

Breathe Easy...

questionnaire summary

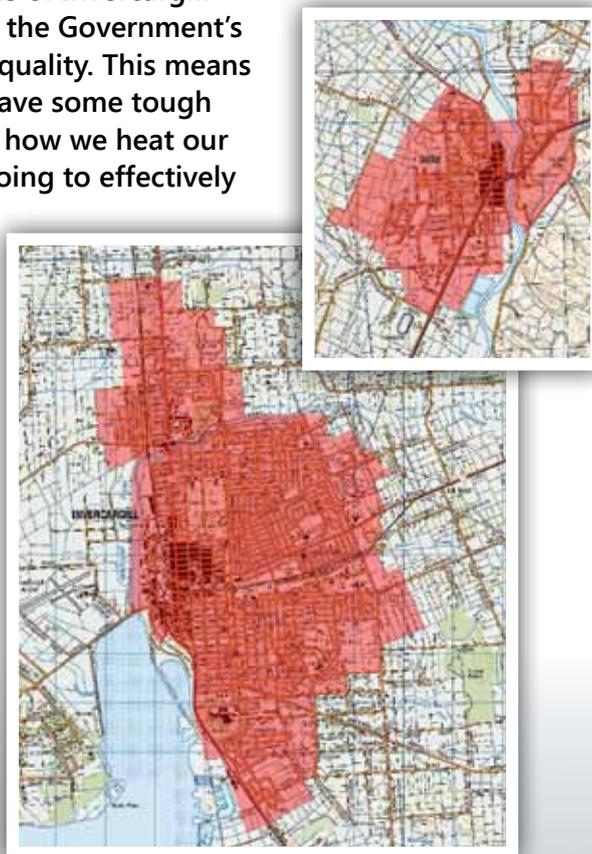
Why do a review?

- *The existing Regional Air Quality Plan for Southland was adopted in 1999 and is out of date.*
- *We need to be able to address poor air quality issues effectively for the benefit of our health and the environment.*
- *Recent law changes have to be reflected in the Air Plan, e.g. the National Environmental Standards for Air Quality.*
- *As a community we need to weigh up our options and make important choices, including how we heat our homes.*
- *If we don't manage discharges of contaminants into the air appropriately they will have a negative effect on our health and the environment.*

This questionnaire summary highlights the responses received from the feedback forms on how to better manage air quality in the Southland region.

In March, you may have responded to a questionnaire about air quality in Southland. The purpose of the questionnaire and accompanying information was to inform you about the issues and options being considered as part of a review of the *Regional Air Quality Plan for Southland*. The urban areas of Invercargill and Gore are not meeting the Government's national standards for air quality. This means that as a community we have some tough decisions to make around how we heat our homes, and how we are going to effectively manage Southland's air quality for the future.

During winter, air quality in Invercargill and Gore airsheds can be poor due to the level of fine particles (PM₁₀) in the air. They regularly exceed the National Environmental Standards designed to protect human health, and that needs to change. The Government has set deadlines for meeting the air quality standards, which for Gore is by 1 September 2016 and for Invercargill is by 1 September 2020.



Invercargill and Gore airsheds.

"As a community we need to weigh up our options and make important choices, including how we heat our homes."



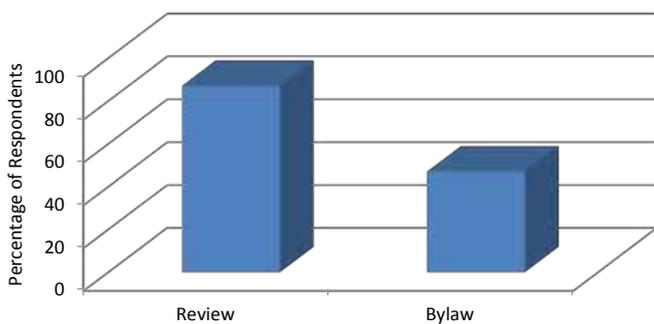
environment
SOUTHLAND
Te Taiao Tonga

Q1 What is your preferred option to manage air quality in Southland?

- a) Air Plan Review
- b) Air Quality Control Bylaw

Q2 Why do you prefer this option? Do you think it will improve air quality in Southland, and if so, why?

Preferred option to manage air quality



The preferred option to **manage air quality in Southland** is through a review of the Air Plan.

There were a number of common themes as to why the review was preferred which included:

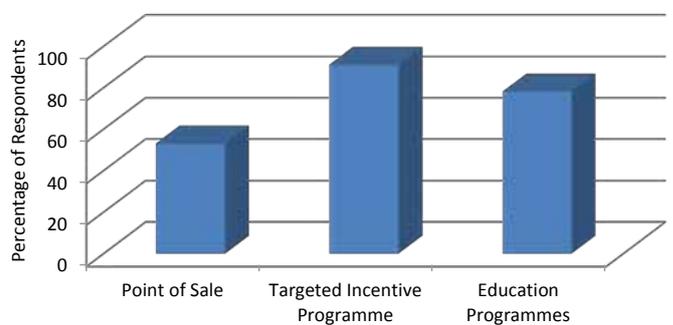
- Provides a more comprehensive range of options to manage and improve air quality.
- Opportunity to phase out existing non-complying fires.
- Likely to result in better long-term outcomes.
- Gives the community time to implement change.
- Can allow for advances in technology.
- Need to have alternative options to electricity.
- Use of non-regulatory tools as well.
- Is more representative of community values.
- Bylaw is too forceful and short-sighted.

