



Ministry for Regulation Weekly Report – 13 March 2026

Week ending	13 March 2026	Priority	Medium
Security classification	Commercial In confidence	Tracking number	MFR2026-054

Recipient	Action sought
Hon David Seymour Minister for Regulation	Note the contents of this report

Contact for discussion if required

Name	Position	Phone number
Aisling Risdon	Head of Ministerial and Strategic Services	s 9(2)(a)

Comments

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Actions

Reference	Action	Due date	Status update
A2026-070	MfR to have a follow up conversation with the Office around regulatory sandboxes and innovation.	16/03/2026	In progress

Contact: Aisling Risdon, Head of Ministerial and Strategic Services, s 9(2)(a)

Papers delivered and under development

Delivered to the Minister for Regulation

Reference	Title	Date delivered
s 9(2)(f)(iv)		
MFR2026-051	Update ahead of your meeting with the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment	10/03/2026
MFR2026-053	Regulatory Standards Board APH Paper – for approval and Ministerial consultation	10/03/2026

Delivered to the office of the Minister for Regulation

Reference	Title	Date delivered
MFR2026-038	Draft Cabinet paper - Initial notice to exclude selected legislation from the Regulatory Standards Act 2025	09/03/2026
MFR2026-055	Comments on the Social Media Ban Cabinet Paper	10/03/2026

Under development

Reference	Title	Due date
s 9(2)(f)(iv)		
s 9(2)(f)(iv)		
MFR2026-057	Product labelling review - revised draft report and Cabinet paper	10/04/2026

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Announcements & Engagements

Ministerial activity

Date	Location	Details	Opportunity
March (TBC)	Wellington	Telecommunications Regulatory Review outcomes	Announcement of the report findings and Cabinet decisions
s 9(2)(f)(iv)			

Ministry for Regulation activity

Date	Details
24 March	Chief Economist presenting at Environment and Resource Management Law Update Conference
25 March	Chief Economist guest lecture at Auckland University of Technology: First year economics course
25 March	Deputy Chief Executive for Organisational Enablement and Chief Economist presenting at MinterEllisonRuddWatts' thought leadership event with private sector clients
25 March	Deputy Chief Executive for Organisational Enablement, Chief Economist and Head of People and Operations at panel event for the Auckland University of Technology investment club
Throughout March	Extensive programme of university career expos

Contact: Joe Stockman, Head of Communications and Engagement, s 9(2)(a)

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Updates

Regulatory Standards Act

For information

Ministerial consultation is underway on all three Cabinet papers: for the Circular/Statutory Guidance; Exclusions and Commencement Order; and Board appointments. We have sent refreshed copies of the papers and supporting documents to agencies to support that process. We are also seeking feedback on the workability of the Statutory Guidance ahead of Cabinet consideration. Ministerial consultation on all three papers closes on 17 March 2026 for lodgement on 19 March.

The team continues to develop the next round of non-statutory guidance, templates, and process changes to support early implementation by agencies once commencement timing is confirmed.

Contact: Andrew Royle, Deputy Chief Executive Policy, s 9(2)(a)

AI in regulation – regulatory leaders showcase

For information

The Ministry for Regulation, in partnership with MartinJenkins, co-hosted an in-person AI regulatory showcase on 12 March 2026 for senior leaders from across New Zealand's regulatory agencies. The event was organised as part of the Ministry's role in convening, influencing, and strengthening system-wide regulatory capability, particularly in relation to innovation and the use of emerging technologies.

The showcase focused on practical, real-world applications of AI in regulatory settings. Regulators already using AI tools, alongside specialist AI technology vendors working with regulators, shared demonstrations, lessons learned, and insights on risks and what has worked in practice. The event was well attended and generated strong engagement, reinforcing demand from regulators for system-wide collaboration and clearer guidance in this area.

The draft AI guidance for regulators is scheduled for publication in April 2026, and your office will be briefed ahead of its release.

