

# STATEMENT OF INTENT 2014»2018



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# FOREWORD

We are pleased to present the New Zealand Walking Access Commission's Statement of Intent (SOI) for 2014-2018. This SOI reflects the priorities of the Government, the Minister and the Board for embedding access culture and heritage and enhancing walking access opportunities in New Zealand over the next four years. It also sets the platform for the ten-year review of the Commission's statutory responsibilities and functions in 2018.

Over the next four years the Commission will give priority to widening its public profile, facilitating new and more enduring access over private land through a renewed focus on establishing Walkways, and working with stakeholders to improve the quality of the information and advice it provides to the public. The regional field advisor network, supported where required by the Commission's Wellington staff, will play an essential part in achieving this.

The Commission adheres assiduously to its statutory functions of retaining, enabling and creating walking access. The Commission is operating at a high tempo and intends to reinforce its focus on core business.

The Commission has reviewed its priorities and considers that its current outcomes framework remains "fit for purpose", with more emphasis in 2014-2018 on strengthening access culture and heritage. Greater understanding of the value of access and mutual responsibilities will reduce the prevalence of disputes and promote voluntary management of outdoor access behaviour.

To achieve its desired outcomes, the Commission will need to exercise a greater level of leadership and influence on walking access matters. The Commission is the national champion for access. It is uniquely placed to examine problems and help people find solutions. It will be firm, consistent, patient and willing to challenge untested assumptions and perceptions.

Stakeholder feedback shows that the Commission is respected due to its demonstrated expertise, transparency, objectivity and quality of products. The Commission is a

place where the public can obtain robust and objective advice and information. Over the past four years, provision of high quality information has helped the Commission develop a reputation as a facilitator of enduring outcomes to access issues. This role is now evolving to a stage where the Commission's knowledge and expertise can be used to influence others to achieve access outcomes.

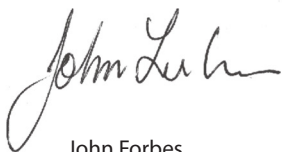
The Commission's collaborative approach is an undoubted strength. The Commission relies heavily on achieving its outcomes through engagement, influencing and facilitation. During the 2014-2018 period, the Commission will undertake a project to strengthen and promote its activities through partnerships – which may offer third party revenue opportunities – with central and local government agencies, iwi and private and not-for-profit organisations.

Our approach to communications will change so that the Commission is seen as a genuine influencer – an organisation which the public believe in and support – rather than just a "complaints body". This will require a greater focus on influencing others to change behaviours and attitudes related to the provision and use of public access, in addition to looking after the operational aspects of retaining and enhancing access.

A theme running through our projects is the concept of "Linking New Zealand". This taps into New Zealanders' strong emotional link to their access heritage.

The Commission will begin reviewing the current tools for achieving access, such as easements and Walkways under the Walking Access Act 2008, and identify how they may be improved. It will also begin to investigate new legal mechanisms for managing access. This will be a long term project with significant policy, legislative and legal complexities.

We will have to think and act differently. We will need to continue to provide services and products of value for our audiences and to think about what might appeal to external partners if we are to connect with all New Zealanders.



John Forbes  
Chairman



Maggie Bayfield  
Board Member

# PART ONE: ABOUT THE COMMISSION

## THE COMMISSION'S PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS

The purpose of the New Zealand Walking Access Commission is to enhance free, certain, enduring, and practical walking access to the New Zealand outdoors and to strengthen our country's access culture and heritage.

Enjoyment of the outdoors is part of New Zealand's identity. New Zealanders value participating actively in outdoor recreation as part of their free, rugged and independent spirit.

The Commission is the only government agency with a primary focus on walking access and other associated forms of access<sup>1</sup>. It is well placed with its many stakeholders to facilitate closer collaboration, partnerships and links between urban and rural New Zealand and it works closely with like-minded central and local government agencies, tangata whenua and private and not-for-profit organisations to achieve this objective.

The Commission's core functions include providing information, advice and education about access rights and

responsibilities and providing leadership nationally and locally to maintain and enhance access opportunities in the outdoors. These areas are identified as priorities by the *New Zealand Walking Access Commission National Strategy 2010-2035*.

The Commission's key products are the New Zealand Outdoor Access Code, which provides guidance on responsible behaviour when accessing the outdoors, and the free online Walking Access Mapping System<sup>2</sup>, which shows land across New Zealand over which the public has walking access. The Commission also manages a curriculum-aligned education website called Both Sides of the Fence<sup>3</sup> to encourage school children to consider different viewpoints around access and its importance to New Zealand's heritage.

