year), and within the next three years, a covered multi-use stadium and new home of the Crusaders.

Christchurch Airport has said that based on government data, United's seasonal service is forecast to bring in \$44m in visitor spending for New Zealand, with \$32m for South Island regions.

It forms part of a big American push into New Zealand over the summer period, with Delta Air Lines entering the market into Auckland for the first time and American Airlines returning with an expanded service.

"The American travel market is buoyant, with Americans travelling widely again and we know they want to experience what the South Island offers," said Christchurch Airport chief executive Justin Watson.

The average American worker only gets 11 days of paid holidays annually, so when they come, they are prepared to spend and have a good time.

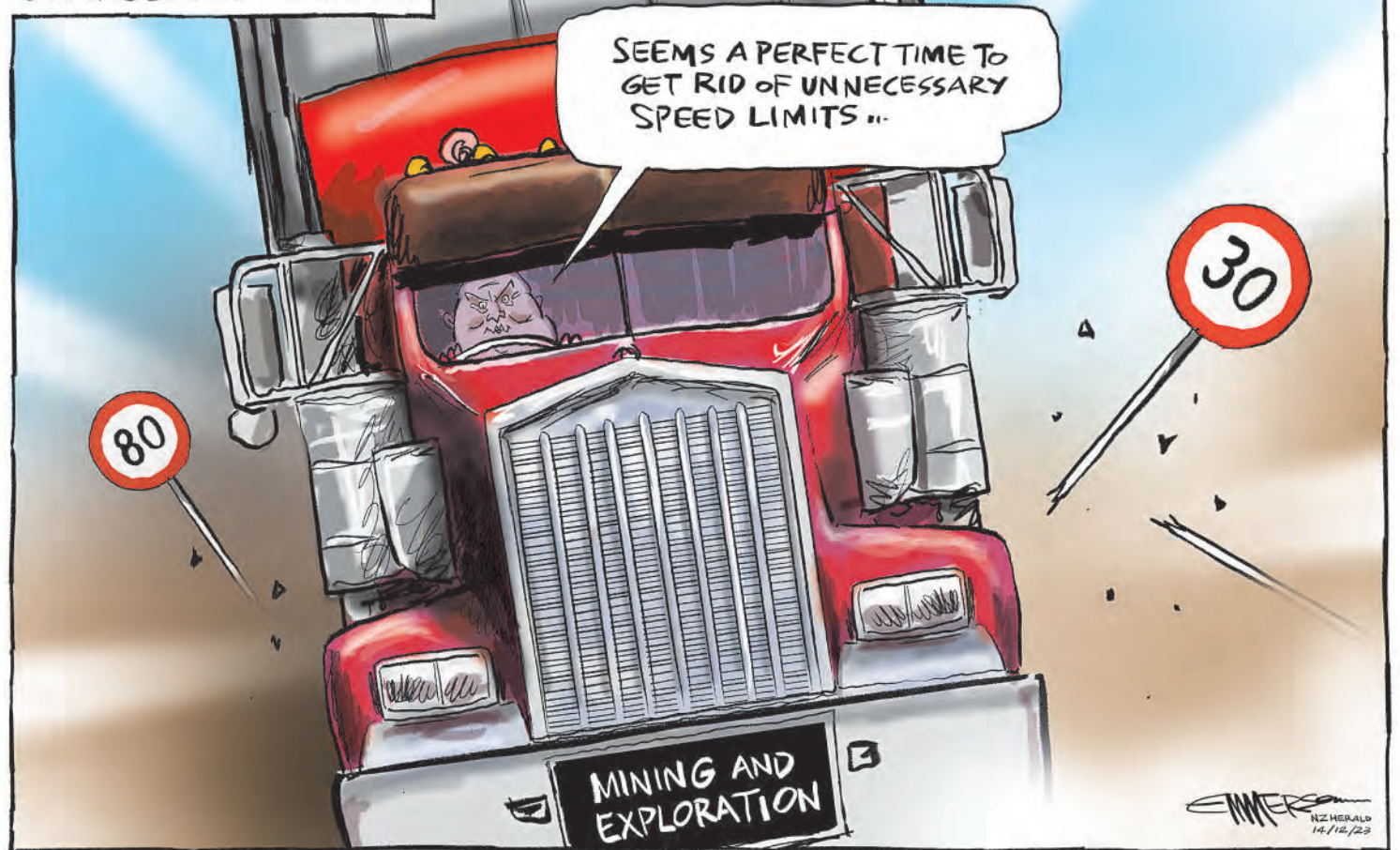
"The high value of the US dollar against the kiwi is also helping with our attractiveness.

Recent studies on outbound tourism expenditure rank the US second only to China.

Our tourism industry must be prepared and ready to welcome them with open arms – they are the shot we desperately need to help get our ailing economy back on the runway and ready for take-off.

ROD EMMERSON'S VIEW

SHANE JONES - TRUCKIE



LETTERS

Learn the rules – in a roundabout sort of way

It is a continuing annoyance at the ignorance a large number of drivers have about correctly indicating when using a roundabout. Only about 30 per cent appear to do it correctly. The rest have either no idea or can't be bothered. It is worthwhile to go online just type in the search box "nz roundabouts" and open "know your way around roundabouts".

It gives very clear diagrams and instructions.

P Plaistowe, Onerahi

Help Tooth Fairy

I felt ashamed to be a NZer when reading how the Tooth Fairy of Kaikohe was vilified by the Justice system and fined for helping people in poverty.

Maybe our Minister of (silly) Regulations, David Seymour, can rectify this?

Instead of confiscating Claire's tools of trade, they should have given her the tools and proper papers to continue legally.

Of course it comes back to money with overpriced dentists being the first to put in a complaint.

Where has the culture of NZers helping one another, the Māori and Pacific Island brotherhood, kindness and compassion gone? Claire should have been given an accolade, not be thrown a brickbat.

I hope the people of the North passed the hat around in order to pay her stupid fine.

Is the Ministry of Health going to offer certification so that Claire can carry on her work in helping her



Claire Wihongi-Matene – the Tooth Fairy – outside Kaikohe District Court after being fined \$7000 and \$3050 in reparations for unlicensed dental work.

poverty struck community? Yeah, nah.

Marie Kaire, Ngararatunua

Just use the post office

As we all know, we are in our busy time of the year. I have a special Christmas parcel to courier to my grandchildren for Christmas. Off I go to our one and only courier in Port Rd. What do I find? It has shifted to 35 Union East Street.

Do you know where that is? No, neither did I. I looked it up and found it off Kioreroa Rd. Great, so I knew where that was, but hello, there is large scale roadworks at the turn off and my attention was totally fixed on getting through that lot. I apologise to any traffic in a hurry, but I was looking for some sort of sign. I didn't find it, so returned after tea to the road that had no name, drove to the end where there is a flash new building.

Still no signage, but I saw two NZ Post vans near by and saw two workmen who confirmed that I was at the right place. They made a very good suggestion – go to the post office and a courier will collect it.

What's going on? Who owns the courier business and why is there only one company? Why don't they carry eftpos?

A.W. Cromwell, Whangārei

Harness the Sky Tower

As I watch 30 knot winds lash my boat an anchor I thought about wind generation... and cylindrical wind turbines.

This deep meditation led to seeking tall cylinders that sit on our skylines that could be converted to power generators.

And voila, there is that ginormous Sky Tower hovering above Auckland that could easily repurpose its tall

GUIDELINES

The Northern Advocate welcomes letters from readers. Please note the following:

- Letters should not exceed 200 words.
- They should be opinion based on facts or current events.
- If possible, please email.
- No noms de plume.
- Letters will be published with names and suburb/city.
- Include full name, address and contact details for our records only.
- Local letter writers given preference.
- Rejected letters are not normally acknowledged.
- Letters may be edited, abridged, or rejected at the Editor's discretion.
- The Editor's decision on publication is final.

Email editor@northernadvocate.co.nz or write to the Editor, Northern Advocate, 88 Robert St, Whangārei 0110

column that receives copious air molecules that could generate power for half of Queen St?

Dear EECA, why not suggest offering a few pennies to motivate that gambling casino to explore how they can be electrically, independently-powered?

And Mayor Brown, why not initiate the same for all Auckland buildings? That would be a useful green thing to do?

The city of WindPower?
Rob Buchanan, Kerikeri

ON THE ROAD

Number of cars outpacing the number of Kiwis lately



New Zealand registered 85,000 new cars in the first six months of this year. Photo / 123rf

WHAT DO YOU THINK?
 Email editor@northernadvocate.co.nz to have your say. Responses may be published.

Car increase outstripping our population increase – but what are you going to do?

COMMENT



John Williamson

The Advent candle to be lit next Sunday in Christian churches is the candle of joy. The ones of hope and peace will have already been lit, and it's the time to reflect on the season we are in – a season of giving, receiving, celebrating and quiet reflection about the past.

We have loved ones around us, or we are at least communicating merry Christmas to them. No matter what belief system we might have, the joy of the season is infectious.

Part of that reflection is the joy of driving – to get where we want to go, or simply to feel the pleasure of getting behind the wheel.

A recent blog put it this way: "I always look forward to my drive to and from work. It's time to catch up on the news, listen to an audiobook, de-stress from a long day, process my thoughts and to just drive. I deeply enjoy my feeling of the weight of the car shift and sensing the weight on the steering wheel

grow as I make my way from turn to turn. When you are driving, every input has a reaction and few things in life provide such a sense of control. Nothing is as therapeutic to me as some time behind the wheel."

We Kiwis love our cars. For a country of just over 5 million people, we have just under 4.5 million cars. Factor in those without licences and we have well over a car per legal

never lets me down; I can escape the everyday stresses of life; and I get to choose the music.

Cars are much more than getting from A to B. They are an expression of our personality and lifestyle. They offer the most comfort and convenience of any form of mobility. You don't have to rely on timetables or put up with other passengers' foibles.

When you are driving, every input has a reaction and few things in life provide such a sense of control.

driver. These figures are growing by the year as there are now an extra million cars on our roads than 10 years ago.

Our car increase is outstripping our population increase with 85,000 new vehicles registered in the first six months of 2023.

There's no getting away from it, our cars are who we are. A recent insurance survey in the UK revealed the top five reasons why we love our cars: it gives a sense of freedom; it's better than getting the bus; it

Even congestion doesn't diminish our ardour for travelling by car on our less-than-perfect roads. We don't like being held up when we have our predetermined timetables but, mostly these days, we plan for it. We build the idle time we spend in traffic into our schedules. Why else would Auckland drivers consciously spend up to an hour either end of the day getting to and from their workplaces.

Driving, though, isn't always perfect. It's what other drivers do to

us that occasionally makes us grumpy. Because more people will be on the roads in the next month than normal, it is worth reflecting on annoying behaviour, just to ensure we know which way the mirror is facing.

- Tailgating – impatient drivers who sit within the 2-second gap. Let them pass with the hope there's a cop ahead.

- Failure to indicate your intention to turn or change lanes. Do it appropriately in advance and not in the middle of the act

- Dangerous overtaking or cutting corners, crossing the centre line. A collective 200km/h crash will always have a bad outcome.

- Slow drivers who won't pull over and who speed up on a passing lane cause huge frustration.

Excessive speed causes a mess, but slow speed causes stress. Drivers in the line of cars behind are getting increasingly grumpy, causing

- Angry drivers and road rage as irrational behaviour takes away from the joy of driving.

Christmas is a season of happiness and joy if we all commit to make it that way – merry Christmas, enjoy your driving.

HOT TOPICS

Quiz

- 1 The Funk Brothers were the in-house band for which record label?
- 2 Niue is partly named after which fruit?
- 3 In which US state is the NFL Hall of Fame?
- 4 Who is considered the founder of Pakistan?
- 5 Who wrote the cookbook *The French Laundry*?
- 6 Which African country produces the most coffee per year?
- 7 Which bird was the first NZ Bird of the Year winner in 2005?
- 8 Along with Cancer and Scorpio, what is the third water sign of the Zodiac?
- 9 Greek soldier Pheidippides is associated with which Olympic sport?
- 10 Which 2012 Marvel superhero film grossed over US\$1 billion worldwide?

History

- 1542** Princess Mary Stuart succeeds her father James V and becomes Queen Mary I of Scotland at 6 days old.
- 1799** The first president of the US, George Washington, dies at his Mt Vernon, Virginia, home at age 67.
- In 1911** Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen and his team become the first men to reach the South Pole, beating a British expedition led by Robert F Scott.
- 1939** The Soviet Union gets expelled from the League of Nations for invading Finland.
- 1981** Israel annexes the Golan Heights, seized from Syria in 1967.
- 1986** The experimental aircraft Voyager, piloted by Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager, takes off from Edwards Air Force Base in California on the first non-stop, non-refuelled flight around the world.
- 2006** A British police inquiry concludes the deaths of Princess Diana and boyfriend Dodi Fayed in a 1997 Paris car crash are a "tragic accident", and that allegations of a murder conspiracy are unfounded.
- 2009** NZ government recognises the Tino Rangatiranga flag as the preferred national Māori flag.
- 2012** A 20-year-old gunman with a semi-automatic rifle kills 20 first-graders and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, then takes his own life as police arrive.
- 2020** The Electoral College confirms (306-232 votes) Joe Biden as the next US president, ratifying his November victory in a state-by-state repudiation of Donald Trump's refusal to concede.

Birthdays

- R&B singer Ronnie McNeir (The Four Tops) is 74
- Rock singer-musician Mike Scott (The Waterboys) is 65
- Singer-musician Peter "Spider" Stacy (The Pogues) is 65
- Actor Natascha McElhone is 54



Quiz Answers

1. Motown 2. Coconut 3. Ohio 4. Muhammad Ali Jinnah 5. Thomas Keller 6. Ethiopia 7. Tūi 8. Pisces 9. Marathon 10. *The Avengers*.

Complaints

This newspaper is subject to the NZ Media Council. First email a complaint to editor@northernadvocate.co.nz. If not satisfied, go to mediacouncil.org.nz.

Bay News

Coastguard PPE goes MIA

Gear, equipment stolen from volunteer's vehicle



Sandy Myhre

In November the Bay of Islands (BOI) Coastguard shifted from their Kerikeri base into the old General Store at Ōpua.

Partnering with Coastguard NZ, the new base also doubles as a Northland-based rescue centre and education hub for boating education and community outreach projects, such as day skipper and boatmaster courses.

The move has enabled the 40 volunteers to respond more efficiently to emergency calls on the water.

In the past year, the BOI Coastguard has responded to 75 incidents, rescued nine people and assisted 171 people home safely.

Now they are coping with land-based incidents.

Items of rescue gear and personal protection equipment (PPE) were stolen from the car of volunteer Dylan Tucker while it was parked in



The PPE clothing stolen from the car of a BOI Coastguard volunteers in late November.



One of the bilingual signs in the Waipapa Bunnings store.