Key contact: Alex McMinn, Head of Regulatory System Capability, s 9(2)(a)

Telecommunications Review

For information

The Cabinet paper was considered at the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee (ECO) on 12 March 2026 and will be considered by Cabinet on 16 March 2026. The Ministry is continuing to prepare a plan for the release of the Review report and supporting communications collateral.

[COMMERCIAL IN-CONFIDENCE: s 9(2)(b)(ii)]

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Pending Cabinet's decisions on Monday, as a number of decisions will be delegated, material relating to those decisions in the Cabinet paper will need to be withheld to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials. We will support your office, prior to any public release, to identify information appropriate to withhold consistent with the Official Information Act.

Contact: Cherie Engelbrecht, Manager Regulatory Reviews, s 9(2)(a)

Product Labelling Review

For information

s 9(2)(f)(iv)



We are continuing to engage with the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and other key agencies on the digital labelling trial under the Food Act 2014. The digital trial is now open for expressions of interest.

Contact: Justine Fitzmaurice, Manager Regulatory Reviews, s 9(2)(a)

Hospitality Review

For information

s 9(2)(f)(iv)



We are looking to schedule a series of discussion sessions on the more substantive issues with you and the relevant portfolio Ministers and will work with your office over the coming weeks to schedule these. s 9(2)(f)(iv)



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Staff attended the Hospitality Summit on 12 March 2026, where we ran a workshop asking attendees how they would redesign the alcohol licensing system. This was a productive session, and some good ideas were generated, which will feed into the alcohol workstream.

This week the Sale and Supply of Alcohol (Sales on Anzac Day Morning, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, and Christmas Day) Amendment Bill (Hon Kieran McAnulty's member's bill), completed the Committee of the whole House stage in Parliament. That Bill will remove the requirement to be dining or staying at premises to be served alcohol. It will also allow on-license premises to trade as they normally would under their alcohol licence conditions. Off-licences and remote sales will remain restricted on these days. The Bill will move to its Third Reading at the next Member's Day.

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Contact: Hannah McGlue, Manager Regulatory Reviews, s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Agricultural and Horticultural Products Review

For information

Further to our update in last week's report, the amendment Bills relating to Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines (ACVM) and Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (HSNO) have been separated. The ACVM Bill has gone out for initial Bill of Rights Act (BORA) vetting. We understand that agencies are working towards presenting the Bills to the Cabinet Legislation Committee meeting of 30 April 2026, and for introduction to the House on 14 May 2026. We will provide further updates as we continue to engage with agencies.

Contact: Paul Delahunty, Deputy Chief Executive Reviews and Systems Capabilities, s 9(2)(a)

Red Tape Tipline

For information

As of 11 March 2026, the Ministry had received a total of 1,559 submissions on potential red tape issues. We currently have 24 low-complexity reviews underway.

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Contact: Hannah McGlue, Manager Regulatory Reviews, s 9(2)(a)

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Meeting Cabinet's impact analysis requirements - Report

For information

We published the second report on meeting Cabinet's impact analysis requirements this week. We have begun work on the form and timing for the next report, which is expected to be the final report on the legacy system. Future reporting will focus on how well ministerial portfolios meet the requirements under the new system.

Contact: Andrew Royle, Deputy Chief Executive Policy, s 9(2)(a)

Business Canterbury meeting

For information

On 11 March, Ministry officials met with Business Canterbury. One of the key points Business Canterbury made was that businesses in Canterbury have a collective ambition to have a regulatory system that is ahead of (and thereby facilitates) innovation. They gave Rocket Lab as an example of a company that had thrived because of proactive regulation and felt there might be similar opportunities in, for example, the med-tech sector. As part of the conversation that followed, we emphasised regulatory sandboxes as a tool we are promoting and we have arranged a follow-up meeting in April to talk to them specifically about regulatory sandboxes.

Business Canterbury also emphasised that the Ministry for Regulation is highly regarded in the business sector and that there is a lot of business support for its work.

Contact: Adam Jackson, Chief Advisor to the Chief Executive, s 9(2)(a)