The Commission is a Crown agent under the *Crown Entities Act 2004* and was created following the passing into law of the *Walking Access Act 2008*. This legislation reflects the enduring public interest in ensuring that New Zealanders are able to enjoy the outdoors, and that access to the countryside, beaches, lakes, rivers, natural areas and public resources is retained.

### FREE, CERTAIN, ENDURING AND PRACTICAL WALKING ACCESS MEANS:

Free – the public should be able to access, without charge, land that is open for public use.

The terms of access over private land are a matter for negotiation and may have conditions on access.

Certain – both the public and landholders expect legal certainty over the ability of the public to access public land, and the right of landholders to exclude the public from privately-owned land.

Enduring – the legal right of access should last over time.

Practical – access should be feasible in terms of topography and useful in terms of location.

<sup>1</sup> Associated access means types of access associated with walking access, such as access with firearms, dogs, bicycles, or motor vehicles.

<sup>2</sup> [www.wams.org.nz](http://www.wams.org.nz)

<sup>3</sup> [www.bothsidesofthefence.org.nz](http://www.bothsidesofthefence.org.nz)

### **WHAT IS THE NEW ZEALAND WALKING ACCESS COMMISSION?**

The New Zealand Walking Access Commission is a Crown agent governed by a six person Board. It is accountable to Parliament through the Minister for Primary Industries and receives funding through Vote: Primary Industries. The Commission has a head office in Wellington and a network of regional field advisors around New Zealand.

The Commission:

- » administers a national strategy on walking access in consultation with other organisations with an interest in access to the outdoors;
- » provides information about the location of walking access and rights and responsibilities when accessing the outdoors;
- » leads and supports the negotiation, establishment and improvement of walking access, including across private land; and
- » provides advice on access matters to the Minister, central and local government and other interested organisations and individuals.

Further information about the Commission's Board, staff and organisational structure is available in the 'About Us' section of our website, at [www.walkingaccess.govt.nz](http://www.walkingaccess.govt.nz)

### **FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES**

- » In exercising its leadership role the Commission will be an independent, responsive, open and influential catalyst facilitating access.
- » The New Zealand economy is based on a strong and stable set of property rights and a legal system that values certainty and predictability.
- » New Zealand has a well-defined legal framework for the ownership of land, which spells out the property rights and responsibilities of those who control access to land, whether privately or publicly owned.
- » A strong tradition has evolved whereby members of the public are traditionally given permission to access privately-owned land provided that they ask permission first and respect property, other people and the environment.

## OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The Commission's operating environment includes recreation, tourism, sport, farming, forestry and local government sectors. Its stakeholders include central government agencies, local government, landholder groups, recreation groups, iwi, community groups and other members of the public with an interest in the outdoors.

Public opinion research conducted by the Commission in 2013<sup>4</sup> found that 95 per cent of New Zealanders believe free and easy access to the outdoors is important and 92 per cent had used the outdoors for recreation in the past year.

The Commission's activities are influenced by changing land use, ownership and management, societal expectations and outdoor and visitor related requirements and activities.

New Zealand's population is heavily urban with 85 per cent of New Zealanders now living in towns and cities. Rural communities are changing with the rise of larger, corporate farms and increasing numbers of "lifestyle" properties on urban fringes. Farming is vital to the economy yet fewer people have direct relationships with rural life and farming than in the past. Amidst these changes, perceptions and social conventions of walking access rights and traditions have weakened. With changing land use and ownership and the increasing commercial value of recreational opportunities, public access to outdoor recreational opportunities continues to diminish.

Public access to land in New Zealand is extensive, but it is not always well-known or practical. More than 30 per cent of our country's land area is administered by the Department of Conservation and much of this is publicly accessible. Local authorities also hold or administer significant amounts of land that provide public access and recreation opportunities. This includes New Zealand's extensive network of unformed legal road (estimated at 56,000 km), which provides potential access for the public. Unformed legal roads have the same legal status as formed public roads, although their diverse locations and topography means that many of them are not practical for walking access.

Access around many parts of the coast and lakes and along rivers is provided through legal mechanisms such as unformed legal roads, marginal strips and esplanade reserves. This conglomeration of water margin reserves –

popularly known as the Queen's Chain – provides legal access to approximately 70 per cent of New Zealand's waterways, though not all of this remains practically accessible due to erosion. A public right of access around the coast above the foreshore depends on the existence of reservations of these kinds. In some places, public access to and along lakes, rivers and the coast is fragmented and unclear.

Public access along the foreshore is covered by the *Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011*. Most of the foreshore is open to public access, with the exception of some areas that have been affected by erosion or where private title extends across the foreshore.