Some of the 40 volunteers who operate from the BOI Coastguard headquarters in the old Ōpua general store.

the Ōpua Marina carpark.

He was attending a Coastguard training session at the time.

Missing are a jacket, bib pants, overalls, boots and a bag, items that are considered by the BOI Coastguard as essential for on-water rescues.

The BOI Coastguard has asked that if any of these items are found the person finding them should message the Coastguard BOI Facebook account, return the goods, and "no questions will be asked".

It's not the first time items have been stolen from cars parked in the marina carpark.

Tucker and a colleague have both had their car's number plates stolen.

"A few others have had gear stolen from their cars in the same carpark and other people in the vicinity, people who work in the businesses at the Ōpua boat yard have suffered the same fate," Tucker said.

The thefts have been reported to the police but it seems there is very little that can be done to track down the offenders.

Bunnings leading the language journey

It was a Facebook post from someone called Frances that alerted the country to the signs in the Bunnings store in Waipapa.

In part it said: "Despite the recent

continued on A14



Around 20 people helped to build Valinor and she was launched last week from Ōpua wharf.

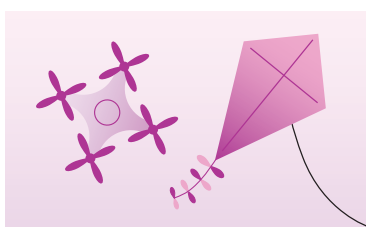


ME TITIRO AKE KIA MATAARA KI NGĀ TAURA HIKO I TE RAUMATI NEI

Te Puna Hihiko.
The Energy Source.

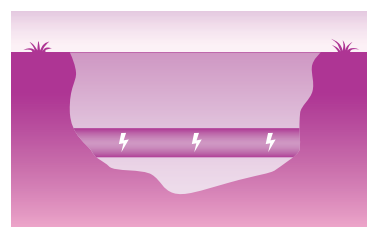
Ko te raumati āini, e karanga ana te moana me te BBQ, ā, e kore anō ngā mahi DIY e whakatahangia.

Ahakoia ko te mahi ki te kāinga, ki te māra, ki hea rāini e whītia e te rā, ānei wētahi take hei whakamāhara, hei whakahaumarū i a koutou. Matua ake nei, ko tā mātou kia mataara mārika koutou ki ngā taura hiko o runga, me mōhio hoki kei hea ngā taura hiko o raro i te whenua.



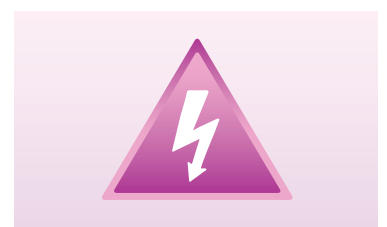
KO TE TAKARO KO WAHO

Ki te whakarere ō tamariki i ngā matatopa, i te rererangi, i te manu tukutuku rāini kia kua e pātata atu ki ngā taura hiko o runga.



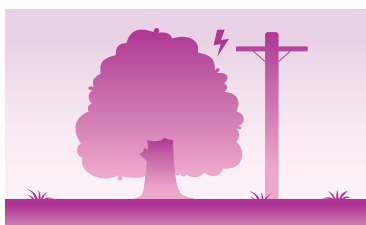
KO NGĀ MAHI MĀRA

I mua pū i te kerī whenua, me whakamahi tā mātou ratonga Tautouhū Taura kia mātau ai kei hea ā mātou kāwei o raro i te whenua me ngā taura hiko rato. www.topenergy.co.nz/cablelocate



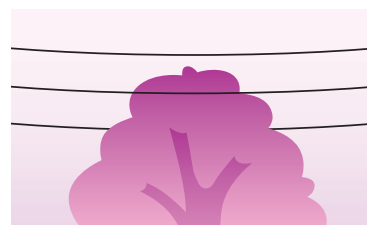
KO NGĀ MAHI DIY

Kia kua e whara ā-hiko, ā, kia haumarū tonu tō kāinga, tirohia ngā tohutohu haumarū mahi nā Work Safe New Zealand. www.worksafe.govt.nz/safe-living-with-electricity



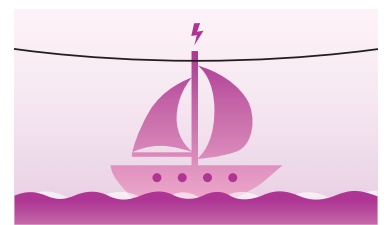
KO TE WHAKATŌ RĀKAU

Kei whara i ngā taura hiko ā muri ake nei, me āta whakaaro ki te teitei me te whānui o te tupu o ngā rākau, ā, kia kua e whakatō pātata atu ki ngā taura hiko. www.topenergy.co.nz/trees



KO TE KOKOTI RĀKAU

E oti i a koe te kokoti rākau me whā mita ake te tawhiti atu o ngā rākau me ngā taputapu i ngā taura hiko. Me he raruraru āu ringi mai hei āwhina māu. www.topenergy.co.nz/trees



KO NGĀ POTI

Ki te whakatere waka tirohia ngā taura hiko o runga. Ki te tōia tētahi poti nui, ā, e tata ana ki ngā taura hiko, tonoa mai te hāpai utanga teitei mā te paetukutuku Top Energy. www.topenergy.co.nz/highload



Valinor making waves

The luxury aluminium cruiser Valinor was launched recently from the Ōpua wharf and she is destined to remain in New Zealand for at least the next five years.

Valinor is 20 metres long (65ft 7 inches) and is powered by two 250hp Scania diesel engines. She is unique in that she is fully automated and can be operated by just two people.

No one involved in the building of her would say who Valinor's owner is, but it is believed to be an American.

For Northland's marine industry it was a considerable assignment and involved several companies. Valinor took four years to build and that included shutdowns and delivery issues because of Covid-19.

Northland Spares and Riggings, based in Ōpua, designed and built the vessel. They got the commission based on their reputation for previous vessels and their expertise in aluminium construction.

Around 20 people worked on the project altogether although not all at one time. The plumbing, electrical,

electronics and interior fitout were contracted to mainly Northland companies.

The interior fitout was completed by Circa Marine & Industrial Limited, the long-established family-operated company based in Whangārei. They have been in the business for 40 years.

The electrical work was done by McKay Electrical, also from Whangārei, and one of the largest privately owned electrical contracting companies in New Zealand.

The managing director, Lindsay Faithfull, was recently inducted into the Northern Advocate Business Hall of Fame.

There are numerous launches and yachts called Valinor around the world.

The name derives from J.R.R. Tolkien's legendarium. It means Land of the Valar, the Land across the Sea.

As for the cost, Alan Walker from Northland Spares and Riggings says he is not permitted to reveal that information but suffice to say it was a substantial commission.



The aluminium luxury launch in the building stages at Northland Spares and Riggings.



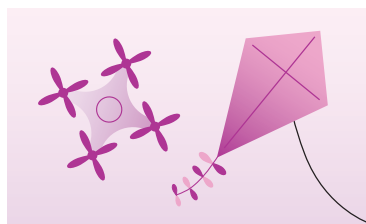
LOOK UP & LOOK OUT FOR POWER LINES THIS SUMMER

Te Puna Hihiko.
The Energy Source.

Summer is around the corner, the beach and BBQ beckon, and those DIY jobs can't be put off any longer.

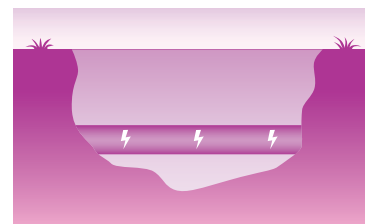
Whether working around your home and garden, or out and about enjoying the sun, there are a few things we would like to remind you of to help keep yourself safe.

Mostly, we ask that you be aware of the overhead lines and to know where our underground cables are.



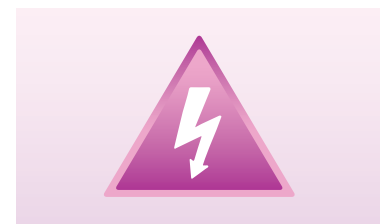
OUTSIDE PLAYING

Make sure your big and little kids stay away from overhead power lines when flying drones, model aircraft or kites.



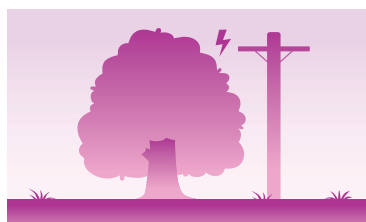
GARDEN PROJECTS

Use our Cable Locate service to know where our underground network and your service cables are located before you start digging. www.topenergy.co.nz/cablelocate



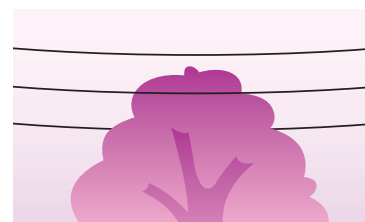
DIY PROJECTS

To prevent electrical accidents and stay safe around your home, check out Work Safe New Zealand's handy safety advice. www.worksafe.govt.nz/safe-living-with-electricity



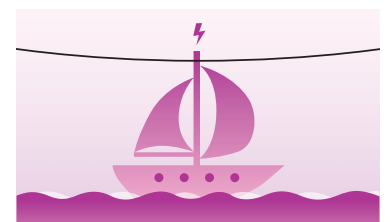
TREE PLANTING

To avoid causing hazards with power lines in the future, think about how high and wide your tree or hedge will grow and plant away from existing power lines. www.topenergy.co.nz/trees



TREE TRIMMING

Only trim trees if in doing so, you, the tools and machinery you are using to trim, and any part of the tree are more than 4m from power lines. If in doubt, call us for advice. www.topenergy.co.nz/trees



BOATS

When launching boats check for power lines above you. If transporting an oversize boat near electricity lines, apply to transport a high load through the Top Energy network. www.topenergy.co.nz/highload



Left: Artist Maureen Lander at the launch of the exhibition at the Kerikeri Mission Station earlier last week.

Below, Lander's work, Hongi's Red Cloak Deconstructed, on display in the Kemp House parlour where Hongi Hika would have spent many hours talking with missionaries.



continued from A12

attacks on bilingual signage, the new Bunnings store in Waipapa, Kerikeri, is loudly and proudly bucking the trend ... my beautiful language written for all to enjoy."

Frances was referring to the store's signs, which are bilingual, with English first and Māori alongside as translation. The bilingual signs are included on all internal banners and carpark signage.

The Waipapa store is not the only Bunnings outlet to have the bilingual signs, they are already in various places across the current store network including the café, battery recycling centre and pot recycling centre.

The company appears to be in the forefront corporately in terms of assisting staff to learn Māori.

It holds training courses for team members that cover the common te

reo Māori phrases.

Melissa Haines, Bunnings general manager for New Zealand, said those taking the courses "can integrate Māori into conversations with customers and create a great in-store experience".

Team members also wear Māori name badge stickers and apron pins, which represent the fact they can speak te reo Māori.

Then there are the television commercials.

"Customers may have also noticed our recent TV commercials over the past 12 months that are entirely in te reo Māori.

"These were aired as part of Te Wiki o te Reo Māori, Māori Language Week, which we have actively participated in over the past few years," Haines said.

Bunnings is also a founding member of the Te Reo Māori Business Network, Te Hononga Pakihi Reo

Māori. The network was founded by the Māori Language Commission, Te Taura Whiri i te reo Māori, this year.

Maureen Lander exhibition launched at Kerikeri Mission Station

An exhibition of original creations by internationally renowned Artist Laureate Maureen Lander has been launched at the historic Kerikeri Mission Station.

The artworks, which incorporate weaving and sculpture, are inspired by the deep connections of prominent Ngāpuhi figures like Hongi Hika, Ruatara and Hariata Rongo to the Kerikeri Mission Station and wider Bay of Islands. The exhibition will run until April.

"We approached Maureen to see whether she would be interested in exhibiting some of her artworks at Kemp House and to our delight she agreed, making available the work

she wished to be shown, as well as requesting works to be loaned from the Auckland Museum," Kerikeri Mission Station property lead Liz Bigwood said.

"These are the four works known as Rongo's Samplers, and we are very grateful to the Auckland Museum for releasing these works into our care for the duration of the exhibition."

Lander described Kemp House as her canvas, and has assembled works that resonate with what happened here and in the wider Bay of Islands 200 years ago.

"These are works that speak to the tūpuna – ancestors – of this place both Māori and Pākehā, and to the kaupapa of each, stitching new learnings with highly valued traditions, weaving together narratives of fact and fiction, and giving people the opportunity to engage with this conversation," Bigwood said.

Born in Rawene, Lander is of

Ngāpuhi, Te Hikutu, Irish, Scottish and English descent. She is one of Aotearoa's leading artists, and was named as a New Zealand Arts Foundation Te Tumu Toi Laureate in 2022.

She is described as an active multimedia installation artist who has exhibited locally, nationally and internationally since 1986.

In 2002, she was the first person of Māori descent to gain a doctorate in Fine Arts at a New Zealand university, and since then her quiet determination to disrupt, challenge and evolve has served as a fuel for the next generation of artists.

"This is a very rare opportunity for people to view original work by one of our leading artists in this very significant place," Bigwood said.

The Kerikeri Mission Station, including Kemp House and the Stone Store, is cared for by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, and is a Tohu Whenua.



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Could new policies see investors' back in property market?

It has been a year of two halves for the housing market. Property research firm CoreLogic said the first half was one of declining sale volumes and house prices, before the market found a floor mid-year.

Sale volumes hit the lowest level in about 40 years in April, with a 12-month moving total of just 60,475 sales, while national property values fell 5 per cent over the year earlier.

"The New Year will likely kick off positively in terms of mood, with a new property-friendly government looking to shorten the brightline test back to two years and steadily reinstate full mortgage interest deductibility," CoreLogic chief property economist Kelvin Davidson said.

Investors may also return to the market in greater numbers as the housing market moves into its next phase.

"This could start to pull some investment demand back into the market, and may see some existing investors find themselves off the hook for capital gains tax sooner than expected.

"But even if some investors do start to buy again, it's not likely to be a torrent, due to low rental yields and high mortgage rates."

In the meantime, he said first-time buyers were likely to continue to benefit from market conditions.

"First-home buyers should still be able to find good opportunities, as they continue to benefit from accessing KiwiSaver for deposits and make full use of the low-deposit lending speed limits at the banks."

He said caps on debt-to-income

An uncertain year about the house



Caps on debt-to-income (DTI) ratios remain a possibility for 2024.

Photo / Michael Craig

(DTI) ratios remained firmly on the cards for 2024, but high mortgage rates were currently doing the job of restricting any risky, high DTI lending.

As for the number of property sales, Davidson said the upturn was expected to be more subdued.

"We're anticipating sales rising by perhaps 10 per cent and prices seeing growth of around 5 per cent, which is still below long-term average levels."

Davidson said some regions offered better pricing than others,

given value drops over the past year.

