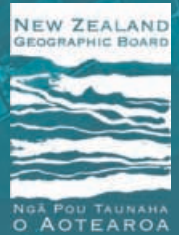


NEW ACT FOR GEOGRAPHIC BOARD

NEW ZEALAND GEOGRAPHIC BOARD
NGĀ POU TAUNAHA O AOTEAROA



A NEW ACT GOVERNING THE WORK OF NEW ZEALAND'S PLACE NAMING AUTHORITY CAME INTO FORCE ON 1 NOVEMBER 2008. THE NEW ZEALAND GEOGRAPHIC BOARD (NGĀ POU TAUNAHA O AOTEAROA) ACT 2008 UPDATES THE BOARD'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES, AND REPLACES THE 1946 LEGISLATION THAT PREVIOUSLY GOVERNED OUR WORK.

ABOUT THE BOARD

The New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa is New Zealand's national place naming authority.

We create new names, change or discontinue current ones, and approve recorded names.

The names of New Zealand places and features, such as mountains and rivers, as well as settlements and localities, reflect the culture and shared heritage of New Zealanders. Knowing the correct names for places and their location is important for people in everyday communications and activities, for businesses in their transactions, and for emergency services in responding to incidents.

Anyone can propose a name for a geographic feature or place. We use a number of criteria to make a decision on any proposal. We encourage anyone making a proposal for a place name within New Zealand to consult with local communities and local iwi to help us make informed decisions.

ABOUT THE 2008 ACT

Official naming of geographic features was previously guided by the New Zealand Geographic Board Act 1946. Following a review of this legislation and a public consultation, Government decided to replace the 1946 Act with new legislation that modernises official place naming and the Board's role.

In confirming the Board's powers, functions and duties, and extending our jurisdiction, the 2008 Act provides a framework for New Zealand's official place naming into the 21st century.

The 2008 Act repeals the 1946 legislation and came into force on 1 November 2008 (excluding sections 32 and 33 of the Act, which require public offices and local authorities to use official place names in official documents, and which are not yet enacted).

What the Act does

The changes made in the 2008 Act:

- extend the Board's naming jurisdiction to new areas under New Zealand's sovereign control such as the continental shelf
- ensure official place naming continues to reflect the culture and heritage of New Zealand's communities, and
- ensure official place naming supports the ongoing, everyday need for consistent, correct identification of geographic features.

Main features of the Act

Extending the Board's role to undersea feature naming

The Board will now name undersea features within New Zealand's continental shelf limits. In September 2008, the United Nations accepted New Zealand's submission for the extent of its continental shelf. This confirmed New Zealand's sovereign rights to more than 1.7 million square kilometres of seabed.

The continental shelf is now the subject of increasing research and exploration activity, and the Board's new role in naming its undersea features will play a crucial part in New Zealand's effective management of the area's undersea resources.

Formalising the Board's role in Antarctic place naming

The new Act formalises the Board's long-standing role in place naming in the Ross Sea Region of Antarctica.

Reviewing names for Crown protected areas

The Act provides the Board with a review and concurrence role for the names for Crown protected areas. This will help achieve consistency and standardisation for features named by the Board and for Crown protected areas. The naming of Crown protected areas is administered by the Department of Conservation.

Members of the public also now have similar opportunities to comment on proposed Crown protected area names to those they currently have for other place name proposals within New Zealand.

Official name gazetteer

From 1 November 2008, the Board has published and maintained an online gazetteer of official geographic names (or place names). Many thousands of names – official and unofficial – exist; an easily accessible gazetteer helps people and organisations identify the correct official name for New Zealand's features and places.

Using official geographic names

The Act requires that official geographic names be used in official documents. Using correct official names in the publications and documents published by public offices and local authorities contributes to the consistent use of correct names for New Zealand geographic features.

(Please note: sections 32 and 33 of the Act, which govern this requirement, are not yet enacted.)

Other features

The 2008 Act also:

- requires the Board to report annually to the Minister for Land Information
- simplifies and modernises the public notification requirements
- requires the Board to consult with relevant national and international naming authorities on names outside New Zealand's territorial limits
- gives the Board additional powers to make final determinations on names where we uphold objections from members of the public
- provides for the alteration of district and region names of local authorities
- provides for recorded names to be reviewed and adopted as official or discontinued
- provides for the gazetting of official geographic names for Antarctica and Crown protected areas that have not been previously been gazetted
- increases the Board's membership by two to represent the naming of suburbs and localities and undersea features
- provides for appointment of committees by the Board, and
- provides for the Board to delegate our powers and functions.

You can find more detailed information on the review at the 'place names' section of the Land Information New Zealand website, www.linz.govt.nz

Enquires and more information

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New Zealand Government

