

Election 2014 Newsletter

National holds the best hand of any Government since MMP began in 1996

The election has delivered stability and a continuation of 'business as usual'. Parliament will likely resume on 20 October. The government will be much the same as previously (National + ACT + United Future + the Maori Party).

National can legislate without compromise with enough seats in Parliament to govern alone, or with any one of their support parties. This does not mean National will necessarily push through unpopular policies. They will consider the 2017 election and public opinion.

But some reforms on hold will be progressed quickly. The first year of a new term concentrates on the important law changes that need a further two years to bed in before the next election. A few changes likely to attract voter support will be kept for the last few months of a term. Solid, predictable government works on schedules. There are many more issues for attention than can ever be dealt with.

If you have a policy wish list there is no better time than now to get it onto the government's 'to do' list. The more 'ready to use' your proposal, the better.

Now is best

Officials are finalising their Briefings for Incoming Ministers (BIM). They generally include officials' preferences for bids for legislative slots.

Party officials are looking at their election promises. Minister will shortly be working out their priorities, and how they might differ from their officials.

Drafting of The Speech from the Throne will begin. It highlights the Government's intentions.

Once those plans are set, it gets much harder to inject something new, or to move an existing item up in priority or to stop something.

How to influence

Develop and put proposals forward now if they:

- relate to announced election policy by National, United Future, ACT or the Maori Party; or
- could make the boat go faster without undue expense or use of political capital; or
- will become a pressing political problem in the next couple of years **and** you have a solution; or
- might interest an MP as the subject of a Member's Bill for the ballot

Ministers and officials are bombarded by complaints and bright ideas. Problem descriptions alone are a waste of time. Governments want solutions. Proposals should identify costs, risks, benefits, supporters, opponents and alternatives.

We can help

We work with lawmakers and policymakers at all levels to promote client interests. People in our team have served as a Member of Parliament, senior Beehive political advisor, regulator, public servant, law drafter, company director, in-house counsel and commercial negotiator. We know what works and what doesn't. That knowledge is there for the benefit of our clients.

Things we could help you with include:

- possible input on Briefings to Incoming Ministers
- analysis of government policies and priorities
- draft policy and statute provisions
- brainstorming campaigns
- analysis of support party agreements
- lobbying for policy work
- insight into the Wellington bureaucracy
- advice and support with select committees
- drafting Member's Bills and collateral documents

Commercial law

We still enjoy commercial law. Please do not hesitate to call if you want a second opinion on some knotty company or securities or competition law question.