Featherston was the weakest performer over the past year with values down nearly 17 per cent, while the top-ranked Sunshine Bay in Queenstown saw 6.6 per cent growth, which Davidson said was relatively moder-

ate growth for the top-performing suburb.

Auckland's Herne Bay held its position as the most expensive suburb with a median value of \$3,161,400, compared with the most affordable, Cobden in Grey at \$258,200.

CoreLogic 2023 Best of the Best statistics

- Highest median value: Herne Bay (Auckland) \$3,161,400
- Lowest median value: Cobden (Grey) \$258,200
- Highest 12-month change in median value: Sunshine Bay (Queenstown) 6.6 per cent
- Lowest 12-month change in median value: Featherston -16.0 per cent
- Highest five-year change in median value: Matakura (Gore) 138.9 per cent
- Lowest five-year change in median value: Auckland Central -8.8 per cent
- Top sale price: 120 Victoria Avenue, Remuera, Auckland (18 Jul) \$23,800,000
- Highest change in median rent: Fairview Heights (Auckland) 32.4 per cent
- Lowest change in median rent: Herne Bay (Auckland) -14.5 per cent
- Highest gross rental yield: Whanganui (suburb) 8.5 per cent
- Lowest gross rental yield: Whitford (Auckland) 1.1 per cent
- Shortest days on market: Hargest (Invercargill) 11 days
- Longest days on market: Ohakune (Ruapehu) 115 days

100-year-old Kiwi candle maker bought by owner of Metro magazine

Liam Dann

National Candles, which makes traditional household and church candles, is the latest acquisition of Auckland-based investment group Still.

Still is a family-owned investment firm founded and run from Auckland's waterfront by Hideaki Fukutake. It has a mission to start or acquire 100 companies that are "fundamentally good" for New Zealand.

Still owns Kings Plant Barn, the World of Wearable Art event and Metro magazine.

In March, its energy division, Shape Group, acquired 100 per cent of back-up power company Dependable Power. It also owns Queenstown's Hulbert House, design agency DDMYY, workspace design business No More Boring and Consult Recruitment.

National Candles might seem a surprising acquisition, but when you understood the Still 100, which is the mission to start or acquire 100 businesses in 20 years that are unique, high-quality, authentic, have long tenures and focused on New Zealand, it made sense, the company said in a statement.

Candles are difficult to import as they melt and stick together, which is why they would continue to be made locally, the company said.

Still chief executive Fukutake said he was excited about supporting the candle business towards continued success and encouraged Kiwis to put some candles on the table, or use them as stocking fillers or Secret Santa gifts this Christmas.

"National Candles is a great addition to Still. I hope Kiwis will keep using candles to create a peaceful atmosphere at home and, of course,



Hideaki Fukutake – CEO of Still investments – owner of Metro magazine, World of Wearable Arts.

to see in the dark when the power goes out," he said.

He was excited to preserve traditional candle-making methods and use the finest raw materials while exploring new local markets.

Still bought National Candles from the McLean family, which has owned the business since 1996, and its intention is to keep it located in Te Aro, Wellington.

National Candles' history can be traced back as far as the 1920s, when Prices Candles, a division of the Shell Oil Company, set up its factory in New Zealand.

"Selling a family business is a huge decision and one which we didn't take lightly. We are proud of what we have achieved at National Candles and pleased to know how much care of this institution will continue through Still," said outgoing chandler and owner Sam McLean.

Volunteering Northland

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Opportunities Whangarei

Opportunities Kaipara

The Shutter Room

Seeking friendly and helpful visitor host at the gallery. WED/THU/FRI - 10:30am to 2:30pm / SAT 10am-12:30pm

Royal Forest And Bird Protection Society Of New Zealand - Northern Branch

Looking for a secretary to join the committee. Basic computer skills, detail-oriented and reliable.

Whangarei Steam and Model Railway Club (Inc)

Seeking volunteer Train Enthusiasts, Visitor Hosts, Mechanics, Model Makers & Handypersons. Members meet every Monday and Friday at 9:00am.

St John New Zealand | Hato Hone Aotearoa

Ambulance & Events Volunteers - Russell & Paihia base. Help provide care and support to patients. Mangawhai and Dargaville areas.

Coastguard North Kaipara

Available roles: Coastguard Boat Crew Tinopai, Coastguard Boat Crew Tinopai

Rural Youth and Adult Literacy Trust

Available roles: Online Learning Module Creator using Adobe Captivate, Phone Call Superstar - Virtual (NZ-based Role). All areas.

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Living beyond our means sparks fears

New Zealand's very strong credit rating may take a beating

Jenee Tibshraeny

New Zealand's current account deficit remains stubbornly wide, suggesting Kiwis continue to live beyond their means.

The country spent \$30.6 billion more on its imports than it earned for its exports in the year to September. This was equivalent to 7.6 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), according to Stats NZ.

In the year to June, the deficit was also worth 7.6 per cent of GDP.

The deficit made headlines and attracted the attention of credit rating agencies when it hit 8.8 per cent in the year to December 2022.

The widening of the deficit was largely put down to temporary

Food prices fall for third month in a row

Food prices fell in November, but were still 6 per cent higher than a year earlier.

"The largest contribution to the annual change was grocery food, mainly driven by higher prices for fresh eggs, lollies, and peanuts," Stats NZ consumers prices manager James Mitchell said.

Food prices have fallen for three consecutive months. Fruit and vegetables were the largest contributor to the monthly fall,

driven by seasonal price falls in tomatoes, capsicums, and strawberries.

"We are seeing more food items fall in price than a year ago," Mitchell said. "In November 2023, 46 per cent of food items fell in price, while in November 2022, 27 per cent of items decreased."

But the year-on-year increase was due to price rises across the five broad food categories Stats NZ measured.

Price movements for the 12 months to November 2023, in order of their contribution to the overall movement, were:

- Grocery food, up 7.0 per cent
- Restaurant meals and ready-to-eat food prices, up 7.5 per cent
- Fruit and vegetable prices, up 4.8 per cent
- Non-alcoholic beverage prices, up 5.8 per cent
- Meat, poultry, and fish prices, up 2.0 per cent.

factors – for example, Covid travel restrictions preventing tourists and foreign students from coming to New Zealand, and demand for imports lifting as Kiwis couldn't travel and had healthy savings, partly due to interest rates being low.

Since late 2022, all eyes have been on how quickly that deficit narrows

to a more sustainable level. The fear has been that if it doesn't track downward, New Zealand's very strong credit rating could be downgraded, which could make borrowing more expensive.

While a deficit of 7.6 per cent of GDP is an improvement from the 8.3 per cent figure recorded in the year

to September 2022, it's still a long way off the 3 per cent level it used to hover around.

The good news is that in the year to September, the services deficit narrowed, as services exports increased by 168 per cent compared to the previous year. Tourism rebounded strongly.

Nonetheless, tourists who visited New Zealand spent less than they did pre-Covid, while the smaller number of Kiwis who travelled overseas spent the same as they did pre-Covid.

To the bad news. New Zealand didn't manage to increase its export receipts in the year to September compared to the same period the previous year. Meat exports fell by 12 per cent, while dairy exports increased by 3 per cent.

The largest contributor to the goods deficit widening was the increase in non-crude fuel imports (including diesel, jet fuel and petrol).

The primary income deficit also widened as overseas investors earned more from their investments in New Zealand than New Zealand investors earned overseas.

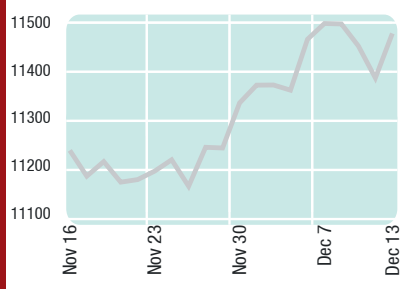
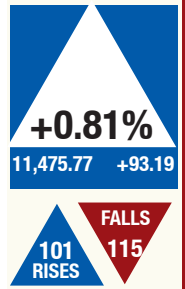
Specifically, the rise in interest payments to overseas investors (including Australian-owned banks) was more than double the rise in interest received from overseas.

Publication of the current account data didn't cause a reaction in currency markets.

SHARE MARKET SNAPSHOT

NZSX50

LAST FOUR WEEKS



TOP 10 VOLUME

Share name	Volume
Pacific Edge	3,235,350
Air NZ	2,787,304
Fletcher Building	2,189,048
Spark NZ	1,836,664
AuckAirport	1,255,974
Freightways Grp Ltd	1,213,675
Kiwi Prop	915,348
Meridian Energy	826,301
Arvida	691,700
Goodman Prop Tst	606,569

TOP 10 VALUE

Share name	Value (\$NZ)
AuckAirport	10,768,090
Fletcher Building	10,073,338
Freightways Grp Ltd	9,837,577
Spark NZ	9,504,283
Fishr&Paykl Health	7,467,529
Infratil	4,622,491
Meridian Energy	4,380,899
EBOS Group	3,404,842
Mercury NZ	2,593,615
Ryman Health	2,433,036

THE NUMBERS

ASX200	+22.10	7,257.30
Nikkei 225	+20.82	32,878.73
Dow Jones	+173.01	36,577.94
FTSE100	-2.12	7,542.77
\$NZ (TWI)	+0.05	71.57
\$US	-0.005	0.61
\$Aus	-0.002	0.93
¥Jap	-0.66	88.80
Eur	-0.006	0.565
£UK	-0.003	0.486
90 Day Bank Bill		5.67

Companies Traded 0 Volume 40.05m Value \$108.40m

Share Code	NZX Market Shares	Closing quotes Buy	Closing quotes Sell	Last Sale	1000s Sold	52-week High	52-week Low	Div CPS	Div t/c	Yld%	P/E Ratio
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BIGGEST 25 RISES (%)

ALF	AlliedFarms	.78	.83	.78	+0.03	8	.83	67	-	-	6.73	
AIA	AuckAirport	8.59	8.66	8.63	+0.33	1255	8.975	730.5	5.56	.73	.64	294.21
AFT	AFT Pharm	3.37	3.39	3.39	+0.04	26	3.92	326	1.1	9.55	.32	32.27
AFI	Aus Found	7.65	7.67	7.65	+0.02	26	8.53	713	27.22	1.00	3.56	28.01
POT	Port of Tauranga	5.30	5.26	5.25	-	76	6.61	503	21.67	1.10	4.13	30.49
PLP	PLP Fund	1.40	1.436	1.44	-	389	1.44	121.8	4.21	-	2.92	-
PGW	PGG Wrightson	3.31	3.35	3.35	-	13	4.67	310	30.56	1.05	9.12	14.43
PFI	Prop For Ind	2.18	2.22	2.22	-	164	2.48	210	9.99	-	4.50	-
PCT	Precinct Prop	1.18	1.20	1.20	-	533	1.35	105	6.74	-	5.62	-
OZY	Smartshir AU 20	4.42	4.50	4.451	-	19	4.744	419.5	20.68	-	4.65	-
OCA	OceaniaHth	.69	.72	.71	-	500	.91	66	3.2	1.71	4.51	12.98
PYS	PaySauce	.24	.25	.25	-	1	.31	17	-	-	-	-
RAK	Rakon	1.14	1.20	1.19	-	552	1.30	59	2.08	2.24	1.75	35.39
RBD	RestaurantBrands	3.65	3.70	3.65	-	28	7.64	330	22.22	.95	6.09	23.99
RYM	Ryman Health	5.25	5.34	5.30	-	458	6.99	482	8.29	4.86	1.56	13.15
SAN	Sanford	3.81	3.84	3.84	-	68	4.39	369	16.67	.89	4.34	35.87
SCL	Scales Corp	3.12	3.15	3.15	-	42	4.34	275	13.19	-	4.19	-
SCT	Scott Tech	3.20	3.23	3.20	-	23	3.91	246	8	2.41	2.50	16.61
SDL	Solution Dynam	1.40	1.41	1.40	-	.012	2.35	140	15.97	2.02	11.41	6.02
SEK	Seeka Kiwifruit	2.46	2.74	2.46	-	16	3.72	218	-	-	-	-
SKC	SKYCITYEnt	1.77	1.81	1.81	-	422	2.65	166	16.67	.09	9.21	172.53
NZX	NZX Limited	1.06	1.08	1.08	-	98	1.32	100	8.47	.71	7.84	24.89
NZO	NZ Oil & Gas	.35	.36	.35	-	13	.46	33.5	-	-	7.29	-
NZM	NZME Ltd	.88	.90	.87	-	2	1.22	82	12.5	1.02	14.37	9.52
MHJ	Michael Hill	.88	.89	.88	-	264	1.24	84	9.81	1.15	11.15	9.46

BIGGEST 25 FALLS (%)

AIR	Air NZ	.64	.645	.64	-0.02	2787	.84	64	8.33	2.04	13.02	5.24
AGG	Smartshir Glo Agr	1.13	1.19	1.16	-0.03	2	1.175	110.8	-	-	-	-
MDZ	Smartshir NZ Mid	4.85	4.88	4.866	-	11	5.745	476.9	18.82	-	3.87	-
PLP	PLP Fund	1.40	1.436	1.44	-	389	1.44	121.8	4.21	-	2.92	-
PGW	PGG Wrightson	3.31	3.35	3.35	-	13	4.67	310	30.56	1.05	9.12	14.43
PFI	Prop For Ind	2.18	2.22	2.22	-	164	2.48	210	9.99	-	4.50	-
PCT	Precinct Prop	1.18	1.20	1.20	-	533	1.35	105	6.74	-	5.62	-
OZY	Smartshir AU 20	4.42	4.50	4.451	-	19	4.744	419.5	20.68	-	4.65	-
OCA	OceaniaHth	.69	.72	.71	-	500	.91	66	3.2	1.71	4.51	12.98
NZX	NZX Limited	1.06	1.08	1.08	-	98	1.32	100	8.47	.71	7.84	24.89
POT	Port of Tauranga	5.30	5.26	5.25	-	76	6.61	503	21.67	1.10	4.13	30.49
PYS	PaySauce	.24	.25	.25	-	1	.31	17	-	-	-	-
RAK	Rakon	1.14	1.20	1.19	-	552	1.30	59	2.08	2.24	1.75	35.39
RBD	RestaurantBrands	3.65	3.70	3.65	-	28	7.64	330	22.22	.95	6.09	23.99
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SCT	Scott Tech	3.20	3.23	3.20	-	23	3.91	246	8	2.41	2.50	16.61
SDL	Solution Dynam	1.40	1.41	1.40	-	.012	2.35	140	15.97	2.02	11.41	6.02
SEK	Seeka Kiwifruit	2.46	2.74	2.46	-	16	3.72	218	-	-	-	-
NZO	NZ Oil & Gas	.35	.36	.35	-	13	.46	33.5	-	-	-	7.29
NZM	NZME Ltd	.88	.90	.87	-	2	1.22	82	12.5	1.02	14.37	9.52
MEL	Meridian Energy	5.25	5.35	5.29	-	826	5.66	475.5	23.47	.21	4.44	143.71
MFT	Mainfreight	67.12	68.86	67.33	-	29	76.99	5537	238.89	1.93	3.55	20.3
MHJ	Michael Hill	.88	.89	.88	-	264	1.24	84	9.81	1.15	11.15	9.46

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Demand drop, competition hit earnings

Air New Zealand says slowing passenger demand and competition are cutting into its earnings, and business could get tougher.

