



How much will the nationally significant proposal process cost?

This information sheet explains:

the costs involved | who can recover costs | how they are recovered

When the Minister decides a proposal is of national significance, it can be decided in one of three ways. It can be directed to a board of inquiry, the Environment Court or the local council.¹ This information sheet explains the costs involved when the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) processes an application to be decided by a board of inquiry.

Every proposal is unique

Every nationally significant proposal is different. While some are relatively straightforward, others may involve complex resource consents and plan changes. When you talk to the EPA about a possible application you will be given a rough idea of the cost, should your proposal be directed to a board of inquiry. You will not be charged for these initial meetings.

Once you formally advise the EPA you intend to lodge an application, you will be given a detailed draft budget and the EPA will begin to recover costs. From this point costs associated with the pre-lodgment phase are recovered, even if you eventually decide not to lodge with the EPA.

How much does a proposal cost?

The cost of proposals can vary greatly, depending on factors such as:

- the amount of public consultation already undertaken
- the length of the pre-lodgment process
- the number of technical reports needed
- the number of submissions received
- the length of the hearing
- the number of members on the board of inquiry.

Many of these variables are not known at the start of the process, so your draft budget will be an estimate only. The EPA will agree with you any assumptions made about these variables.

¹ Full information on proposals of national significance can be found in Part 6AA of the Resource Management Act 1991. This information sheet is intended to provide a general picture of the cost recovery process and does not provide legal guidance. The EPA strongly suggest you take legal advice if you are uncertain about any aspect of this information.



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What is the policy?

The EPA recovers actual and reasonable costs as detailed in its *Cost Recovery Policy for Proposals of National Significance*. You can view this policy on the EPA website at www.epa.govt.nz

The Resource Management Act 1991 also allows for costs to be recovered from the applicant by the Minister in relation to appointing a board of inquiry to consider a proposal of national significance. The Minister for the Environment appoints a board to consider a land-based proposal. The Minister for Conservation appoints a board to consider a coastal proposal. The Ministers work together to appoint a board to consider a proposal containing both land and coastal matters.

Can cost savings be made?

Once you lodge a proposal with the EPA, you will be provided with updated budgets regularly. The EPA processes a proposal of national significance as efficiently as possible, however the EPA welcomes discussion of any cost-saving ideas you may have. It is also important to note that there are some fixed costs associated with your proposal. For example, the Minister decides how many members will sit on the board of inquiry and who they will be. Fees paid to board of inquiry members are set by Cabinet.

How are costs recovered?

- Costs are invoiced monthly, and invoices are accompanied by a report detailing hours worked by EPA staff.
- EPA staff hourly rates are listed in the *Cost Recovery Policy for Proposals of National Significance*.
- The details of all other costs recovered (such as contractors, hearing venues, accommodation, board member fees and expenses) are also detailed in the monthly report.
- Payment is due on the 20th of the month following the invoice.



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Want to know more?

Contact the Environmental Protection Authority by phoning +64 4 916 2426.

You can also email rminfo@epa.govt.nz or visit the EPA website at www.epa.govt.nz

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