There is no right of public access across private land – permission must be obtained. Owners and managers of private land have a legal right to exclusive occupation and enjoyment of that land. When asked to allow access, many landholders readily oblige. However, this is a privilege and access may be refused or conditions applied. This right is enforceable by the provisions of the *Trespass Act 1990*.

Public access across private land can be provided by esplanade strips, easements in gross, covenants made under the *Queen Elizabeth the Second National Trust Act 1977*, reserves created under the *Reserves Act 1977*, or Walkways under the *Walking Access Act 2008*.

Lands of the Crown – other than that administered by the Department of Conservation – may be open to public access at the discretion of the Crown. However, Crown land that is subject to Crown pastoral lease (a large amount of the South Island high country) is in the exclusive possession of the leaseholders and is essentially the same as private land from an access perspective. Traditionally the owners or lessees of large rural holdings with recreational value have permitted public recreational access across their land.

The Commission's work requires an understanding of cultural values, the relationship between land and tangata whenua, and the importance of sacred and special places. The Commission's board, staff and regional field advisors will develop and maintain a depth of understanding of these values to inform their actions and guide all their external relationships.

The Commission is mindful that negotiations between the Crown and iwi to resolve Treaty of Waitangi claims may either create new opportunities for access for the public or limit access. The Commission will identify on its mapping system

<sup>4</sup> 2013 Walking Access Survey, conducted by Colmar Brunton on behalf of the Commission.

the legal access arrangements already agreed between the Crown and iwi, and, to the extent that resources allow, seek to have access retained or enhanced in other negotiations.

The Commission has a strong information focus and delivers its resources and advice online, in print, face to face and over the phone. These methods reflect the way the public likes to interact with the Commission and use its information. The Commission places a strong emphasis on providing clear and accurate information which, in turn, enhances the Commission's credibility.

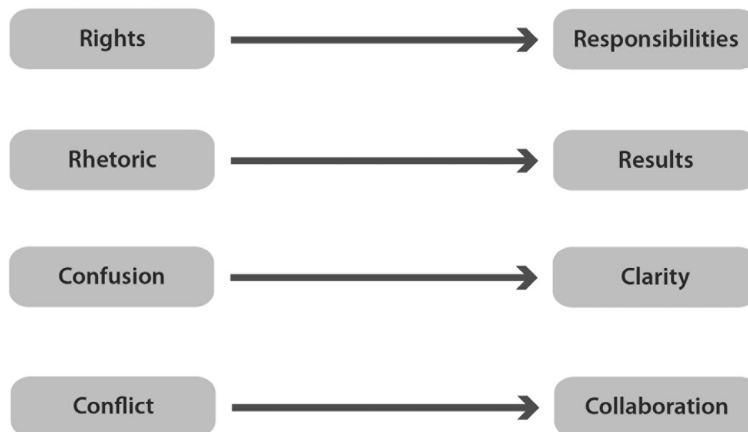
The Commission expects to gradually reduce the amount of printed material and use online systems to hold and disseminate information. This is cost effective and most people who use Commission material do so through its websites. The Commission will explore the use of social media platforms to engage with its audiences, particularly those in the younger generation.

The Walking Access Mapping System is a key product, brand, marketing and information tool for the Commission and needs to be managed accordingly. Geographic information systems (GIS) technology and its applications are developing rapidly. The Commission is not alone in having to work with a relentlessly changing GIS environment with consequent uncertainties for investment decisions.

The trend toward greater use of mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets to access maps and other GIS-related information will have implications for the Walking Access Mapping System. The Commission will actively monitor and assess changes in technology and use to ensure that the Walking Access Mapping System maintains its relevance.

The Commission's experience shows that it will achieve its desired outcomes and impacts by focusing its skills, resources and information to achieve the change to the desirable states as described in figure 1.