The airline now expects earnings for the six months ended December to be at the bottom end of its October forecast of between \$180 million and \$230m.

"Early signs of softness in domestic travel, particularly corporate and government travel, which were noted in the 12 October update, have continued, with late booking activity remaining weaker compared to the prior year," the company said in a statement to the NZX.

"More recently, the airline has noted softer leisure demand in both the domestic and trans-tasman markets."

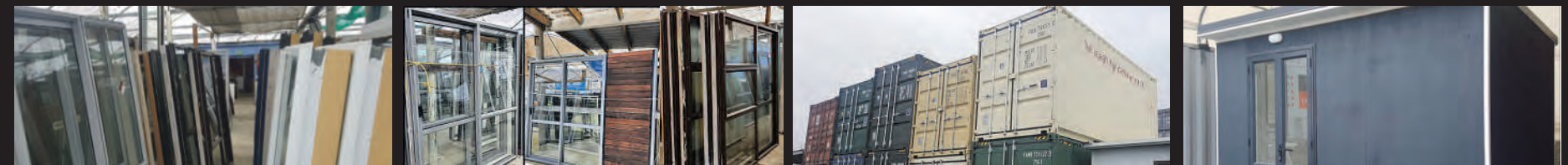
Asia and Pacific Island demand remained unchanged, but increased competition from US airlines was putting pressure on prices.

It said the new forecast included about \$45m of travel credits which were unlikely to be redeemed.

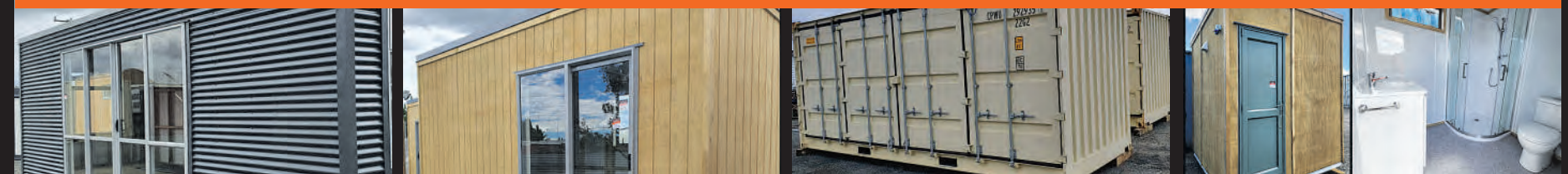
It gave no new information on potential disruptions caused by required checks for the Pratt & Whitney engines on 16 of its planes,

The carrier gave no full-year earnings forecast because of uncertainties caused by economic and inflation risks, and repeated its first-half performance should not be used an indicator of the second half, likely to be "increasingly challenging".

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Lake Hāwea Station earns validation

BUSINESS: It is the first NZ farm to win B Corp status, recognition that will open the door to high-end fashion labels.

A famous high-country station has become the first farm in New Zealand – and the first merino sheep farm in the world – to earn B Corp status.

Lake Hāwea Station's owners say the new status paves the way to "a competitive advantage for New Zealand exporters".

B Corp businesses have been verified by B Lab – founded in 2006 in the United States – as having high standards of social and environmental performance, transparency and accountability.

The station is a climate-positive farm – high-profile owners Geoff and Justine Ross, the founders of 42 Below, have spoken extensively of how they have transformed the 6700ha farm and farming practices, and their longer-term climate, environmental and commercial goals.

Lake Hāwea Station says its B Corp Certification reaffirms the station's mission to regeneratively farm for the future and increase the international competitive advantage of New Zealand wool.

"Certified B Corporations are leaders in the global movement for an inclusive, equitable, and regener-



ative economy," a station press release said.

"The B Corp certification is a holistic view of a company's entire social and environmental impact through rigorous measurement of its policies and processes, supply chain, environmental outputs and social contributions."

Lake Hāwea Station earned a 109.5 score representing the station's unwavering commitment to its climate-

positive, animal welfare, regenerative farming and biodiverse ecosystem credentials.

"We are thrilled to welcome Lake Hāwea Station to the growing Kiwi community of certified B corporations" B Lab Australia & Aotearoa New Zealand chief executive Andrew Davies said.

"In an industry responsible for half of New Zealand's carbon emissions, Lake Hāwea Station is modelling a new approach to agriculture, centred on regeneration and respect for the land and livestock.

"Their innovative approach ... reflects the kind of leadership we need to see across the industry and broader economy."

More than 7350 companies across 92 countries have achieved B Corp certification.

The South Island Merino sheep station said the recognition would give it access to a growing number of wool buyers.

"World famous fashion labels such as Chloe, Patagonia, All Birds, Another Tomorrow and Maggie Marilyn all share in choosing a more impactful path and are looking to grow their B Corp certified supply chains."

Lake Hāwea Station's sustain-

Geoff Ross with wife Justine and son Finn in the regeneration paddocks at Lake Hāwea Station in Central Otago.

In an industry responsible for half of NZ's carbon emissions, Lake Hāwea Station is modelling a new approach to agriculture, centred on regeneration and respect for the land and livestock.

– Andrew Davies, B Lab

ability lead Finn Ross said: "The B Corp community is growing each year and becoming an important tool for trade".

"The thriving network is focused on transforming the global economy to benefit all people, communities and the planet and being the only merino farm in the world certainly gives Lake Hāwea Station an advantage on the international market".

Business advantages stretched beyond the wool market, he said.

"Almost all New Zealand export categories have companies that are moving to the B Corp certification and aiming to source from other certified businesses.

"We see our agriculture, food and tourism sectors constantly pushing for better sustainability and social credentials and with evidence this will increase access to a growing number of commercial opportunities for NZ Inc."

Lake Hāwea Station owner Geoff Ross said New Zealand must constantly innovate and collectively aspire to higher environment and community standards to stay globally competitive.

"New Zealand has a unique opportunity to be at the forefront of sustainability innovation, products and services. There is both a commercial opportunity in this and also an opportunity for New Zealand to be a world leader in decarbonisation." ■

Disrupters cop vitriolic backlash

Lake Hāwea Station became unwittingly embroiled in controversy when a *Country Calendar* episode featured their innovative and climate-positive approach to farming and triggered a vitriolic backlash that included death threats against their family.

42 Below founders Justine and Geoff Ross were ridiculed by a vocal minority for practices that featured in the episode, such as landing mattresses for sheep in the shearing shed and playing Vivaldi music to help keep the animals calm.

In her recent book, *Meet You at*

the Main Divide, Justine Ross describes the struggle the couple had to 'fit in' to the conservative farming sector and how they have transformed the 6700ha into a carbon-positive farm.

She devoted a chapter to that *Country Calendar* episode, the highest rating of the year, that ultimately caused the couple to call in police.

"We've done some disrupting before but we had never in our lives had our families threatened and had our home threatened," she said. ■

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Survey: Rural crime rates on rise

SAFETY: Federated Farmer are calling on judges to give harsher sentences to livestock thieves and illegal hunters.

The findings in Federated Farmers' 2023 Rural Crime Survey are concerning, Feds rural policing spokesman Richard McIntyre says.

McIntyre said sentencing judges needed to stop going lightly on those convicted of illegal hunting and the killing or stealing of livestock.

He also said farmers needed to report all instances of criminal activity, to ensure rural areas had a fair share of police resources and to keep pressure on the Government.

Of more than 1000 farmers who responded to the questions, 67 per cent said they had experienced a crime or suspected they had, in the instance of hard-to-prove incidents such as livestock killing or theft.

This was a 14.7 per cent increase from the 2021 survey and a 26 per cent rise from the federation's first survey in 2016.

This year's tally was boosted by the inclusion of a question on illegal street racing, reported by just under 62 per cent of farmers.

McIntyre said there was a marked overlap with "boy racer" burnouts



and dangerous driving, and instances of road and fence damage.

"The often-dangerous antics of sometimes hundreds of boy racers in isolated rural areas is very intimidating for families.

"Too many farmers are having to keep stock out of road-adjacent paddocks because animals are being spooked and injured."

While the number of surveyed farmers reporting single incidents of crime had dropped slightly since the

2021 survey, McIntyre was alarmed that the number who had been hit by five or more criminal incidents had nearly doubled to 33.4 per cent.

After illegal street racing, illegal hunting or poaching is the next highest reported crime at 47.1 per cent, and property theft at 35.5 per cent.

McIntyre was particularly worried by the high rates of illegal hunting, as well as theft and killing of livestock (at 33 per cent and 23 per cent respectively), because they involve

Rural crime is up 14.7 per cent from Federated Farmers survey in 2021.

Photo / NZME

offenders coming on to farms with firearms.

He said when hunters asked the landowner for permission to come on to the property, there was an opportunity to let them know where houses were, where staff were working and where livestock was located.

"With people hunting illegally, or looking to steal livestock, that whole safety element is out the window.

"We've got people shooting semi-randomly about the place without any understanding of the safety risks."

McIntyre said he found it slightly exasperating that nearly half of those farmers hit by crime had not reported it because they thought police were too stretched or wouldn't be interested.

"All crime, and even suspicious vehicles and activity, needs to be reported," he said.

"Police have told us time and again that it helps them pick patterns of offending that boost the chances of an arrest.

"More importantly, unreported rural incidents mean a vast extent of the cost and disruption of criminal activity gets no notice, and the Government is off the hook on adequately resourcing police."

Just 15 per cent of farmers who experienced crime in the past two years said police had investigated and prosecuted the offender, he said.

"It's only when we have more police dedicated to rural areas that we'll boost that figure." ■

Baptism of fire for asparagus growers

HORTICULTURE: Couple who lost everything love providing jobs, **Sally Round** writes.

When George and Diana Turney's home caught fire in the middle of the night, little did they know the tragedy would set them on the path to growing asparagus.

They lost everything in the blaze, but the Taihape community rallied around with goods and funds, which enabled the couple to start afresh and buy land in Northland.

With four children to raise and difficulties farming the land, the family had its ups and downs. Meanwhile, George had always dreamed of returning to the Rangitikei district.

"I'd learned this land can grow anything."

The Turneys eventually bought a

sheep and beef farm in the Kawhātau Valley, over the river from Mangaweka. Out went the livestock and in came asparagus.

That was 25 years ago, and Mangaweka Asparagus now produces up to 250 tonnes of asparagus a season, off 70 hectares.

The Turneys brought in manager Sam Rainey nine years ago, and workers from Vanuatu come every year for the harvest.

When I visit, the morning pick is over and the 60-strong team is in the packhouse, weighing and bundling up the spears, with music pumping.

Glen Towbah, in his 11th season, is at the front on quality control. He weighs the bundles after checking the spears are neatly taped up and of similar size, which ensures the bunch cooks evenly.

"We try to sell the best," he said.

The quality has to be spot-on, Rainey says, because their crop comes to the market a little later in

the season. They go on harvesting later too, feeding those who are still keen for asparagus after the Christmas splurge.

"You've got to be producing early or producing late to make any money in this industry," Rainey says.

His workers can take back home as much as \$15,000 after seven months of harvesting asparagus and apples, allowing them to build a well-constructed house, pay school fees and, perhaps in time, set up a small business.

Their remote workplace in the Kawhātau Valley means they're not tempted to spend too much of their earnings, Towbah said.

The Turneys say it's great to have the team back after the tough Covid years, when there weren't enough hands to harvest.

But this year has been tough too, with lower demand and oversupply because of various growing regions peaking at the same time. All parts of the farm have been mowed at some



Mangaweka Asparagus owners George and Diana Turney.

Photo / Sally Round, RNZ

stage this season in order not to flood the market and depress prices further.

"It's been as bad as I've seen it in my nine seasons," Rainey said.

But the Turneys find providing employment for so many is what gives them the most satisfaction.

"When you lose a house and all your material things in life and the community come to your aid, I'm very pleased to give back," George said. ■

— RNZ



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Couple donate 5000-plus mince meals

CHARITY: Meat the Need's Big Feed telethon is running live today to support those Kiwis who need food on the table.

A dairy farming couple who have donated more than 5000 mince meals to food banks urge other farmers to think about supporting their local communities through today's rural telethon, The Big Feed.

John and Cara Gregan milk 650 cows under the Hunter Hills near Waimate in Canterbury and have donated a large number of cattle beasts to charity Meat the Need.

John recently spent the day at Oamaru Churches Food Bank as part of The Big Feed, seeing first-hand the difference his donations are making in his local community.

"These food banks are a lifeline for people who are suffering from food poverty," he said. "It was definitely a reality check, you tend to live in your own little world a bit and it was eye-opening to see just how important giving really is."

The food bank supplies food parcels to 27 families every Friday and it's running low on food.



"They really appreciate the meat that comes in, they can't get it from anywhere else and it's too expensive to buy in, so as a farmer, it's great to be able to donate that," Gregan said. "For a country that feeds 50 million people, it would be a real shame if we couldn't feed our own."

Gregan first got involved with Meat

the Need in 2020 and also came on board as a "champion", raising awareness of the charity. He liked that 100 per cent of what farmers donate is provided directly to food banks and community organisations as mince and milk meals.

Donating produce was easy, he said. People just pledge how much they want to give and Meat the Need and Silver Fern Farms took care of all the admin.

"It's not too difficult to donate your meat or milk and you won't really miss it. It's giving our communities

Cara and John Gregan have supplied \$12,000 worth of meals to food banks through their donations and fundraising efforts.

Photo / Meat the Need

The Big Feed

- **What:** A live rural telethon
- **When:** Kicks off 6am today and runs for 14 hours
- **Where:** The Big Feed will be streaming live on Facebook, YouTube, Vimeo and at meattheneed.org
- **Hosts:** TV personality Matt Chisholm, Meat the Need co-founder and Federated Farmers president Wayne Langford, and former boxer Dave Letele
- **Donations:** Livestock, milk, virtual animals or funds can be donated online at meattheneed.org, or by texting "feed" to 3493 to automatically give \$3; or by calling 0800 632 884

and food banks a product they need that's really high in protein."


Gregan also raised around \$12,000 for the charity by hosting a fundraising Golf Day in Waimate earlier this year with the funds going towards mince and milk meals for the Waimate food bank. He rang around local businesses to gather support and help in sponsoring the event, putting money behind an auction - which included auctioning himself off for free labour.

