



Hon Phil Twyford  
Minister for Building and Construction Infrastructure

Hon Jenny Salesa  
Minister for Building and Construction Infrastructure

Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

28 March 2018

Dear Phil and Jenny

I am writing to you to request information regarding actions the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment may be undertaking in response to climate change issues highlighted in *Our atmosphere and climate 2017*, published by the Ministry for the Environment and Statistics New Zealand under the Environmental Reporting Act 2015.

This request is made in relation to my role under this Act. As set out in Section 18, I have a broad role to comment on national state of the environment reports, which includes discussing implications of environmental reports and recommending responses to the findings contained within those reports.

*Our atmosphere and climate 2017* contained information on significant increases in greenhouse gas emissions across the New Zealand economy since 1990. The report shows that population growth has been a key driver of increasing emissions, with those from public electricity and heat generation having increased by 16 percent, and from road transportation by 78 percent.

In light of these issues, could you please provide answers to the following questions:

1. *What work is the Ministry doing to ensure that the design and construction of the country's dwellings, buildings and infrastructure incorporates climate mitigation aims and objectives?*
2. *What work has the Ministry done or is planning to do with other government agencies to address issues where greenhouse gas reductions require co-ordinated actions from multiple stakeholders?*

*Our atmosphere and climate 2017* also highlighted a range of impacts from climate change that are either occurring now or will do so in the future. Among the current or future impacts of climate change, the report discusses implications for housing and critical infrastructure (e.g. roading, sewerage, and power supply) resulting from rising sea levels and more intense heavy rainfall events associated with climate change. In particular, the report highlights the threat that rising sea levels pose to South Dunedin. Although far from unique, the challenge

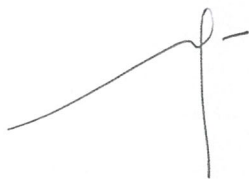
facing South Dunedin illustrates that climate change will have significant and far-range consequences for our built environments.

In light of these issues, could you please provide answers to the following questions:

3. *What is the Ministry's approach to dealing with the risks that climate change poses to New Zealand's dwellings, buildings and infrastructure? Is any work being done to estimate the cost of these risks?*
4. *What work is the Ministry doing to ensure that our dwellings, buildings and infrastructure will be adapted in a timely and effective manner to the impacts of climate change?*
5. *What work has the Ministry done or is planning to do with other government agencies to address issues where effective adaptation responses require co-ordinated actions from multiple stakeholders?*

I would also welcome a meeting to discuss these issues with you following the reception of a reply to this letter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a long, sweeping horizontal stroke followed by a vertical line that curves slightly to the right at the top.

Simon Upton  
Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment

CC: Hon Judith Collins; Marama Davidson, MP; David Seymour, MP