Figure 1: Desired changes





## THE COMMISSION'S NATIONAL STRATEGY

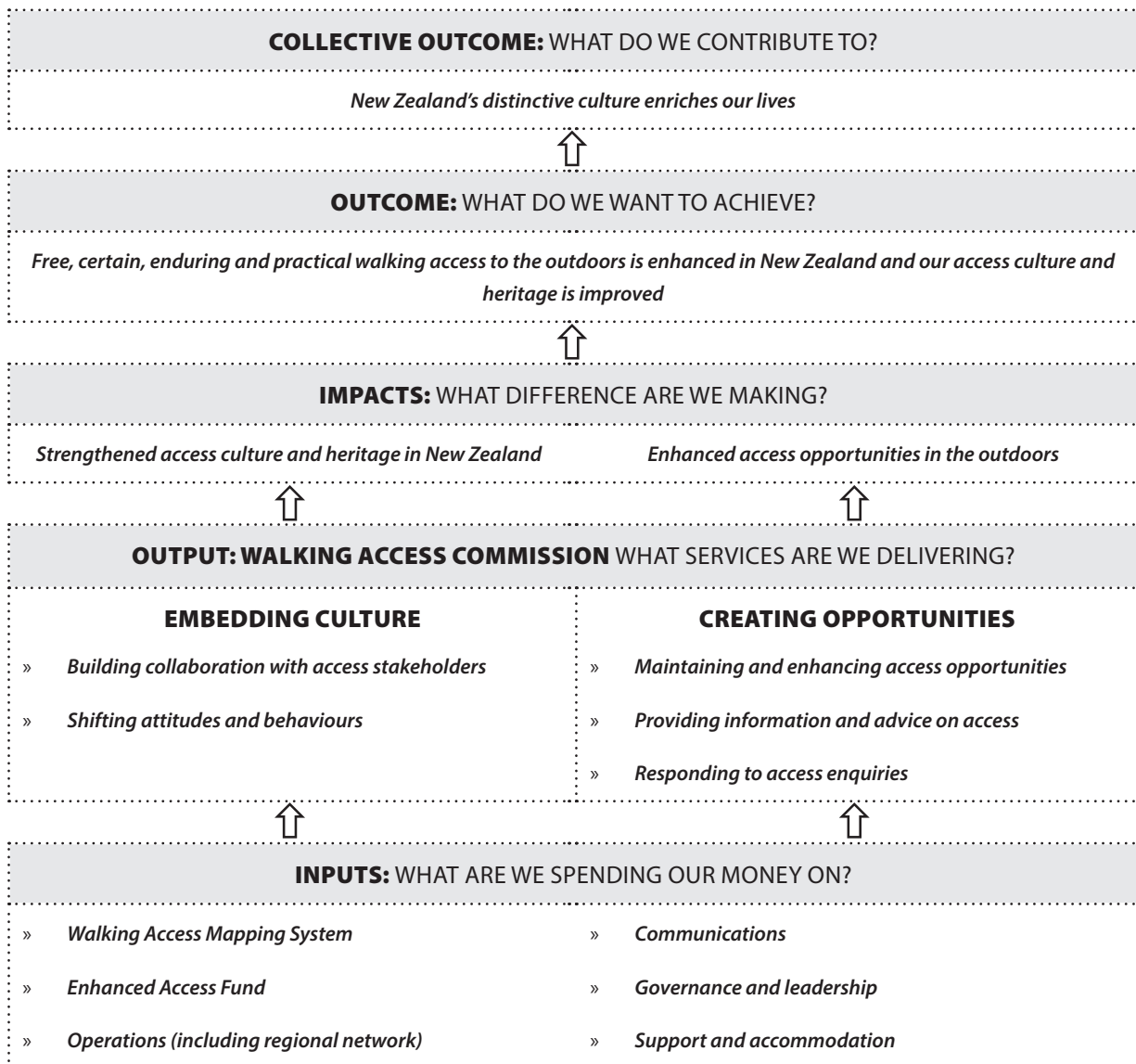
The Commission provides leadership by administering a national strategy on walking access, including Walkways. This strategy is known as the *New Zealand Walking Access Commission National Strategy 2010-2035*. Figure 2 shows how the Commission's work aligns with the National Strategy's three focus areas. The strategy will be reviewed in 2015-2016.

*Figure 2: How our work contributes to the National Strategy*



# PART TWO: WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE

## THE COMMISSION'S OUTCOME FRAMEWORK



## OUTCOME: FREE, CERTAIN, ENDURING AND PRACTICAL WALKING ACCESS TO THE OUTDOORS IS ENHANCED IN NEW ZEALAND AND OUR ACCESS CULTURE AND HERITAGE IS IMPROVED

Access to the outdoors is part of New Zealand's distinctive culture and identity. It has enriched our lives and shaped our free, rugged and independent spirit.

New Zealand's access culture and accessible outdoors contributes to a strong economy by creating myriad opportunities for businesses in the tourism, adventure and outdoor sectors. It also facilitates societal benefits such as healthier communities and greater appreciation of the environment.

Our outcomes framework focuses on delivering value to all New Zealanders. Over the next four years the Commission will work closely with central and local government agencies, iwi, landholders, businesses, non-government organisations and the public to enhance free, certain, enduring and practical walking access to the New Zealand outdoors and strengthen our access culture and heritage.

The following diagram (figure 3) describes how the Commission's activities contribute to this outcome.