"Our bank manager bought us and made us go and tail lambs so it wasn't all that bad," he said, laughing. "As a farmer, it's amazing the number of people in the business community that you cross paths with who were all keen to get on board." ■

For a country that feeds 50 million people, it would be a real shame if we couldn't feed our own.


— John Gregan

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'Bugger the bank': Tips for tough times

DAIRY: Hamish Jenkins talks to **Shawn McAvinue** about finding positives and how to manage turbulent times.

Adversity is a great teacher on how to farm smarter, Taieri 50:50 sharemilker Hamish Jenkins says.

He and his team milk 570 cows on the 168ha flat farm surrounding Dunedin Airport.

The Government and Dunedin City Council have an equal share in the ownership of the airport, including the farm.

He launched his sharemilking career on the airport farm 12 years ago and had no intention of farming anywhere else.

"I'll stay here until I'm done."

To be a sharemilker, he saved money by contract milking to buy budget cows from Stafford Ferguson in Milton, whose herd was in the top 5 per cent of New Zealand.

The "fair deal" allowed his sharemilking career to take off.

"In this game, everyone needs a helping hand and you're away, but it is really hard to get that helping hand.

"You never look back when you get your opportunity."

The budget cows were still able to "smash out" 450kg of milksolids (kgMS) per cow.

In the beginning, he only had enough cows to milk on 91ha of the farm but he took on the remaining 77ha after five years on the job, as his herd numbers increased.

Last season, he achieved a record production of 280,000kgMS, a lift in production of 100,000kgMS on the two farm blocks since he had started working for the airport.

The reasons for the lift in production included a focus on pasture management and being able to feed his cows palm kernel and dried distiller's grain in the 24-bale herringbone milking shed.

His sharemilking career had a bumpy start after the milk price dropped to \$3.90 per kgMS in the 2014-15 season.

"It was terrible, it was costing us to make milk. It was the worst year ever."

At the time, the break even point was about \$5 per kgMS.

Cow prices also plummeted.

"It was basically, works price. I sold all my late-calving cows to the works."

His bank at the time was "brutal" and refused to lend him any money.

"I didn't have any equity left and



the bank was like 'you're on your own mate'."

The only money the bank would give him was by refinancing his tractor, which he had recently paid off.

As he and his wife Jody had just started sharemilking, they were "in debt up to [their] eyeballs".

"We lost half our equity and half our income overnight. It was really tough."

Despite Jody working off-farm and putting her wages in the farm business, he had to lay off staff and stop paying himself a wage.

"It was so bad."

Dunedin Airport helped him by paying for some of the farm costs.

"They didn't give me any money but they were prepared to share some of those costs that were mine, which was really good."

When he started on the farm, the annual budget allowed for the application of 350kg of superphosphate per hectare.

"It never got changed and we threw it on."

A different approach to fertiliser application came following the 2014-15 season.

"The blanket approach of just throwing it at it was just wasting money. It took the \$3.90 year to click on to that."

Now the soil on each paddock was tested and fertiliser was only applied

where it was needed.

"It is saving us lots of money. There's no point throwing fertiliser at it while our nutrient levels are at the optimum level or above it."

The plan this season was to only apply fertiliser on the grass surrounding the runway after it was cut, as it was the only part of the farm that did not get any nutrients from the cows.

He never considered selling his herd in the 2014-15 season.

"I'd just got my dream, I'd just bought my herd of cows. It was all I ever wanted so I thought bugger the bank and knuckled down and did everything I could and we got through."

In hindsight, a positive of the bank refusing to lend him money was not needing to pay it back.

About two seasons after the dire year, he was in a position to buy another herd.

This season, when the milk price dropped to \$6.80 per kgMS, the 2014-15 season helped keep the drop in perspective.

However, on-farm inflation this season was making farming more expensive than the 2014-15 season.

When the milk price dropped this season, he altered his business plan from being "aggressive at paying back debt" – about \$150,000 a year in principal – to changing to interest-only repayments for six months so

Sharemilker Hamish Jenkins has no aspirations for farm ownership. "I'm happy where I'm at."

Photo / Shawn McAvinue

Measuring stuff is really important; if you don't know, you are guessing.

– Hamish Jenkins

he could keep all his staff on and be able to pay to establish crops and mate his herd.

"It gave me breathing space early."

Having a conversation with the bank manager early on to find a solution was easier than calling them down the track asking to borrow money to pay wages, he said.

He had entered the Dairy Industry Awards twice before, as a contract milker and sharemilker, and recommended the experience to others.

The competition was an "awesome" way to find where your business was at.

"Leading up to that, all I wanted was to be on the farm and I didn't know my business – it taught me a lot about my business."

"Measuring stuff is really important; if you don't know, you are guessing."

If a farmer knew their business, a bank would be more likely to lend them money, he said.

He liked to keep things simple, including his cropping.

A 10ha crop on the farm won the direct-drilled kale category at the 2023 Taieri Winter Crop Competition and Charity Auction.

To produce the crop, he sprayed the perennial ryegrass in the paddock with Round Up, took it off for baleage, and direct drilled Cleancrop kale seed and applied 100kg of urea. The crop produced about 19 tonnes.

"With the fertility we have here, we are able to grow, big, big crops with no expense."

He found direct drilling produced a crop that held together, resulting in less pugging of the soil in wet weather. After the kale was eaten, the paddock was returned to a perennial ryegrass.

"I don't put a catch crop in – I don't see a lot of value in that."

About 400 cows were wintered off-farm on fodder beet.

He has no aspirations of farm ownership because he has no desire to take on more debt, deal with increasing regulations and face the negativity towards the dairy industry, despite it feeding plenty of people and constantly improving in how it operates.

"I'm happy where I'm at and I don't need that in my life. I'm further ahead than I ever thought I was going to be." ■

– Otago Daily Times

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Cooks on Fire, at 7.30pm

- 6am Breakfast
9am Lingo
10am Tipping Point
11am The Chase
Noon 1News Midday
12.30 Emmerdale
1pm Attitude
1.30 Coronation Street
2pm Millionaire Hot Seat
3pm Tipping Point
4pm Te Karere
4.30 The Office US
5pm The Chase
6pm 1News at Six
7pm Seven Sharp
7.30 Cooks on Fire
8.35 RFDS: Royal Flying Doctor Service
9.35 Coronation Street
10.35 1News Tonight
11.05 Shortland Street
11.35 The Apprentice UK
12.45 20/20
1.35 Te Karere
2.10 Infomercials
5.30 Te Karere



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The Voice Australia, at 7.30pm

- 6am Les Mills Born to Move
6.25 Children's Programmes
9am Infomercials
9.30 Les Mills Adult Classes
10am Rutherford Falls
10.30 Shortland Street
11am Country House Hunters Canada
11.30 Kirstie's Handmade Christmas
12.30 Unbeatable
1.30 Sarah Beeny's New Life in the Country
2.30 The Drew Barrymore Show
3.25 Bluey
3.35 Teen Titans Go!
3.55 Sabrina the Teenage Witch
5.05 The Goldbergs
5.30 Neighbours
6pm Friends
6.30 Young Sheldon
7pm Shortland Street
7.30 The Voice Australia
9.05 Emergency on Sunny Beach
10.05 Paranormal: Caught on Camera
11pm FBI: International
12.45 Party Down
1.15 Emmerdale
1.40 Infomercials
2.35 MacGruber
3.35 The Big Body Hotel
4.25 Neighbours
4.50 2 Tunes
5am Infomercials



The Graham Norton Show, at 7.30pm

- 6am AM
9am Infomercials
10.30 Gold Rush
11.30 Tiny House Hunters
Noon Sister Wives
1pm Outrageous Acts of Science
2pm Pit Bulls and Parolees
3pm Guy's Grocery Games
4pm Flip or Flop
4.30 Room Crashers
5pm Gold Rush
6pm Newshub Live at 6pm
7pm Beach Cops
7.30 The Graham Norton Show
8.35 SAS Australia
10.05 Newshub Late
10.35 NCIS: LA
11.35 Room Crashers
12am Infomercials
5.30 Tiny House Hunters



NZ Rugby Awards, at 8.30pm

- 8am Kiri and Lou
8.05 The Legend of Korra
8.30 The Moe Show
9am Rural Delivery
9.30 Wheel of Fortune
10am Infomercials
Noon Masterchef USA
2pm Frasier
3pm Wheel of Fortune
3.25 Jeopardy
3.50 Football: A-League Women
5pm Pawn Stars
5.30 News First
6pm Frasier
6.30 Outback Truckers
8.30 NZ Rugby Awards
10.30 Crowd Goes Wild
11pm Barry
11.35 Law and Order: Organized Crime
12.30 Love Island UK
1.30 Infomercials

W H A K A A T A

M A O R I

- 6.30 Purakau
6.40 Pipi Pao Pao Tamariki Karaoke
6.45 Takaro Tribe
7am Darwin and Newts
7.10 Tamariki Haka
7.20 Te Nutube
7.30 Kia Mau
7.40 Whare Takataka
7.50 Island of Mystery
8am Polyfest 2022
8.30 Oranga Ngakau
9.30 Whanau Bake-off
10am Huro Pepi
10.30 Amplify
11am Cracking the Code
Noon Te ao Tapatahi
12.30 The Man who Invented Christmas
2.20 Yes to Success
2.30 Opaki
3pm Ako
3.30 Purakau
3.40 Pipi Pao Pao Tamariki Karaoke
3.45 Takaro Tribe
4pm Darwin and Newts
4.10 Tamariki Haka
4.20 Te Nutube
4.30 Kia Mau
4.40 Whare Takataka
4.50 Island of Mystery
5pm Mauri Reo, Mauri Ora
5.30 Brain Busters
6pm Haka Ngahau a Rohe: Tamarao
6.30 Te ao Marama
7pm He Aha to Say
7.30 The Casketeers
8pm Only in Aotearoa
8.30 Black Comedy
9pm Rurangi
9.30 Ai M
10.30 Te ao Marama
11pm Closedown



- 10am Ghost Hunters
11am Snapped
Noon The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills
1pm Below Deck Sailing Yacht
2pm Vanderpump Rules
3pm Judge Jerry
3.30 Hollywood Medium
4.30 Ghost Hunters
5.30 Rich Kids Skint Holidays
6.30 Hoarders
7.30 Tattoo Fixers on Holiday
8.30 Below Deck Mediterranean
9.30 The Real Housewives of New York
10.30 Snapped
11.30 One Deadly Mistake
12.20 Infomercials

sky MOVIES PREMIERE

- 6.49 Top Gun: Maverick
8.56 Where the Crawdads Sing
11.03 Book Club: The Next Chapter
12.51 Millie Lies Low
2.33 The Woman King
4.48 Scream VI
6.50 Happening
8.30 Champions
10.36 Brian and Charles
12.09 What's Love Got to do with It?
1.59 Cocaine Bear
3.32 Mack and Rita
5.04 Men

sky MOVIES GREATS

- 7.25 Ocean's 8
9.12 Gold
11.08 The Taking of Pelham 123
12.51 Dear John
2.36 Jurassic World
4.37 Life
6.18 Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald
8.30 Jerry Maguire
10.46 Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull
12.49 Snow White and the Huntsman
2.54 2012
5.29 Adrift



- 6am All Round to Mrs Brown's
6.35 QI
7.10 EastEnders
7.40 The Bill
8.30 A Touch of Frost
10.20 Father Brown
11.10 Doc Martin
Noon Midsomer Murders
1.35 The Bill
2.25 New Tricks
3.25 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown
4.20 All Round to Mrs Brown's
5.15 Who do You Think You Are?
6.20 QI
6.55 EastEnders
7.25 QI
8pm Would I Lie to You?
8.35 Cheaters
9.10 Cheaters
9.45 The Jonathan Ross Show
10.40 Mallorca Files
11.30 Midsomer Murders
1.05 QI
1.35 QI
2.10 Would I Lie to You?
2.40 Who do You Think You Are?
3.40 Cheaters
4.10 Cheaters
4.40 The Jonathan Ross Show
5.30 Richard Osman's House of Games

sky SPORT 1

- 6am Football: A-League Men Round Seven.
7am Football: A-League Women Round Seven.
8am Football: Dutch League Round 15.
9am Football: La Liga Matchday 16.
10am Spirit of Sport
10.30 NBL Slam
11am NBL Overtime
Noon Rugby: Champions Cup
2pm Rugby: Champions Cup
6pm UFC Fight Week
6.30 UFC on Sky
7pm Crowd Goes Wild
7.30 NZ Rugby Awards
9pm UFC Fight Week
9.30 UFC on Sky
10pm Crowd Goes Wild
10.30 NZ Rugby Awards
12am Rugby: Champions Cup
2am Rugby: Champions Cup
4am Rugby: Champions Cup

RNZ NATIONAL

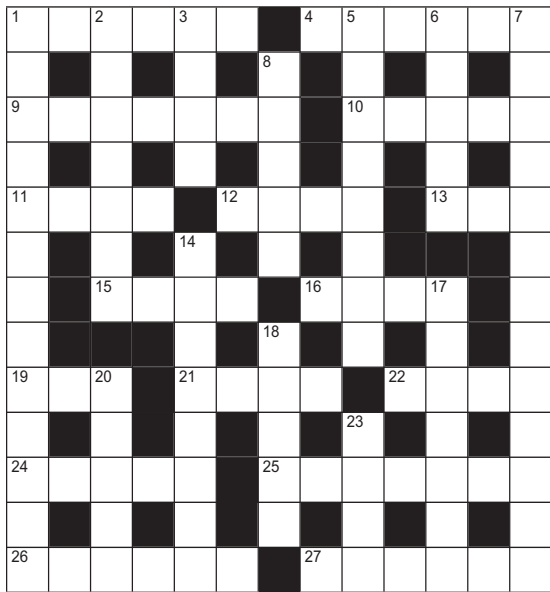
- 6am Morning Report
9.06 Nine to Noon
Noon Midday Report
1.06 Afternoons
3.45 The Panel
5pm Checkpoint
6.30 Trending Now
7.06 Nights
10pm News at Ten
11.04 The Mixtape
12.04 All Night Programme
First Up

RNZ CONCERT

- 6am Mornings
10am Days
3pm Three to Seven
7pm Evenings
8pm Music Alive
10pm Evenings
12am Music Through the Night

