

**BEFORE THE HEARING COMMISSIONERS  
DUNEDIN**

**IN THE MATTER** of the Resource Management Act 1991  
(**RMA or the Act**)

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER** of Proposed Otago Regional Policy  
Statement 2021 (Freshwater Planning  
Instrument)

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**SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF VANCE HODGSON**

**04 SEPTEMBER 2023**

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## SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF VANCE HODGSON

1. My name is Vance Hodgson. I prepared a statement of evidence on the Freshwater Parts of the Proposed Otago Regional Policy Statement 2021 ('pORPS') dated 28 June 2023. My qualifications and experience are set out in my Evidence in Chief (EiC).
2. I support the pORPS as an appropriate response to the resource management issues in Otago and consider that, except for improvements that could be made to some provisions to clarify food production values as they relate to freshwater, the pORPS is the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the Act.

### SRMR – 15 – Freshwater demand exceeds capacity in some places

7. I have set out in my EiC those changes I consider would improve SRMR – 15. In particular I described that matters concerning food production needed to be clearly developed through the context and impact snapshot narrative for SRMR-15. This is the case in other parts of the pORPS where food production values and associated issues are expressed.<sup>1</sup>
8. I recommended an amendment to the Context of SRMR-15. The first sentence of the second paragraph reads as if human consumption, irrigation and renewable electricity generation uses are all economic. Ms Todd for ORC in her opening statement agrees that the word 'economic' should be deleted to widen the context and we align on our opinion.
9. I also remain of the opinion that SRMR-15 Social Impact Snapshot would be improved by an amendment consistent with that proposed in the s42A for the SRMR-16 (water quality related) Social Impact Snapshot:

*For the wider community, water is a source of kai and for harvesting and food production.*

### SRMR – 16 – Declining water quality has adverse effects on the environment, our communities, and the economy

10. In my opinion the Economic Impact Snapshot would be improved by adding a reference to food production being affected by the effects of water pollution. The Otago region is characterised by a number of iconic sectors. Food production is one of those and in my opinion, effects on this activity (from

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<sup>1</sup> e.g., SRMR-11, SRMR-14, SRMR-16, SRMR-18, SRMR-110A (new) and the as-notified FMU visions

an economic and social impact perspective) are equally if not more important to identity than effects on property values.

11. I continue to support the s42A authors recommended changes to the Social Impact Statement to include reference to the other social aspects of communities affected by water quality, including food production and human health.

#### **LF-FW-O1A**

12. As expressed in my EiC, subject to amendment I consider new LF-FW-O1A(7) a worthy objective, applicable region-wide and not activity specific.
13. Ms Boyd for ORC in her opening statement agrees with incorporating 'food production' in this clause for the reasons set out in my EiC, but suggests an alternative wording arrangement that I support as follows:

*(7) innovative and sustainable land and water management practices provide for the health and well-being of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems, ~~and~~ improve resilience to the effects of climate change, and support food production, and*

14. I agree with Ms Boyd that achieving LF-FW-O1A forms a part of achieving each of the visions. However, I remain mindful that the community engagement determined more nuanced long-term visions for freshwater relating to food production activity, in the Dunstan, Manuherekia and Roxburgh rohe, the North Otago and Taiari FMU.
15. If the vision statement re-write recommended by the s42A report writer is accepted, then it is my opinion that new LF-FW-O1A(7) should be amended as above.

#### **LF-FW-P7A**

16. I continue to support Ms Boyds recommended new policy LF-FW-P7A on water allocation and use. That new policy would recognise an allocation need (within limits) for '*land-based primary production*'.
17. This accords with the acknowledged significant benefits of these activities on highly productive land and the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land 2022 and will helpfully guide the future decision making.

**Vance Hodgson**

4 September 2023