Figure 3: The Commission's contribution to improving walking access in New Zealand



## IMPACT: STRENGTHENED ACCESS CULTURE AND HERITAGE IN NEW ZEALAND

### WHAT IMPACT ARE WE SEEKING TO MAKE?

The Commission seeks to increase awareness of access responsibilities and the value of outdoor access to New Zealand society. This includes informing people about public and private property rights and responsible behaviour in the outdoors, and ensuring landholders are aware of New Zealand's access tradition.

### WHY IS THIS IMPACT IMPORTANT?

Greater understanding of the value of access and mutual responsibilities reduces the prevalence of disputes and helps to improve outdoor access behaviour. When information about access is widely available, people are able to make informed decisions and resolve matters themselves.

The Commission acknowledges the importance of respecting private property rights while ensuring that the rights of the public to access public land such as unformed legal roads and marginal strips are not impeded. A strengthened access culture will assist both users and landholders to understand and respect the interests of each other.

### CURRENT SITUATION AND IMPROVEMENTS WE WANT TO MAKE

The increasing urbanisation of New Zealand's population has led to a perception by some that many people who use the outdoors are unfamiliar with the countryside as a working place and lack relevant knowledge about farming and rural practices<sup>5</sup>. Equally, rural New Zealand is changing with intensification of land use, changes in production methods, fewer "family farms" and more corporate investment arrangements.

These changes have led to a disconnection between urban and rural New Zealand. Well established behaviours and expectations are dissipating with a greater emphasis on rights rather than responsibilities, co-operation and collaboration. Yet there are opportunities for closer collaboration and partnerships between urban and rural New Zealand which are essential if the rural sector is to be recognised for its contributions to growing and creating an innovative economy.

The Commission aims to strengthen access culture through leadership and education so that landholders experience

<sup>5</sup> The Walking Access Survey 2013 found that one in five New Zealanders (19%) disagree with the statement: "Most New Zealanders have a strong understanding of how to behave responsibly when accessing the outdoors". This view is even more prevalent among rural respondents (25%), hunters (27%) and horse riders (36%).

appropriate behaviour from the public and continue to allow public access over their land. The *New Zealand Outdoor Access Code* plays a central role in this vision and fulfils the Commission's statutory responsibility to develop, promote and maintain a code of responsible conduct.

The Commission will work with central and local government to promote and embed an active and positive access culture and to raise awareness of the economic and societal benefits of walking access opportunities. This brand of "influential leadership" is expected to lead to greater collaboration with central and local government and to increase the likelihood that access features in decision making processes. Working together to achieve access results can be time consuming but the results are more enduring.

This approach will also involve building partnerships with businesses, iwi and non-government organisations. Working with others on projects of mutual interest will enable the Commission to share costs, leverage its investment and amplify its messages.

### WHAT SERVICES WILL WE DELIVER TO MAKE THIS IMPACT?

The Commission will:

- » build collaboration with access stakeholders, and
- » shift attitudes and behaviours.

#### *Building collaboration with access stakeholders*

The Commission will meet with stakeholders to foster dialogue on access and to investigate opportunities for collaboration. The Commission recognises the importance of building strong partnerships and forging new relationships with organisations and individuals with an interest in access.

In the 2014-2018 period the Commission will continue working closely with central and local government to develop a shared understanding of the value of walking access, to enhance walking access opportunities and to ensure that roles and responsibilities are understood.

The Commission will also make a concerted effort to build partnerships with other organisations to generate third party revenue and to explore opportunities for joint projects that raise awareness of responsible behaviour in the outdoors and the value of access. These opportunities may exist with central or local government, iwi, landholders, business, non-

government organisations and communities.

The Commission will regularly assess the results of this partnership building programme. Programmes of this nature typically take five years to come to fruition and the Commission is cautious about expectations of early success.

### **Shifting attitudes and behaviours**

The Commission will promote its services and information resources more widely to increase awareness of New Zealand's access culture and heritage among the public generally.

Public awareness research indicates that awareness of the Commission and responsible outdoor behaviour is highest among outdoor clubs and members of key stakeholder organisations, but more work needs to be done to reach other groups and individuals who stand to gain or lose as a result of changes in New Zealand's access landscape.

The Commission's key programmes for shifting attitudes and behaviours and encouraging responsible behaviour in the outdoors are the *New Zealand Outdoor Access Code* and the Both Sides of the Fence education website ([www.bothsidesofthefence.org.nz](http://www.bothsidesofthefence.org.nz)).