Puzzles and horoscopes

Cryptic crossword



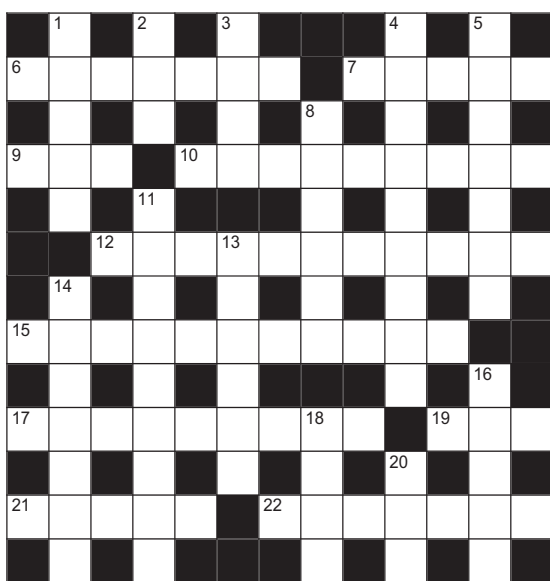
ACROSS

- Secret shelter for game (6)
- Isn't there a tendency to be around the South? (6)
- Sort of lock it takes miser to change (7)
- Begin to insert a record of it (5)
- Incline to the diet Jack Sprat adopted (4)
- Prejudice repeated in music with a third (4)
- She's a sister to a pigeon (3)
- Pony-carriage one might get caught in (4)
- It is tied to a Turk's head (4)
- The point of writing nota bene is to include one (3)
- Paints one makes run smoothly (4)
- A gull may soundly impale its meat (4)
- Where there's contest it comes near a disaster (5)
- Wrench ran out with pens adapted to it (7)
- Obedient followers have seen my confusion (3-3)
- Is against us not completing poetry first (6)

DOWN

- Alternative sort of medicine sounds as if it's given free (13)
- A different sort of 3 perhaps in VAT (7)
- Fled when one was in a downpour (4)
- Benediction not so much apparent in a crooner (8)
- Has broken fast each half between nine and eleven (5)
- Lizard-hipped monster turns any, as our replacement shows (13)
- Be worthy of one in a difficult term (5)
- With which to throw a 25 in the works as a bat goes for it (8)
- Shop's income, thanks to Cambridge college (7)
- Start the game and turn red (5)
- Makes tea for Serb uprising around the West (5)
- Weed one should rip out, one is told (4)

Quick crossword



Across

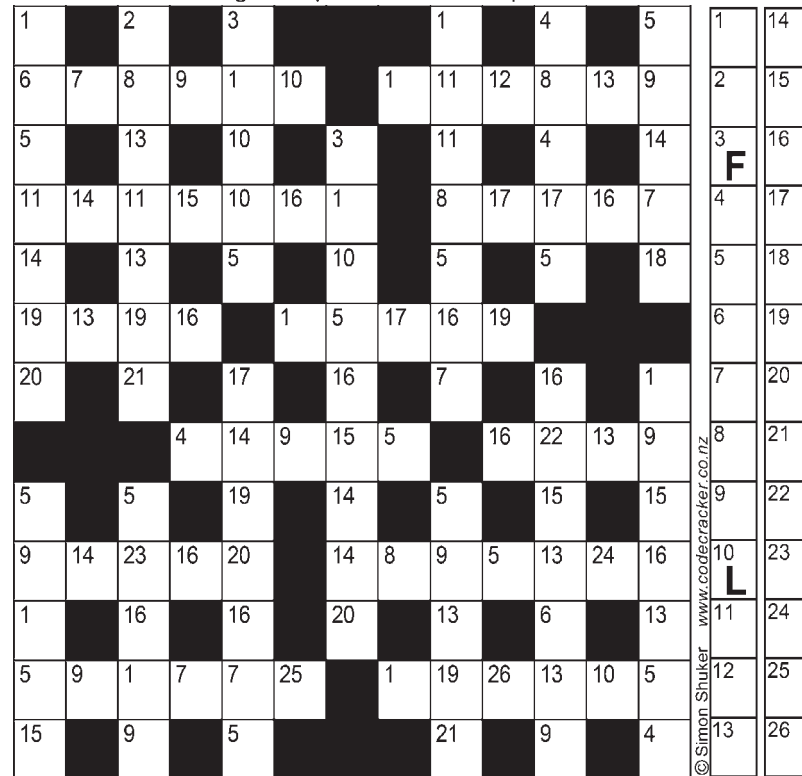
- Screen (7)
- Healed (5)
- Prohibit (3)
- Rejoice (9)
- Based on good intentions (4-7)
- Fast-thinking (5-6)
- Attack (9)
- Might (3)
- Wall painting (5)
- Mixture (7)

Down

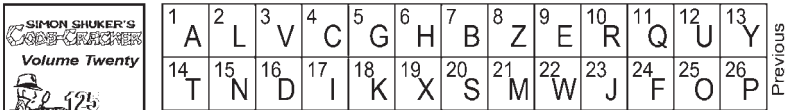
- Regal (5)
- Repair (3)
- Manage (4)
- Capitulate (9)
- Encounter (7)
- Abandon (6)
- Requiring great strength or effort (9)
- Legitimate (6)
- Disastrous (7)
- Unpleasant (5)
- Practical joke (4)
- Part (3)

Simon Shuker's Code-Cracker

Each number in our Code-Cracker grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. For example, today 3 represents F so fill in F every time the figure 3 appears. You have two letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid and solve the starter word. Fill in other squares in the main and control grids with the found letters and look for the next word. Follow the word trail through the puzzle to its completion.



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



Volume Twenty now available!

All the books in Simon Shuker's Code-Cracker series can be ordered at a bookshop near you. (See www.codecracker.nz for stockists)

WordWheel

Insert the missing letter to complete an eight-letter word reading clockwise or anti-clockwise.



Previous solution: MUSTANGS



www.thepuzzlecompany.co.nz

14/12

WordBuilder



How many words of three or more letters, including plurals, can you make from the five letters, using each letter only once? No words beginning with a capital are allowed. There's at least one five-letter word.

Good 12 Very Good 17 Excellent 20

Previous solution: age, ager, are, areg, art, ate, ear, eat, era, erg, eta, gar, gat, gate, gear, get, grate, great, rag, rage, rat, rate, ret, retag, tag, tar, tare, targe, tea, tear, teg

Your Stars

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 19): It's a good time for asking hard questions. For instance, do you seek a deep understanding of a complex matter, or is there something different going on? Are you trying to control the uncontrollable?



TAURUS (Apr 20-May 20): Knowing the answer is only the start. The long process of implementation, adaptation, recovery and repetition is next. Do not doubt that you have everything you need to succeed. One thing at a time.



GEMINI (May 21-Jun 21): Transformation is just what love does. It changes anything in its path. Whether you give your attention and warmth outwardly or focus it on yourself, it happens the same.



CANCER (Jun 22-Jul 22): Loved ones can comment with a sharp precision that comes from understanding your vulnerabilities. You'll use these pokes for personal growth. Stay positive and buckle in for your extraordinary emergence.



LEO (Jul 23-Aug 22): You'll strike a lovely balance of being aware of how you are perceived without being overly worried with what people think of you. You'll hold back some, give just the right thing and make a fantastic impression.



VIRGO (Aug 23-Sep 22): Helping is your main drive. Whatever else is going on for you, you'll set it aside for your people when something comes up. They don't always acknowledge your heroics, but today you'll get the nod.



LIBRA (Sep 23-Oct 23): The awareness of sleeping comes after being startled awake. Today's lucky disruption will be an energetic shake-up that will cause you to open your eyes to a level of consciousness that was inaccessible.



SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 21): Love fosters a kind curiosity all its own, seeking to find out what people need and how you can help. You connect with people on a heart level and your compassion drives your interest in them.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22-Dec 21): You embody the spirit of an adventurer who defies convention, seeking experiences few would think to do and fewer would risk. It's about time for another one of your courageous escapades. What'll it be?



CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 19): Our eyes see the subject and let the negative space float into the background. Let the negative space be important and a whole different picture emerges, one that will be more interesting and useful to you today.



AQUARIUS (Jan 20-Feb 18): You get clarity on a specific area you could improve on, and you'll see an accessible way to this end. There will be much helping, doing and giving, but nothing you give diminishes you. What you give makes you bigger.



PISCES (Feb 19-Mar 20): There's a negotiation to hash out. Keep in mind that some people, for whatever reason, are incapable of sharing. With them, you're better off just giving what you're willing to part with and expecting no return.



Previous cryptic solution

Across: 1. Complain 7. Girth 8. Enthuse 9. Nuances 10. Turn 12. Capture 14. Delight 17. Game 18. Confine 21. Bragged 22. Daily 23. Defector

Down: 1. Create 2. Material 3. Loud 4. Irenic 5. Eric 6. Chaste 7. Grampus 11. Dignity 13. Untaught 14. Decide 15. Treble 16. Tender 19. Nail 20. Male

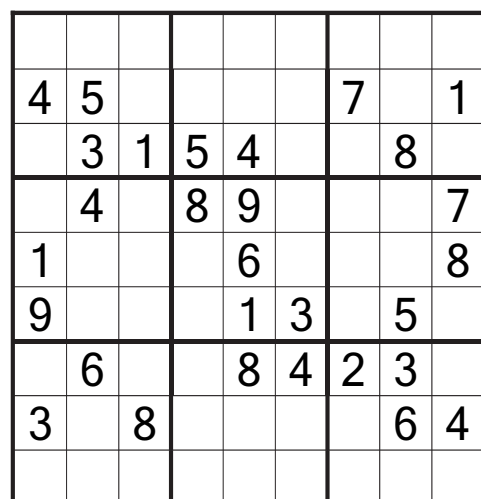
Previous quick solution

Across: 1. Recluse 5. Rifle 8. Conscientious 9. Pat 10. Aggressor 12. Aerate 13. Appals 15. Abandoned 16. Air 18. Hairsplitting 20. Dined 21. Suspend.

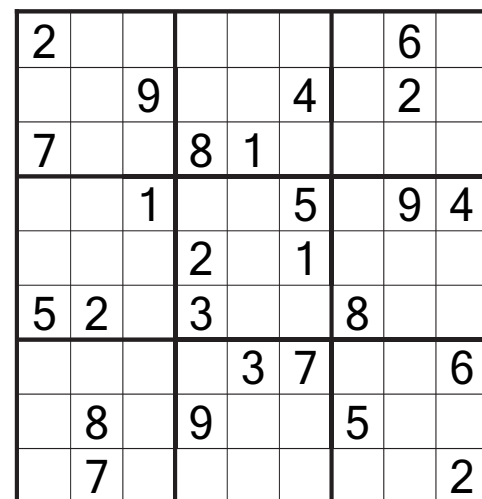
Down: 1. Recap 2. Consternation 3. Uncharted 4. Emerge 5. Rut 6. Fool's paradise 7. Ensures 11. Expedites 12. Abashed 14. Knells 17. Rigid 19. Sad.

Sudoku

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.



MEDIUM



HARD

PREVIOUS SOLUTIONS

7	4	5	9	1	6	3	8	2
6	1	3	5	2	8	4	7	9
2	8	9	3	7	4	6	1	5
8	9	7	6	3	1	5	2	4
1	3	4	7	5	2	9	6	8
5	6	2	8	4	9	1	3	7
9	5	8	1	6	7	2	4	3
3	2	1	4	8	5	7	9	6
4	7	6	2	9	3	8	5	1

6	3	1	9	4	8	2	5	7
2	5	9	3	6	7	1	8	4
7	4	8	5	2	1	3	6	9
4	8	7	2	1	3	5	9	6
3	6	5	4	7	9	8	2	1
9	1	2	8	5	6	4	7	3
1	7	3	6	8	5	9	4	2
8	2	6	1	9	4	7	3	5
5	9	4	7	3	2	6	1	8

WORDSEARCH

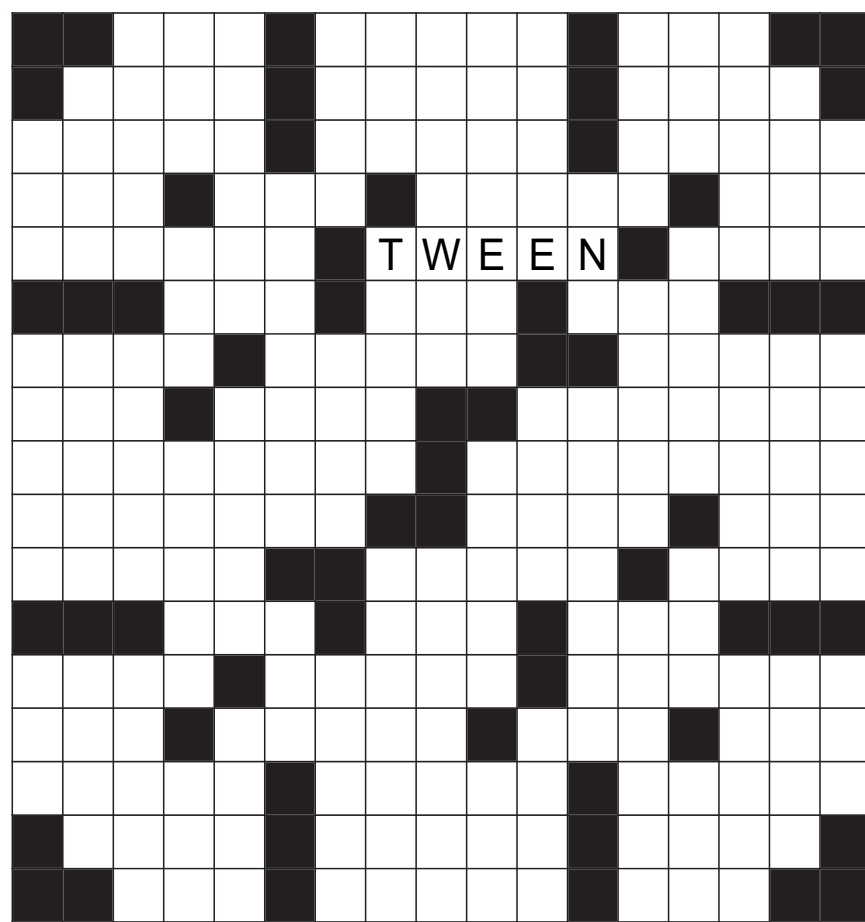
GR

Can you find all the words hidden in the grid? Read backwards or forwards, up or down, or diagonally. The words will always be in a straight line. Cross them off the list as you find them.

