

Fees and expenses



Fees

Fees and allowances are paid in accordance with the Fees and Travelling Allowances Act 1951. Periodic Cabinet Office circulars set out expectations in this regard.

Fees are paid to members of the NZCA and conservation boards for attendance at scheduled meetings, including any special and committee meetings, and fieldtrips. Also, for attendance at other meetings or for undertaking other NZCA or conservation board business with the prior approval of the NZCA or conservation board, or chairperson if notice is short.

A daily fee of \$250 for conservation board members and \$450 for NZCA members applies. The daily fees for the chairperson of a conservation board is \$330 and for the NZCA \$700. This fee is based on the expectation that a working day is about 8 hours, but working longer than 8 hours does not attract an extra payment. Travel time is not generally paid. For meetings of lesser duration, hourly pro-rata fees should be calculated by dividing the daily fee by 8, then multiplying by the number of hours worked.

Members are not expected to accumulate time over a number of days or weeks into daily units, except in the case of preparation for meetings which can be combined with actual hours spent in the meeting for fee calculation purposes. Considering that actual meetings are seldom of 8 hours duration on any one day, members commonly do not claim for preparation time unless sustained effort has been required. For example, reading a draft conservation management strategy.

Other than attendance or preparations for NZCA or conservation board meetings, work must either be approved and minuted at a meeting or approved by the Chair in consultation with the servicing staff *before* it is undertaken.

The payment of fees to members is through the Department's payroll system but, for the avoidance of doubt, members are not employees of the Department. Withholding tax will be deducted from the amount paid unless the member has provided a certificate from IRD that an exemption has been granted from this requirement.

In approved cases, fees may be paid via a GST invoice, especially if the fee is to be paid to a third party, such as an employer. That third party will have to furnish a GST invoice, which clearly identifies the GST amount and a GST number.

Expenses

Travel costs

Travel costs will be paid by the Department or reimbursed in line with the principles in the Department's Travel Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and Discretionary Expenditure SOP.

The travel costs of members will be met when meetings are held outside their local area. A guideline of a half-hour drive is appropriate, but this should be decided by each conservation board.

NEW ZEALAND

CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
TE POU ATAWHAI TAIAO O AOTEAROA

**Department of
Conservation**
Te Papa Atawhai

Conservation board members who believe they need to travel by air to attend meetings should discuss this with their servicing staff, but is unlikely to be approved except in very extenuating circumstances. New Zealand Conservation Authority members will be issued with air travel cards. Infrequent air travellers must make their bookings through the Department to take advantage of Departmental discount arrangements.

Use of private vehicles is reimbursed at the prevailing Department rate or lower rate if agreed by the NZCA or conservation board. The prevailing rate for a motor vehicle as at the date of this Fact Sheet is 79 cents per km. Members are expected to car pool where ever possible or to use public transport to reduce costs. Where members choose to use their private vehicle but the most cost- and time-efficient method is by public transport or rental car or by car-pooling, the lowest cost option shall be reimbursed. Where a Departmental vehicle is available, but a member chooses to use a private vehicle, then reimbursement for mileage will not be made. Rental cars must be booked through the Department and members must retain receipts for petrol purchases in order to be reimbursed.

Actual and reasonable costs will be reimbursed where other modes of transport need to be used.

Accommodation

Where overnight accommodation is required, this will be arranged by the Department.

Accommodation may be in Department-managed accommodation, especially on field trips, or on a marae, in which case sleeping bags may be required. Mid-range hotel or motel accommodation is otherwise used. If a member prefers to travel home for the night and return the next day, mileage at the standard rate capped at the cost of the overnight accommodation provided by the Department will be reimbursed.

Meals

Meals taken during meetings/field trips will be arranged and paid for by the Department. Alcoholic beverages are not provided as an official expense.

Other expenses

Telephone toll expenses incurred on NZCA and conservation board business can be claimed. The original phone bill, with the claimed calls identified, needs to be provided. This can be returned if necessary. Other actual and reasonable expenses incurred on pre-approved NZCA or conservation board business can be claimed and will be considered on the same basis as a claim by the servicing staff.

The NZCA operates an 0800 number for members to call servicing staff. If you have stationery needs or want NZCA or conservation board related photocopying done, please discuss these requirements with your servicing staff.

Where members are asked to stay on a marae, the Department will arrange to pay koha. Members can add their own if they wish, but this additional koha would not be met as an official expense.

Special requirements

If you have special dietary needs or preferences, or special accommodation requirements, please advise your servicing staff.

Making claims

Members will be given claim forms to fill in. Claims should be filed after each NZCA or conservation board meeting to assist the Department to manage the NZCA or conservation board's budget

efficiently. To meet audit requirements, members are required to sign all claim forms, which will then be certified by a departmental staff member.

It is Departmental policy that all claims for expenses require the original receipt which includes a GST amount and a GST number. Credit card receipts or statements and photocopies of invoices or receipts are insufficient for expense claims.

The Department's financial year runs from 1 July to 30 June. Special effort needs to be made in early June to ensure all claims relating to a financial year are lodged in time for inclusion in that year's accounts.

ACC levies

Members should pay any ACC levies that are levied against them with respect to their NZCA or conservation board activity. Members cannot claim these payments back from the Department. Affected members need to talk to their accountants about whether ACC levies can be claimed as an offset to income from NZCA or conservation board fees.