The *New Zealand Outdoor Access Code* will continue to be promoted through targeted advertising and media activity, and a dedicated website will be developed to clearly communicate the Code's messages to the public in

an engaging and cost-effective manner. The Code will be reviewed and refreshed, in consultation with stakeholders, to ensure it remains relevant.

The Both Sides of the Fence website will be promoted more widely and further enhanced to increase its value to teachers and students. The Commission will explore opportunities to partner with like-minded organisations to create and present additional educational resources on the website and enrich the learning experience for students. Although the site is currently directed towards primary and intermediate school students it may be widened to include secondary school students and other audiences. This will be especially so if partners can be attracted to help provide new and additional resources. There is a great opportunity for this site to become a cross-sector resource, covering topics such as biosecurity, health (the benefits of walking and exercise), conservation (protection of endangered species) and rural land management (fire risk).

The Commission will reinforce its messages by producing credible and high-quality resources that answer common questions, address misconceptions and recognise landholders and other individuals who are making valuable contributions to public access. These resources will be distributed through the Commission's corporate website and newsletters, as well as through the mainstream media and the communications channels of stakeholder and partner organisations. A social media programme will be implemented to increase engagement with the public.

## **HOW WE WILL MEASURE THIS IMPACT?**

The Commission has created two new measures to assess performance against this impact:

<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>TARGET</b>
The New Zealand public agrees that New Zealanders and overseas visitors can easily access our country's outdoors.	Higher than the previous survey
The New Zealand public agrees that access is being strengthened and valued	Higher than the previous survey

*These will be measured by biennial surveys, the first which will be conducted in 2014-2015. The inaugural measures will establish the Commission's baseline for future years.*

## IMPACT: ENHANCED ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES IN THE OUTDOORS

### WHAT IMPACT ARE WE SEEKING TO MAKE?

The Commission seeks to enhance access opportunities for everyone in the New Zealand outdoors. This includes retaining and securing existing access, seeking new access opportunities and supporting central and local government agencies, iwi, landholders, business and communities to develop new access.

### WHY IS THIS IMPACT IMPORTANT?

New Zealanders and international visitors value highly the many opportunities for free, certain, practical and enduring access to our lands, forests, mountains, waterways, coasts and natural resources.

Access to the outdoors is central to our international tourism brand and public opinion research conducted by the Commission in 2013<sup>6</sup> found that 95 per cent of New Zealanders agree that free and easy access to the outdoors is important. New Zealanders' love of and association with the outdoors shapes our national culture and character and encourages personal independence and self-reliance. The International Visitor Survey conducted by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment in June 2013<sup>7</sup> noted that for 77 per cent of international tourists, walking and trekking was an activity they participated in whilst in New Zealand.

### CURRENT SITUATION AND IMPROVEMENTS WE WANT TO MAKE

A high priority for 2014-2018 is to identify and secure new access opportunities, especially over private land. This may include working more closely with landholders to identify agreed access over their land to nearby points of interest, and with iwi to identify and promote access to culturally significant routes, including old tribal pathways. We will achieve this by working primarily with local government, iwi, communities and individuals to create new access.

Securing access over private land is a priority activity from 2015 onwards and will involve a shift in focus from dispute resolution to negotiation, community engagement and promoting a culture among landholders and the community where the provision of responsible access is valued.

When appropriate the Commission will take a leadership

6 2013 Walking Access Survey, conducted by Colmar Brunton on behalf of the Commission.

7 Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment International Visitor Survey, June 2013 – Activities / Attractions data set

role in negotiating access and, where possible, establishing and gazetting new Walkways under the *Walking Access Act 2008*. The Commission will have an independent approach to access issues, a commitment to voluntarily negotiated access agreements and will uphold legislative access provisions.

The Commission will also prioritise making existing access enduring for future generations. This will involve negotiating with landholders and public and private land managers to secure existing ad-hoc and informal access arrangements using formal legal mechanisms such as easements.

The Commission may need to find additional funding sources and build partnerships to share the cost and test the willingness of other agencies to collaborate and spread risks.

The Commission's Enhanced Access Fund helps to facilitate access projects instigated and managed by individuals and organisations across New Zealand. The Enhanced Access Fund is successful and each round is substantially over-subscribed. The Commission will formally evaluate the Fund in 2015-2016 to ensure that funding is being channelled to projects that create new access opportunities that are legally enduring and have the potential to be well used.

The primary objective of the *Walking Access Act 2008* is walking access. Even so, many people are interested in "non-walking access" which, by definition in the Act, may include access with bicycles, motor vehicles, dogs and firearms. The Commission can facilitate access for these activities when they are associated with "walking access". This is not an exclusive list and the Act allows for other activities such as horse riding.

