

Information Disclosure in the Water Sector: Have Your Say Te Whākinga Pārongo i te Rāngai Wai: Kōrero mai

September 2025



The Commerce Commission is seeking feedback on a draft decision package for information disclosure (ID) in the water sector. This marks a significant milestone in establishing economic regulation and will improve transparency around how councils and water organisations deliver water supply and wastewater services.

How are we approaching this? He aha ā mātou mahi whakariterite?

The water sector is transforming. We acknowledge the significant mahi of councils and water organisations as they navigate new statutory deadlines and regulatory requirements. We're proposing a staged and proportionate approach to introducing ID requirements. Our initial focus is on:

- **Investment and asset management:** understanding how regulated suppliers plan for and maintain water infrastructure to ensure reliable service over time.
- **Financial sustainability:** assessing whether regulated suppliers are financially positioned to deliver services now and into the future.
- **Ring-fencing:** making sure money collected for water services is used for water services.

We're aiming to keep the approach proportionate, recognising that compliance costs are ultimately passed on to consumers. We know that efficient service delivery can lead to more affordable outcomes over time.

Your feedback will help us strike the right balance and shape requirements that are proportionate, effective and achievable.

What is information disclosure and why is it important?

He aha kē te whākinga pārongo, he aha hoki ia e hira ai?

We'll be using ID as a tool to regulate councils and water organisations that provide water supply and/or wastewater services. Regulated suppliers will have to publicly share specific details about how they are performing. We will take that information, analyse it, and publish it in a manner that makes it easier to compare between regulated suppliers, and look at trends over time.

- **Putting consumers first:** Our role is guided by the long-term interest of consumers. Water infrastructure lasts for decades, so it's important to understand how well services are being delivered now and into the future.
- **Making things more transparent:** By sharing performance information, we help communities, councils, and other stakeholders see how regulated suppliers are doing, how they have performed over time, how they compare to others, and what's changing.
- **Encouraging improvement:** When performance is visible, it creates reputational incentives. Regulated suppliers are more likely to improve when poor performance is brought to light.
- **Helping regulated suppliers understand themselves:** Consistent data collection gives regulated suppliers a clearer picture of their own operations, strengths, and areas for improvement.
- **Allowing regulated suppliers to learn from each other:** Seeing how peers perform—and what good practice looks like—can help regulated suppliers find ways to improve.
- **Informing better decisions:** Better data helps regulators and policymakers know whether additional regulatory measures are needed (such as ring-fencing, revenue thresholds, quality regulation).
- **Signaling any need for further regulation:** The potential need for further regulation resulting from poor performance being revealed can influence regulated suppliers to improve their performance to avoid further regulation.

What kind of information would be disclosed?

He aha te momo pārongo ka whakapuakina?

We're proposing that regulated suppliers disclose a range of information including:

- asset management plans and an annual report on what they have delivered (such as progress on significant projects)
- how much revenue they've received and how they've made sure this was only spent on water services
- how much money they've spent, split up into detailed categories to help see if consumers are getting value for money.

To help ensure this information is true and accurate, we're proposing that two councillors (or directors for a water organisation) would have to certify it. Some information would also have to be audited.

Want to make a submission?

Kei te hiahia ki te tuku tāpaetanga kōrero?

You can find our draft decision package and submission template [here](#).

What are the key dates?

He aha ngā rā matua?

Milestone	Date
Submissions open	11 September 2025
Submission deadline	5pm, 20 October 2025
Final Determination published	By 26 February 2026
Implementation of initial ID requirements	TBC - from 2026 onwards

Who is your regulated supplier?

Ko wai rā tō kaituku waeture?

In our role we only regulate water supply and wastewater services. Your regulated supplier is responsible for delivering water services to your community and is subject to economic regulation. This could be your:

- territorial authorities (like your local district, unitary or city council)
- water organisations, such as council-controlled organisations (like Watercare), and
- regional councils (if they provide any water services).

Want to know more?

Kei te hiahia koe ki ētahi kōrero anō?

You can [join our email list for our Commission-wide updates](#), including our newsletter or any of our industry-specific updates. You can also [join our email list for Commission media releases](#).

We look forward to hearing your views. Your feedback will help shape a proportionate and effective approach to economic regulation in the water sector.

Who is the Commerce Commission?

Ko wai rā te Komihana Tauhokohoko?

The Commerce Commission is New Zealand's primary competition, fair trading, consumer credit and economic regulatory agency. We have regulatory responsibilities in many areas that affect the day to day lives of New Zealanders including telecommunications, energy networks, transport fuel, groceries, airports, and now water.

For more information about our other tools, see our [Introducing Economic Regulation and Consumer Protection for Water Services in Aotearoa New Zealand](#) overview.