Q3 Which options do you believe will improve air quality in Southland?

- a) Point of Sale Rule
- b) A Targeted Incentives Programme to encourage the use of cleaner home heating options to reduce PM₁₀
- c) Education Programmes

Q4 Why do you think it/they will improve air quality in Southland?

Which option will improve air quality



The preferred option to **improve air quality in Southland** is through a Targeted Incentives Programme.

As indicated above, a Targeted Incentive Programme was preferred however many respondents believed that a combination of the above approaches would be key in improving air quality in Southland. The key themes for why respondents felt each option would improve air quality include:

Point of Sale

- Bad as it may place an extra cost on new homebuyers.
- Bad as it will most likely hit those selling older homes and probably those who can least afford to upgrade.
- Positive and effective as a user pays system.
- Good as it allows negotiation of price during sale.
- Unfair because the devices were legal when they were installed.
- Good because it will make people change.
- Good because it won't affect rental tenants.
- Good because it will achieve immediate results.
- Bad because people will find a way around the rule.
- Good as it provides an opportunity for an authority to check compliance.
- Good as it might allow the purchaser to choose what heating type they'd like in the house.

Targeted Incentives

- Give people the choice to decide how they heat their home.
- Money will assist people in making a change.
- Insulation initiatives have worked, so clean air should too.
- Bad because they will hit ratepayers and be a cost to everyone.
- Good because people on fixed and low incomes are unable to make the changes without help.
- Good as it is encouraging burning of wood instead of coal and changing to electric options.
- If an affordable option is available people will take it.
- Good, as it may reach a larger number of people (i.e. number and needy).
- Should be used in conjunction with rules. (e.g. incentives first, then a deadline)
- Incentives will 'sweeten' any rules that are put in place.
- No good unless substantial (a few hundred dollars won't cut it).
- Rates rebate for homes that don't have fires?
- Should ensure the equity and encourage those who are most vulnerable to participate.

Education

- People will be made aware of the problem and become motivated to do something about it.
- Necessary to explain why there is a problem and which incentives/options are available to remedy it.
- Ensuring people understand why the rules/regulations are in place.
- Bad because education of the masses does not work.
- Instruction on burner use is needed; people don't know how to efficiently operate them.
- Education will not help people see what is already blindingly obvious.
- Education is pointless if they can't then afford to change.
- Education is better than rules that people resent and resist.
- Prevents a future problem.
- People need advice on how to operate their fires.

Other

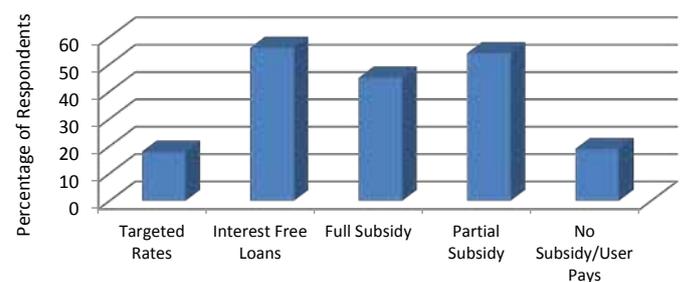
- High power prices are a problem.
- All three options are good. Not a 'one size fits all' situation.

Q5 *If you think an incentives programme is needed to help improve air quality in Southland, how do you think this could be paid for?*

- a) Targeted rates
- b) Interest free loans
- c) Full subsidy
- d) Partial subsidy
- e) No subsidy (e.g. user pays)
- f) Other (Please specify)

Q6 *Are there any other options you'd like to add?*

How should we pay for an incentives programme?



The preferred option to pay for an **incentives programme** was varied, however most common responses were interest free loans or a partial subsidy.

The respondents were given the opportunity to provide any other options they would like to add. A significant number of those that responded used this as an opportunity to highlight their priority issues about air quality and regulation in Southland. The main recurring themes included:

- The ongoing cost of power is too expensive in relation to wood and coal in Southland.
- Regulation is needed to improve air quality.
- Budget restrictions on low-income homes prohibits changing heating sources.
- Some sort of subsidy is required to enable change to cleaner fuels.
- More education is required.
- Reject the government legislation.
- Provision for power cuts and natural hazards.
- Improve technology around burning appliances and fuels.

- Better quality fuels to be used.
- Target industry and other contributors, not just domestic heating.
- Provide a similar campaign or structure to that currently being used by EECA and the SWHT.
- Phase out of high emission sources will occur naturally over time.
- Southland has a colder climate than many other areas in New Zealand.
- Subsidies need to be means tested.
- Direction should be toward renewable energy sources such as wind and solar.
- Incentive scheme should be user pays.
- Open fires provide a positive aesthetic value that other sources do not.
- Should be minimum insulation and heating standards for rental properties.
- Odour from dairy industry needs to be regulated.
- Maintenance of heating appliances such as sweeping chimneys.

Conclusion

Responses received highlighted a number of important issues from a wide community perspective. Generally, people want to improve air quality without increasing their day-to-day costs. It is also imperative that it is done in a way that will not compromise people being warm in their homes over winter months. This is going to require a variety of both regulatory and non-regulatory methods and assistance for those who cannot afford to make the changes on their own.

Why do we need an Air Plan?

It's a legal requirement to adopt an Air Plan to manage the discharge of contaminants into the air e.g. dust, odours, gases and PM₁₀. An Air Plan lets councils manage discharges and set regulations where necessary.



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