E F E D A R G A L U F E C A R G B H
 G R A F T E R R V Y H J R P Y J P C
 G S D V B B O G U E L D D I R G C N
 E R G R I E F R L M G R I L L G K I
 G T O H D N Z A Z G P D U Z D R T R
 R N P G O B U M G R B Y K S S O R G
 E U K P G D Y D P U G R I E V O U S
 A R G R A G R E Y D L E U R G V G X
 T G A R G G R I R G R E A S E E R X
 W N G E I R R E P E E S G T H A A R
 D V Z B H N E I E P C X R R C L I H
 I G A J H A D E S T N V O M U V N T
 G R E E N O G S D T E L U P O B Y E
 N I L M E R G V M Y L D N Z R U L M
 Z C Z M A G G Y B M C Y D P G U Q M
 A E V P Y R E C O R G G R I N Q U O
 R H E B I D I S E L Z Z I R G Y N R
 F S R D G R A D I E N T U R T P U G

- | | | | |
|----------|----------|---------|--------|
| GRACEFUL | GREAT | GRILL | GROOVE |
| GRADE | GREEDY | GRIN | GROSS |
| GRADIENT | GREEN | GRINCH | GROUCH |
| GRADUAL | GREETED | GRINDS | GROUND |
| GRAFTER | GREMLIN | GRISTLY | GRUB |
| GRAINY | GREY | GRIZZLE | GRUDGE |
| GRAM | GRID | GROAN | GRUEL |
| GRAND | GRIDDLE | GROCERY | GRUMPY |
| GRAPES | GRIEF | GROG | GRUNT |
| GREASE | GRIEVOUS | GROMMET | |

BUMPER WORDFIT



Fit the words into the grid to create a finished crossword

3 LETTERS

- ACT
- ADO
- ALE
- AND
- APE
- ASP
- BIT
- CAW
- DON
- DYE
- EEL
- EGG
- ELF
- ERA
- ERR
- GEL
- HAS
- HER
- ILL
- IRE
- KEG
- MIR
- MOW
- ORB

4 LETTERS

- RAY
- RUE
- RYE
- SEA
- SEW
- TIE
- TOW
- YEN
- ACTS
- ASKS
- DELL
- DULY
- EASY
- EDGE
- GOOF
- HAIR
- HERE
- ITCH
- KNEW
- LADE
- LIED
- MILO
- RAPE

Enjoy WordFit? Magazine available at www.thepuzzlecompany.co.nz

- SACS
- SARI
- SCOT
- SEAM
- SIRE

- LOGIC
- MERGE
- OPENS
- OUSTS
- OWNER
- PATIO
- PERIL
- PILLS
- RAFTS
- RIGHT
- ROVES
- SAGAS
- SALAD
- SCRUM
- SEDGE
- SEERS
- SNAKE
- THORN
- TIMER
- TUNER
- TWEEN

6 LETTERS

- GAWKED
- PARADE
- TIRADE
- WEIRDO

7 LETTERS

- CONCAVE
- COTTAGE
- ICE FLOE
- IRELAND
- REVENUE
- RUNAWAY
- THINNED
- USELESS

8 LETTERS

- FORGIVEN
- STONE AGE



BLACKOUT

We have removed all the black squares from this crossword grid and replaced them with letters. Can you black out all these surplus letters to reveal the correctly filled crossword grid pattern?

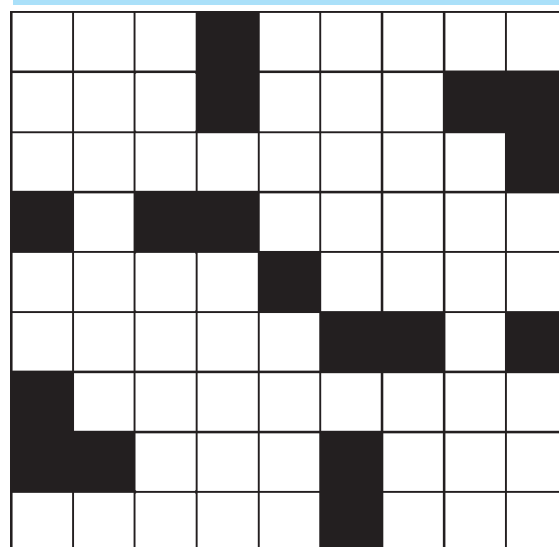
B E S W R A A C H Z Z G U L C
 E X T I N G U I S H R R J Z O
 P O D S V G N N R Y E A R L Y
 S T E P E R E D I D R N J A P
 V I Y O P I G I N R O D J D N
 S C A C H E J A M A S S E D U
 Z S A O D V K N A C J T Q I D
 M G S H E E P Y E S T A T E J
 F D R E W K U R X P S N L N B
 Y E A R N S V E E R I D I N G
 B L P E Y I V V T A F P K E T
 U I Q N U L L I F Y I E A R N
 T G S T O K L E Z E Q D B V E
 S H E L V E C W A R F A R E P
 O T U Y M N L F Y K V M T S W

TRIO

Find the three-letter sequence which will complete all these words

- ___ION
- AD___
- ___ICS
- ___IMIST

NUMBERCRUNCHER



Fit the numbers into the grid. Cross each one off as its position is found.

- 2 digits: 08 46
- 3 digits: 077 080 156
406 462 698 726 750
760 844
- 4 digits: 0173 0568
4361 8076
- 5 digits: 05588 17175
29656 34100 55840
56615 66506 67678
- 7 digits: 4069660
5960374
- 8 digits: 06047864
45102867

SOLUTIONS

NUMBER CRUNCHER

7	5	0	0	5	5	8	8
6	9	8	1	5	6		
0	6	0	4	7	8	6	4
0	3	6	1	0	5	6	8
6	7	6	7	8			9
4	5	1	0	2	8	6	7
4	6	2					
4	0	6	5	6			2

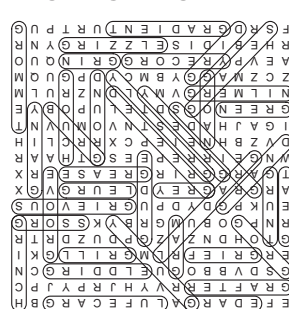
BLACK-OUT

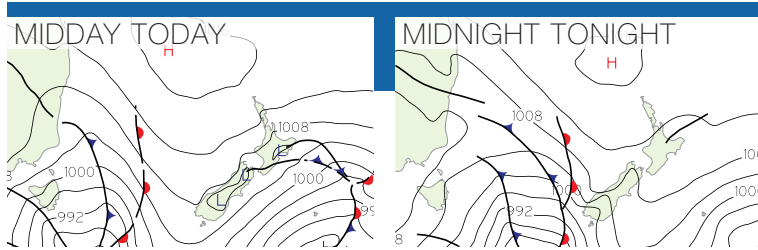


WORDFIT



WORD-SEARCH





NORTHLAND WEATHER



WHANGAREI	TOMORROW	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
TODAY max 22 min 14 Cloudy periods. Fresh SW, easing in the evening.	max 23 min 13 Cloud clearing and becoming fine. W, easing late at night.	max 25 min 14 Becoming cloudy in the morning. Westerlies, easing in the evening.	max 26 min 15 Fine, but becoming cloudy. Westerlies developing.

THE SITUATION

The narrow ridge over the country is pushed northwards by a front approaching from the Tasman Sea tonight. Tomorrow, this front moves northwards and becomes stationary over central Aotearoa New Zealand. The front weakens and stalls over central Aotearoa on Saturday. Another front travels up the South Island on Sunday.

NORTHLAND FIVE DAY FORECAST

- Today:** Cloudy periods, with isolated light showers in the morning. Fresh southwesterlies, easing in the evening.
- Tomorrow:** Cloudy, clearing and becoming fine in the afternoon. Westerlies.
- Saturday:** Partly cloudy, with isolated showers developing late. Westerlies, easing in the evening.
- Sunday:** Partly cloudy, with isolated showers clearing. Northwesterlies developing.
- Monday:** Partly cloudy, with rain developing. Light winds.

NEW ZEALAND TODAY

Hamilton	clearing	21	10	Wellington	mainly fine	19	12
Tauranga	mainly fine	23	12	Nelson	fine	23	12
Rotorua	mainly fine	22	9	Greymouth	mainly fine	17	10
Taupo	mainly fine	20	9	Christchurch	mainly fine	19	10
Napier	mainly fine	24	13	Queenstown	fine	25	11
New Plymouth	mainly fine	19	12	Dunedin	mainly fine	18	11
Palmerston Nth	mainly fine	20	11	Invercargill	mainly fine	15	8

BAY OF ISLANDS MARINE FORECAST

Today: SW 15kt, easing to 10kt about the Bay of Islands in the afternoon. Sea slight. E swell 1m. Mostly cloudy.
Tomorrow: SW 15kt, but 10kt about the Bay of Islands, becoming W 10kt everywhere early. E swell 1m. Cloud clearing.
Saturday: W 10kt, becoming N 15kt for a time in the morning, easing to variable 5kt late. E swell 1m, easing to 0.5m. Fine.
Sunday: Variable 5kt, becoming NW 10kt early. E swell 0.5m. Partly cloudy.

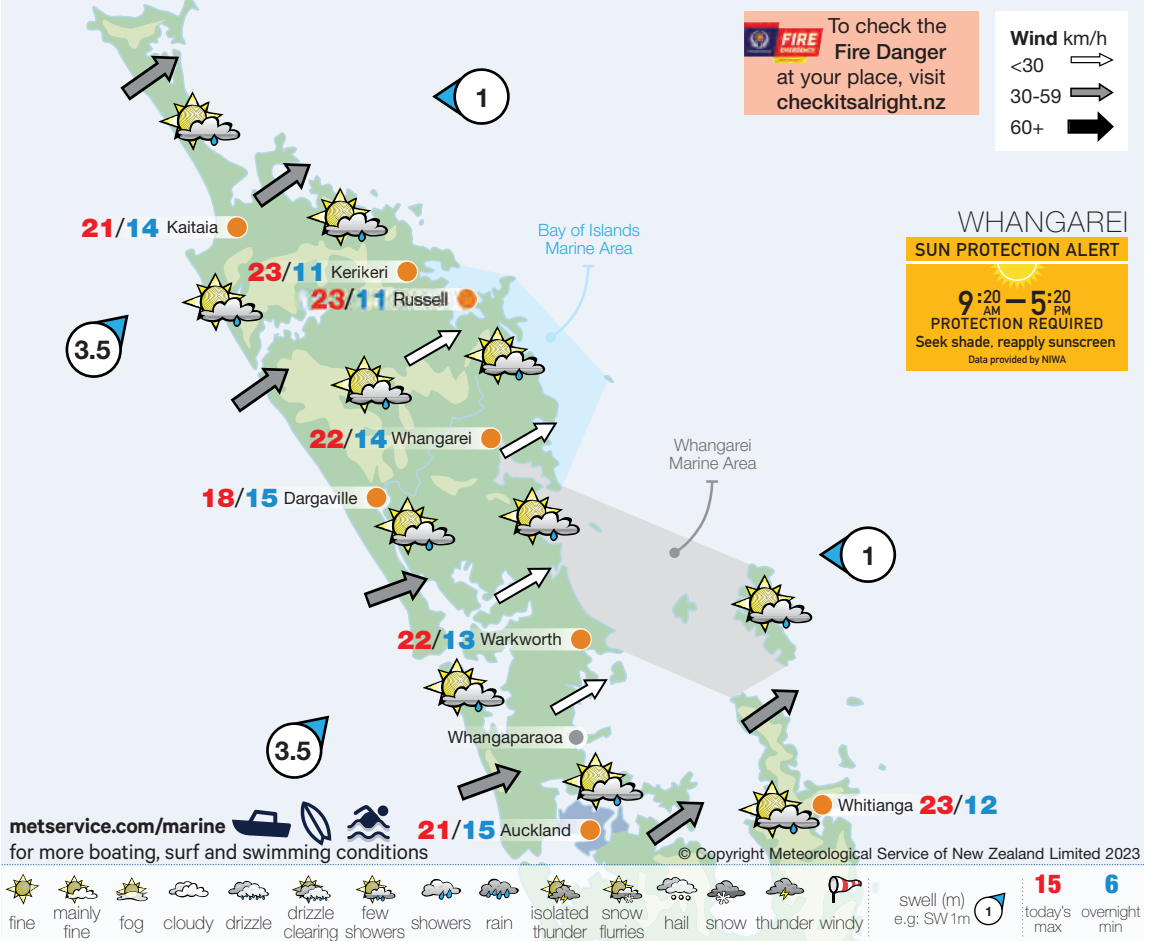
WHANGAREI MARINE FORECAST

Today: SW 25kt gusting 40kt but 30kt gusting 40kt about Colville Channel, easing to 20kt gusting 30kt but 25kt gusting 35kt about the channel in the evening. Rough sea easing everywhere in the evening. NE swell 1m. Partly cloudy.
Tomorrow: SW 15kt but 20kt about the channel, becoming W 10kt everywhere early. NE swell 1m, easing to 0.5m. Cloud clearing.
Saturday: W 10kt. NE swell 0.5m. Fine.
Sunday: W 10kt, turning NW 10kt early. NE swell 0.5m. Cloud clearing later.

READINGS TO 6PM WEDNESDAY

Temperature °C	Kaitaia	Kaikōhe	Kerikeri	Bay of Is.	Whangarei	Whangaparaoa	Auckland
6pm temp	17.4	15.5	17.9	18.8	17.4	16.3	16.3
max yesterday	20.1	16.9	19.6	21.0	19.6	19.4	19.4
min yesterday	13.6	12.8	12.2	11.3	14.0	12.4	13.5
grass min yesterday	-	12.4	-	-	-	-	11.8
Rain mm							
24hrs to 6pm	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.8
to date this month	76.8	24.0	20.6	34.2	35.2	47.8	39.0
to date this year	1885.8	3122.2	2256.8	1523.4	2091.8	1612.2	1626.2
average for Dec	98	121	142	92	91	79	82
Pressure hPa							
mean sea level	1009.6	-	1008.6	1008.4	1007.6	1006.4	1005.6
Max Gust kmh							
direction and speed	SW 56	SW 57	SW 48	-	SW 57	-	SW 63
Evapotranspiration mm							
daily average for week	-	3.6	-	-	4.2	-	4.3

TODAY AT A GLANCE



NORTHLAND TIDES + SUN, MOON & FISHING

	Thursday Dec 14	Friday Dec 15	Saturday Dec 16	Sunday Dec 17
Whangarei	H 9:47am 9:57pm L 3:14am 3:43pm	H 10:34am 10:46pm L 4:01am 4:32pm	H 11:22am 11:36pm L 4:48am 5:22pm	H 12:12pm L 5:36am 6:13pm
Mangawhai	H 9:28am 9:38pm L 3:01am 3:29pm	H 10:15am 10:28pm L 3:48am 4:19pm	H 11:03am 11:18pm L 4:36am 5:09pm	H 11:53am L 5:24am 6:01pm
Marsden Point	H 9:24am 9:34pm L 2:59am 3:27pm	H 10:11am 10:24pm L 3:46am 4:17pm	H 10:59am 11:14pm L 4:34am 5:07pm	H 11:49am L 5:22am 5:59pm
Tutukaka	H 9:09am 9:19pm L 2:49am 3:17pm	H 9:56am 10:09pm L 3:36am 4:07pm	H 10:44am 10:59pm L 4:24am 4:57pm	H 11:49am L 5:12am 5:49pm
Russell	H 9:24am 9:34pm L 3:03am 3:31pm	H 10:11am 10:24pm L 3:50am 4:21pm	H 10:59am 11:14pm L 4:38am 5:11pm	H 11:49am L 5:26am 6:03pm
Whangaroa	H 9:31am 9:39pm L 3:09am 3:36pm	H 10:16am 10:27pm L 3:54am 4:24pm	H 11:03am 11:16pm L 4:41am 5:15pm	H 11:52am L 5:29am 6:07pm
Houhora	H 9:54am 10:04pm L 3:29am 3:57pm	H 10:41am 10:54pm L 4:16am 4:47pm	H 11:29am 11:44pm L 5:04am 5:37pm	H 12:19pm L 5:52am 6:29pm
Pouto Point	H 12:19pm L 6:03am 6:30pm	H 12:39am 1:04pm L 6:48am 7:16pm	H 1:26am 1:50pm L 7:34am 8:05pm	H 2:15am 2:38pm L 8:21am 8:55pm
Cape Maria V. D'n	H 10:51am 11:13pm L 4:43am 5:07pm	H 11:36am L 5:28am 5:55pm	H 12:01am 12:23pm L 6:14am 6:45pm	H 12:52am 1:13pm L 7:02am 7:37pm
Opononi	H 11:33am 11:55pm L 5:28am 5:52pm	H 12:18pm L 6:13am 6:40pm	H 12:43am 1:05pm L 6:59am 7:30pm	H 1:34am 1:55pm L 7:47am 8:22pm
Te Kopuru	H 12:57am 1:22pm L 7:54am 8:18pm	H 1:44am 2:07pm L 8:39am 9:06pm	H 2:32am 2:54pm L 9:25am 9:56pm	H 3:23am 3:44pm L 10:13am 10:48pm
R 6:00 am S 8:33 pm	R 6:29 am S 10:05 pm	R 6:01 am S 8:34 pm R 7:35 am S 11:00 pm	R 6:01 am S 8:35 pm R 8:47 am S 11:47 pm	R 6:01 am S 8:35 pm R 10:01 am
☀️	☀️	☀️	☀️	☀️
🐟 Good	🐟 Good	🐟 Bad	🐟 Bad	🐟 Bad

the front page

Your daily news podcast.

