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In This Issue

4 FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

Business Development Manager, Phil Clode

6 ROSEBANK ADVOCATES

6 Grant Hewison

8 Kimmy's Korner

10 ROSEBANK NEWS & EVENTS

14 ROSEBANKOPOLY

16 2025 Hightlights

18 Is LinkedIn Still Worth It?

20 CCTV Sponsors

23 BUSINESS NUTS & BOLTS

23 New Member profiles

24 Fire and Emergency Levy Reform:
Why Commercial Property Owners
Should Be Paying Attention Now

25 Smarter Security Starts with Camera Quality

26 Opportunities and Challenges As Disputes
Tribunal's Jurisdiction Increased to \$60,000

27 Risk-Based Reset of Health and Safety
Rests on the Details



Cover: ROSEBANKOPOLY competitors Intelligent Enviroments having some fun.

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From My Perspective

Phil Clode, Business Development Manager, phil@rosebankbusiness.co.nz



Welcoming the Waitomo Group

The development of a new service station for Waitomo Group has begun, starting in late February with the demolition of the BOC Gas building at 334 Rosebank Road, opposite Columbus Coffee.

Founded in 1947 by Desmond Ormsby, the Waitomo Group's journey started in Te Kuiti, from which they fuelled the Waitomo region. During this time, the business was run by three generations of the Ormsby family, with a period of joint ownership with Mobil Oil New Zealand. In 2003, they reverted to 100% family ownership, and they are now one of New Zealand's largest independent fuel suppliers. Current managing director Jimmy Ormsby is the grandson of founder Desmond Ormsby.



Waitomo's arrival in Rosebank will add competition to the gas market in Rosebank and the wider West Auckland area. The service station will be the fourth in Rosebank, which is currently home to two Gulls and a truck stop.

Development of the Valspar site

Demolition has started on the property at 2-14 Patiki Road, Rosebank, the last of the big chunks of land left in Rosebank for development. The plot was purchased by Stride Property group in 2021 on behalf of a new industrial property investment joint venture called Industre Property. The company has a half billion dollars to invest in industrial

property, and 2-14 Patiki Road is part of that investment.

Building work will begin soon; the plans are for commercial units in a similar size to the Kirkpatrick development next door. Industre Property owns other sites in Rosebank as well, with some also due for development.

It's great to see the development and renewal of Rosebank; it's a big box tick for the area and the value of property here.

Regards,

Phil Clode,
Business Development Manager



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Dr Grant Hewison

Auckland Council Annual Plan 2026/2027: What Does It Mean For Rosebank Businesses?

Auckland Council's Annual Plan for 2026/2027 is open for consultation, and while much of the plan continues previously agreed spending, several decisions and priorities will directly affect the Rosebank industrial and commercial area.

The Annual Plan confirms significant regional investment, including around \$3.9 billion in infrastructure and more than \$5 billion in operating expenditure. It also proposes an average residential rates increase of 7.9%, largely linked to the opening of the City Rail Link and ongoing service costs. While much public discussion focuses on residential impacts, these financial settings also shape the environment in which local businesses operate, including infrastructure delivery, transport planning, and economic development support.

For Rosebank businesses, transport reform is one of the most significant developments. The restructuring of Auckland's transport governance aims to improve integration between transport and land-use planning and strengthen long-term infrastructure delivery. For industrial areas dependent on freight movement and reliable road access, this shift could have meaningful implications. Improved coordination and a 30-year integrated transport plan are intended to support more efficient movement of goods and people across the region. The Whau Local Board has also advocated for key strategic projects, such as the Avondale Southdown rail link, to improve freight connectivity across Auckland.

Another major theme of the Annual Plan is economic development. Council is developing a new economic

development strategy aimed at strengthening Auckland's competitiveness, supporting innovation, and improving business conditions. This includes attracting investment, growing local employment, and building a more resilient and low-carbon economy.