The Commission will consider all access cases and requests for advice and assistance on their merits.

### WALKING ACCESS MAPPING SYSTEM

The Commission has a statutory function to provide maps and information about land over which members of the public have walking access. This function is unique – no other government agency has a similar statutory requirement. The Commission is committed to maintaining and improving its online Walking Access Mapping System ([www.wams.org.nz](http://www.wams.org.nz)) to fulfil this responsibility.

The Walking Access Mapping System (WAMS) is a strategic asset for the Commission and plays a vital role in assisting the public to identify the boundaries of public land and

opportunities for public access to the outdoors. It will remain a public facing system that meets the Commission's mapping function for the duration of the 2014-2018 period.

Improving the mapping system is an ongoing activity. The Commission has assessed developments in GIS technology and, following expert advice, will focus on making the Walking Access Mapping System the authoritative source of data on land over which members of the public has walking access.

The Commission intends to invest significantly in WAMS in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 and, to a lesser extent, in 2016-2017. Progress and technical developments will be assessed in 2015-2016 to determine what investment might be required from 2016 to improve the current mobile functionality.

## **WHAT SERVICES WILL WE DELIVER TO MAKE THIS IMPACT?**

The Commission will:

- » maintain and enhance access opportunities;
- » provide information and advice on access; and
- » respond to access enquiries.

### ***Maintaining and enhancing access opportunities***

In 2014-2018 the Commission will give priority to creating new access opportunities. This will include leading and supporting efforts to negotiate enduring access over private land, with agreement of landholders. Access over private land can include unmarked access available with the permission of a landholder, sign posted access made available on an informal basis or access that has been formalised and made enduring through the use of easements or Walkways.

New access opportunities are sought, where appropriate, through processes in the *Overseas Investment Act 2005* and the *Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998* ("tenure review"). These two statutes require that consideration be given to walking access and provide a useful means of securing access to places that might otherwise not have been accessible. In both cases the final decision rests with other decision makers. This means that the Commission has to maintain good relationships and be able to provide solid, credible and timely information.

The Commission will continue to help resolve access disputes and enhance access security through legal agreements and signage. The Commission has considerable expertise in this area and is now able to resolve many disputes in shorter time

frames than in the past. As the Commission provides high quality information about access rights and responsibilities parties are expected to use that information to resolve issues themselves.

The Commission will continue to administer the Enhanced Access Fund. The priorities and quantum available will be reviewed by the Commission's Board annually.

### ***Providing information and advice on access***

Many people do not know where to obtain reliable and accurate information about access. To address this, the Commission will continue to produce easy to use, readily available and easy to understand information and will increasingly use web-based systems to do so.

The Walking Access Mapping System is one of the Commission's flagship products and it will continue to be promoted and enhanced. The breadth and quality of the information on the mapping system will be improved by encouraging and providing the systems that enable central and local government and other organisations to upload and administer their own outdoor access information onto the mapping system for public use. This will enrich the user experience and assist New Zealanders and overseas visitors to identify practical walking opportunities

Access that has been retained or created with Commission involvement will be added to the mapping system and linked to the Commission's corporate site to demonstrate the value of the Commission's work.

To help raise public awareness of the locations of publicly accessible land, the Commission makes available its GIS mapping information showing public access areas across the country. This information will remain available, under a Creative Commons Attribution License, to researchers and web developers who wish to make use of it in their own projects, services and products.

In addition to the mapping system, the Commission offers other helpful informational resources. These include the *Guidelines for the Management of Unformed Legal Roads* publication and a series of fact sheets and frequently asked questions documents relating to access.

The Commission intends to update *Guidelines for the Management of Unformed Legal Roads* in 2014-2016 and will continue to update and add to the fact sheets and frequently asked questions series as needed. The main topics have been covered and new topics and the number and frequency

updates are expected to decrease. The purpose of these publications is to bring clarity to and demystify technical topics that cause uncertainty.

**Responding to access enquiries**

The Commission receives a variety of enquiries, ranging from questions about access rights and responsibilities to enquiries about matters of fact or law, matters in dispute or statutory matters requiring action.

In 2014-2018 the Commission will respond to these enquiries with an operations team based in Wellington and a national network of regional field advisors.

The operations team and field advisors will continue working

with local organisations, communities and individuals to provide leadership and identify access opportunities and needs. They will also negotiate with relevant parties and assist in the resolution of walking access issues when they arise.

This role is vital to ensure the Commission remains publicly engaged and is able to effectively collaborate, influence and support organisations and individuals with an interest in access.

