



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### ***Democracy must always prevail says LGNZ***

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A pragmatic, workable solution for Environment Canterbury which does not compromise local democracy is paramount, says *Local Government New Zealand*.

The statement follows the release of the report '*Investigation of the Performance of Environment Canterbury under the Resource Management Act and Local Government Act.*'

The report found Environment Canterbury's management of regional freshwater resources fell well short of what was essential, and there was an unprecedented gap between capability and requirements.

It recommends a separate Canterbury Regional Water Authority established under its own Act of Parliament. Membership would be appointed by the Government.

The report also recommends the existing council be replaced by a temporary Commission.

Lawrence Yule, LGNZ president, says Environment Canterbury has been struggling with some of the most complex issues regional councils face.

"There is a need for swift, drastic action but there must be a firm commitment to elections in 2013 or earlier. Local democracy must never ever be compromised."

Mr Yule says it's extremely disappointing Environment Canterbury appears to have failed to achieve the standards of excellence all councils should aspire to.

"But it's also important to note the report does acknowledge Environment Canterbury has made some progress towards addressing some fundamental issues around water management, however these come too little too late."

Mr Yule will make no further comment on the matter until the Government has determined a course of action.

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