Today's talking point

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Family Notices

Deaths

MARRIS, Russell Janzen (Jan). Born 24 February 1949. Passed away on 9 December surrounded by family. Loved father of Olivia and Gabrielle, Father-in-law to Ian and Angus. Grandfather to Luke, Tommy and Joe, Emma and Tui. We will miss him greatly and love him forever. A service to celebrate Jan's life will be held at the Salvation Army - 206 Wai-iti Road, Highfield, in Timaru at 1pm, 16 December, followed by afternoon tea at Timaru Town and Country Club.

Funeral Arrangements



Whatever your wishes, whatever your budget, we have options for you.

Talk to the experts, we understand funerals

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Visit our Family Notices online to view notices and offer condolences www.northernadvocate.co.nz/familynotices

Public Notices

TE HIKU O TE IKA CONSERVATION BOARD

Notice of Public Meeting

Virtually via Microsoft Teams

Wednesday, 20 December 2023 commencing at 2pm

We invite members of the public to join virtually

From 15 December 2023, the agenda can be viewed online: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/statutory-and-advisory-bodies/conservation-boards/te-hiku-o-te-ika/>

Please contact the Board Support Officer for connectivity details:

Email: tehikuconservationboard@doc.govt.nz

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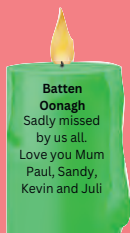


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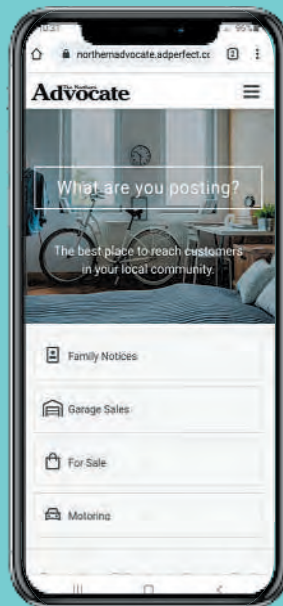
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Roger Tuivasa-Sheck is likely to find himself in the centres when he makes his NRL return.

Photos / Photosport



RTS:

LEAGUE

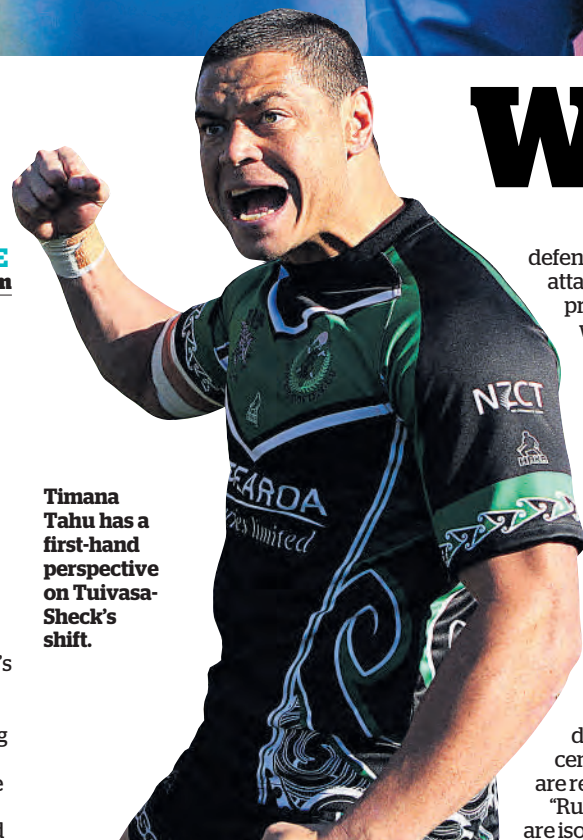
Corey Rosser of NRL.com

Former dual-code international Timana Tahu knows all about transitioning back to the NRL after a stint in rugby union and expects Roger Tuivasa-Sheck's return to be a success, albeit with some major challenges attached.

After heading back to the NRL following a two-year spell in rugby union back in 2010, Tahu picked up right where he left off and was selected for New South Wales after just nine games back with the Eels.

While he believes Tuivasa-Sheck's professionalism will mean the change of codes presents few problems for him, Tahu says juggling a positional switch from fullback to the centres in 2024 will be a far more difficult prospect.

"The centre position is really hard



Timana Tahu has a first-hand perspective on Tuivasa-Sheck's shift.

What to expect

defensively now and attack on the edges is pretty big these days, with a lot of tries scored in the corners," Tahu told NRL.com.

"You only have to look at the data when it comes to wingers scoring tries; last season it was enormous and so many finished on over 20 tries.

"That tells you there are a lot of tries scored on the edges, so the defensive decisions centres have to make are really hard. "Rugby league centres are isolated a lot,

especially on shift plays, and at the moment their job, because a lot of teams run plays on them, it's difficult to make split decision there.

"If you haven't played there before then it can be a challenge and that will be something Andrew Webster will be drilling into him, making sure that defensively he is making the right decisions.

"It will take him a few games to warm into it and teams will probably target that edge as well.

"Depending on how he goes in the Pre-Season Challenge, if he makes a few misreads teams will start looking at that and they'll know he's coming back from rugby union and that he is a fullback or winger usually."

Across 195 NRL appearances and 20 tests for New Zealand Tuivasa-Sheck has never started a game at centre, but is almost certain to line up there with Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad the locked-in No 1.

Despite his time away from the game and the fact that he will turn 31 in the middle of next season, Tahu sees no reason why RTS won't be able to rediscover the type of form that saw claim a spate of positional awards at both club and international level in the past.

"I feel like he is going to come back a better player and, for me, the Warriors have made a really good decision in bringing Roger back to rugby league," Tahu said.

"Coming back from rugby, you don't want to be cruising, he will want a challenge and this is really good for him actually.

"He will invite those challenges and see that as a goal, for him to prove people wrong, which I feel like he will be able to do.

"I think he can thrive and be one of the best centres in the game. The attacking side won't be a problem. He's going to kill it."

Wales upset hosts' momentum at teams squash event

SQUASH

New Zealand have one win and one loss at the men's squash World Team Championship in Tauranga after being beaten 2-1 by Wales in their second group match.

Brothers Temwa and Lwamba Chileshe were beaten by Owain Taylor and Emyr Evans, with world No 3 Paul Coll the only New Zealand player to pick up a win, beating Joel Makin 3-1.

The hosts beat South Korea in their opening game in Group F.

New Zealand had a rest day yesterday before progressing to the playoffs.

In Tuesday's action, Yannick Omlor and Simon Rösner delivered a seedings upset for Germany as they helped their side beat No 8 seeds Hong Kong, China, to top Group H.

Joining Rösner in playing in eight separate championships was Alan Clyne, with the 37-year-old helping No 7 seeds Scotland to a crushing win over Canada.

Elsewhere, there were a number of tight contests as teams jostled for the top spots in the groups.

In Group E, fifth seeds USA and [9/12] seeds Czech Republic played out a 15-game thriller.

Czech Republic's Jakub Solnický gave his side the lead with a tight win over Andrew Douglas, before Timothy Brownell clinched a 11-7, 10-12, 9-11, 11-9, 11-9 win against Viktor Byrtus and Shahjahan Khan squeezed past Daniel Mekbib 12-10 in game five with the scores at 2-2.

Top seeds and defending champions Egypt beat Malaysia, No 2 seeds England overcame South Africa, No 3 seeds France beat Australia and No 4 seeds Switzerland defeated Nigeria.



The Chileshe brothers, Lwamba and Temba, are competing for New Zealand at the squash World Team Champs in Tauranga.

Photo / Photosport



Former France international Karim Benzema scored Al-Ittihad's third goal before halftime.

Photo / AP

Lyttelton to host SailGP in March '24

SAILING
Christopher Reive

SailGP will bring a regatta to New Zealand in 2024, with Christchurch coming to the rescue after Auckland was ruled out as a viable location to host the March event.

The 2024 New Zealand stop in the global foiling league's schedule was thrown into limbo late last month as SailGP deemed Auckland was not a viable host, given land at Wynyard Point was not available to be used for spectators. SailGP has a set vision for its events, putting the fans as close to the action as possible – the benefits of which were seen in Dubai last weekend where arguably the closest finish in league history played out mere metres from spectators.

Without the area at Wynyard Point, the league felt they would not be able to host an event to its standards and made the call not to visit Auckland.

Instead, they will return to Christchurch to sail on Lyttelton Harbour on March 23 and 24, following their successful New Zealand debut at the venue in early 2023. The 2024 edition will be a bigger event, with more seating being made available for fans, allowing for about 22,000 spectators over the weekend.

In 2023, SailGP had as good an introduction to a new audience as they could have hoped for, with the sun shining, the wind blowing and the teams racing at pace and proximity.

"Christchurch has proven to be one of our very best events to date – with fantastic racing, thousands of fans and spectacular scenery in a natural amphitheatre," SailGP chief executive Sir Russell Coutts said.

"This is a perfect venue for the stadium-style, inner-harbour racing SailGP is known for around the world and we can't wait to bring more fans closer to the action with additional grandstands planned for next year's event."

The event in Auckland would have been the second regatta in a four-year commitment to visit New Zealand, with the initial plan being for the events to alternate between Christchurch and Auckland each year.

The league is yet to confirm if that regatta-sharing plan will remain.

Pros thump part-timers

FOOTBALL

We don't get to play in stadiums like this and play against stars like that.

Auckland City's Nathan Lobo

Auckland City have been beaten 3-0 by Saudi club Al-Ittihad at the Fifa Club World Cup.

The home side, with their \$360 million payroll dominated the game against Auckland City's part-timers and semi-pros, including a teacher, a sales rep, a real estate agent, a painter, a delivery driver, a car detailer and a project manager. The hosts were ahead 3-0 at halftime following goals

from Brazilian Romarinho and Frenchmen N'Golo Kante and Karim Benzema.

The second half didn't live up to the excitement of the first 45 minutes although Al-Ittihad did continue to have scoring chances.

The Saudis had 27 shots on goal compared to Auckland's four.

Afterwards Auckland City player Nathan Lobo said: "It's an experience of a lifetime.

"We don't get to play in stadiums like this and play against stars like that. It's amazing."

City goalkeeper Conor Tracey made a number of good saves to keep them in the game.

Al Ittihad now go on to meet African champions Al Ahly of Egypt in the second round.

Also in the second round Concacaf Champions League winners Leon of Mexico play Asian champions Urawa Red Diamonds of Japan.

South American champions Fluminense and European champions Manchester City join the competition at the semifinal stage.

The Fifa Club World Cup is made up of the six confederation champions plus a club from the host country.

Ferns' top order takes control of first ODI

CRICKET

The White Ferns won the series opening ODI against Pakistan by 131 runs after posting the team's highest one-day total in five years.

Sent in to bat, New Zealand scored 365-4 from their 50 overs in Queenstown.

Pakistan were all out in the final over of the game.

The White Ferns' top four batters all scored half-centuries as New Zealand passed 300 runs at home for the first time since 2018.

A 165-run first-wicket partnership between Suzie Bates, who made 108 – her 13th ODI century – and Bernadine Bezuidenhout, who scored her first ODI 50 and went on to make 86, gave the home side a good platform.

Captain Sophie Devine kept the momentum, going pummelling 70 off just 36 balls including six sixes, putting on 107 for the third wicket



Suzie Bates made 108 against Pakistan on Tuesday, her 13th ODI century. Photo / Photosport

with Amelia Kerr, who made 83.

Kerr did take an injury break when she was hit on the back of head by a stray outfield throw when she was on 51 but she was assessed and continued on.

Nashra Sundhu was the best of the Pakistan bowlers taking 1-52 off her 10 overs.

In reply, Pakistan's openers Muneeba Ali (44 runs off 48 balls) and Sidra Ameen combined for a 110-run partnership.

Sidra was the standout for the visitors with the bat, scoring her fourth ODI hundred before she was run out in the 44th over for 105.

The New Zealanders shared the wickets with six bowlers taking at least one wicket each in the win.

Amelia Kerr took 3-44 off 8.5 overs of spin.

Lea Tahuu was the most expensive of the White Ferns bowlers but took two wickets for 49 runs off her 8 overs.

The second ODI is scheduled to be played tomorrow in Christchurch.

– RNZ

Penalty for shoddy pitch

The Mirpur pitch, which hosted the second and final test match between Bangladesh and New Zealand, has received one demerit point after the International Cricket Council rated it as unsatisfactory.

ICC match referee David Boon in his assessment said that "the pitch may have been under-prepared" and that "deliveries from spin bowlers often went over the batter's shoulder when playing forward and then occasionally stayed very low".

Black Caps test captain Tim Southee lambasted the Mirpur pitch describing it as "probably the worst I've come across in my career".

New Zealand won the match by four wickets to level the two-match series, thanks to Glenn Phillips' allround performance.

The match overall saw just 178.1 overs of action over the course of 3½ days after all of Day 2 and some sizeable chunks of the first and third days got chopped off due to rain and wet outfields, making it the shortest-ever test in Mirpur.

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