

March 2009

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Auckland Becomes a Super City - One Auckland a Reality

It has been recommended that the Auckland Regional Council and the seven territorial authorities be dissolved and replaced by a unitary authority.

The **Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Auckland Governance** was released on 27 March 2009 without the Government's response, contrary to previous indications.

The Report recommends one unitary authority called the Auckland Council having the powers and responsibilities of both a regional council and a territorial authority. There would be one elected mayor with some executive powers (the appointment of the deputy mayor and committee chairpersons, and the ability to propose the budget and initiate policy) with 23 councillors.

In addition to the Auckland Council six elected local councils are proposed to oversee the delivery of services by Auckland Council staff and to undertake local engagement in four urban and two rural districts. The boundaries of the new local councils are somewhat similar to the existing council territories of Rodney District, North Shore, Waitakere, Auckland, and Manukau Cities.

The functions of those local councils will be as set by statute and delegated by the Auckland Council. The local councils will "have specified governance responsibilities within their districts" but, "they will be part of the Auckland Council, and will be subsidiary and accountable to the governing body of the Auckland Council". The Commission describes the local councils as "a new type of body - a local representative body, which operates within a larger local authority and which provides services and acts as an advocate for the residents, ratepayers, and communities of their areas".

Community boards will disappear if the recommendations are accepted, except for Great Barrier and Waiheke Islands, and for the central city and waterfront area.

There will also be changes to the southern boundary of the region, with areas north of the Waikato River including Tuakau, Pokeno and Mercer coming to Auckland and the area bordering the Firth of Thames from Matingarahi Point to Whakatiwai joining Waikato Region.

The Herald reported that John Key said Cabinet would discuss the report on Monday 30 March 2009.

For a copy of the summary go to the Royal Commission website www.royalcommission.govt.nz.

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