**HOW WE WILL MEASURE THIS IMPACT?**

The Commission has created two new measures to assess performance against this impact:

MEASURE	TARGET
Access opportunities created or retained with Commission involvement	Higher than the previous survey
Access arrangements formalised and made enduring for future generations	Higher than the previous survey

*These will be measured annually; the first survey for this measure will be in 2014-2015. These inaugural measures will establish the Commission's baseline for future years.*





# PART THREE: INPUTS

## HEALTH AND CAPABILITY

The Commission's capability comprises its Board, a highly skilled team and relevant GIS systems and technology. This capability is employed by the Commission to achieve its statutory functions and the objectives outlined in its national strategy and this Statement of Intent.

### **Our people**

The Commission is a Crown agent under the *Crown Entities Act 2004*. It has a team of six staff (4.9 FTEs) working from its Wellington office and eight part time contracted field advisors located around New Zealand.

The Commission has a kaumatua to advise Board and staff members on tikanga Māori and to assist the Commission to establish, build and maintain partnerships with Māori in respect of walking access matters.

Specialist support functions (information technology, human resources, communications and legal advice) and regional field advice are contracted out by the Commission. The main role of the regional field advisors is to liaise with territorial authorities, key stakeholders, user groups and the public.

The Commission's organisation chart is available online in the 'About Us' section of our website, at [www.walkingaccess.govt.nz](http://www.walkingaccess.govt.nz).

### **Our systems**

Information technology is critical to the success of the Commission because the Commission fulfils many of its information functions through online resources. These include the Walking Access Mapping System, the Commission's corporate website, and the Both Sides of the Fence website. The Commission also makes use of a document management system (SharePoint) to manage its internal records.

Apart from basic computing hardware, all of the Commission's technology functions are outsourced. This allows the Commission to scale its server hosting requirements as required without investing in on-site technology that requires

regular maintenance and upgrading.

The Commission is committed to managing the inherent IT risks involved in delivering many of its resources online. Regular reviews will be conducted to ensure that the Commission's processes, risk management practices and resources allocated to managing its systems are sufficient to mitigate key risks such as outages, data loss and privacy breaches or leaks.

## MANAGING OUR HEALTH AND CAPABILITY

The Commission's Board ensures that it has the skills and expertise to exercise good governance. It has a formal governance policy and undertakes an annual self-review. This review is assisted by an independent facilitator biennially. The board regularly reviews its knowledge base and, as appropriate, sets time aside to explore governance-related topics in depth; for example, financial governance.

The Commission is committed to being a good employer (as defined in the *Crown Entities Act 2004*). The success of the Commission relies on it being seen as independent, credible, responsive and authoritative. The Commission is committed to:

- » maintaining a culture where staff feel valued, enjoy coming to work and share a commitment to excellence;
- » recruiting on an equal opportunity basis;
- » providing for flexible working hours and location where appropriate;
- » using the State Services Commission code of conduct;
- » using a performance review process to help manage employee development;
- » conducting exit interviews with staff to help identify improvement initiatives; and
- » having a health and safety policy to support a productive and safe work environment.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

The Commission assesses risks and mitigation measures regularly to manage potential vulnerabilities. This is essential to ensure it can continue to meet its objectives and maintain its performance when faced with challenges and adversity.

RISK	RESPONSE
Increased awareness of the Commission's value, services, products, skills and expertise may generate resource pressures.	Priorities will be clearly communicated to staff and resources directed to statutory functions and achieving the outcomes of this Statement of Intent. The Commission will consider opportunities to expand its revenue streams and increase its partnership activities.
Differing local government, landholder and public views about the law and processes involved in managing and resolving access problems highlights the tension involved in managing public and private interests.	The Commission will maintain an extensive programme of meeting with parties and providing independent and accurate advice and information.
Loss of key personnel results in a loss of institutional knowledge.	This will be managed through succession planning, using contractors and widening the Commission's internal skill and knowledge base.  The small number of staff creates an environment conducive to good internal communication and exchange of information.
Disruption of IT systems caused by failure of provider systems, security failure, failure to deliver on objectives or an inability to maintain an appropriate level of investment	These risks will change over time. Mitigation requires active engagement with service providers and constantly reviewing the nature and level of investment in the Walking Access Mapping System.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Commission's progress towards achieving the outcomes and impacts outlined in this document will be reported each year in publicly available annual reports.

Forecast financial statements and measures developed to assess the Commission's performance are available separately in the Commission's Statement of Performance Expectations (SPE). The SPE is reviewed annually to ensure the financial forecast statements are up-to-date and the performance measures remain fit for purpose.

Actual performance is measured by a combination of surveys conducted by independent third parties, and information recorded internally by the Commission.

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**Notes:**

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