

8 May 2015

Independent Hearings Panel
Auckland Council
Level 16, 205 Queen Street
Auckland


By Email

Dear Judge Kirkpatrick and Commissioners

INTERIM GUIDANCE ON THE REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT

1. I am writing to express EDS's concern with RPS interim guidance. Of particular focus is the interim guidance on Section B8.3 – Rural Subdivision.
2. As we raised at the peer review meeting on 11 March 2015, EDS has a concern about the influence of the interim guidance and the fact that the picture is not yet a complete one. The Panel needs to be aware of the substantial weight being given to what is said in its interim guidance at mediation.
3. The interim guidance sets a clear direction that subdivision and development should be enabled in rural areas. We understand from your comments at the review meeting that guidance regarding the overlays that might limit that enablement is yet to come.
4. We contend that the Panel should release its interim guidance on ecological areas, landscape, natural character and any other overlay matters. In the absence of this guidance it is not possible to understand the subdivision regime or to fairly participate in mediation or other processes relating to rural development.
5. We respectfully request that the Panel release the balance of interim guidance on the RPS provisions relating to rural land at an early date.

Kind regards



Gary Taylor
Executive Director
Environmental Defence Society