Property management and urban development reforms are also underway. Council is reviewing how it manages its property portfolio and is seeking to optimise land use and asset performance. While this may improve efficiency, local boards have raised concerns about how asset sales or redevelopment decisions could affect community and economic outcomes. Businesses will want assurance that strategic employment land and industrial capacity are protected and that decisions are informed by long-term economic value, not just short-term financial return.

Locally, the Whau Local Board continues to face funding pressures, despite some additional funding through the Fairer Funding model. Rising costs mean a significant portion of spending is tied up in maintaining existing assets and services, leaving limited capacity for new investment. This environment reinforces the importance of prioritising projects that support economic activity and resilience, including infrastructure upgrades, flood resilience, and transport improvements.

Environmental and resilience initiatives are also part of the plan. Investment in water quality and flood resilience reflects the increasing importance of climate adaptation across Auckland. For Rosebank, where many businesses are located near the Whau River and coastal margins, effective stormwater management and flood planning are not abstract policy but essential for operational continuity and long-term investment confidence.

The Annual Plan also highlights broader city-wide priorities, such as value for money, efficiency in service delivery, and stronger integration across council functions. While these reforms aim to improve performance, businesses will be watching closely to ensure they translate into more responsive regulation, faster infrastructure delivery, and better engagement with the commercial sector.

Overall, the Annual Plan represents a continuation of Auckland's current direction, rather than a major shift. However, decisions about transport integration, economic development strategy, infrastructure investment, and local funding pressures will shape the operating environment for Rosebank businesses in the years ahead.

The consultation process is an opportunity for the Rosebank Business Association and its members to ensure that Auckland Council recognises the strategic importance of employment areas like Rosebank and that investment decisions support the productivity, resilience, and growth of one of the city's most important business precincts.

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Kimmy's Korner

Kim Watts RBA Executive Engagement Manager
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Rosebankopoly: It's All About The Money!!

Everyone loves the classic board game Monopoly, so what better way to honour this timeless favourite than by giving it a business-inspired twist? Enter Rosebankopoly, the creative theme of the 5th annual Rosebank Business Challenge. With 15 teams and 103 participants registered, Tuesday, 17 February marked another standout occasion on the Rosebank calendar. Held at Riversdale Reserve in Avondale, the event stayed true to Monopoly tradition — it was all about the money! The team holding the most cash at the end of the game was crowned the 2026 Rosebank Business Challenge champions.

This year's challenge was made possible by our nine major sponsors: Holdson, Westie Food Group / VIBE, Autex Industries, Direct Office Products Depot, Blum, Spark Business Hub-Auckland West, Bon Accord, Anglo Engineering, and Tyres 4U. These local businesses have supported the event since day one, and their continued backing plays a vital role in its ongoing success.

Rosebankopoly combined classic board game elements with hands-on activities, all governed by one overriding factor: chance! Each challenge contained varying amounts of money hidden in different objects, so teams never knew whether they had struck gold or uncovered a modest sum. Participants unlocked a padlock attached to an aluminium tube with money tucked

inside. Cardboard houses concealed cash, and refreshments included money wrapped around VIBE cans and hidden under Bon Accord hot chocolate lids. Dice rolls and oversized Rosebankopoly tokens were also ways to win money, while a compulsory silent auction tested teams' strategy and bidding skills. Scrabble tiles were used to spell meaningful game-related phrases, and watering flowers that had been left parched over the weekend added a light-hearted, community-focused touch.

Wellbeing remained an important feature. Participants paused to colour in houses before the Coffee Run, creating a moment of calm amid the competition. By intentionally slowing the pace this year, the event moved away from frantic energy, allowing teams to savour each activity, strengthen connections, and fully engage. It also provided the perfect opportunity for group photos at Free Parking, capturing the camaraderie that defines the Rosebank business community.

Chance and Community Chest cards were included, with teams collecting or handing over money as directed. A spinning wheel determined whether players were "Going to Jail," "Just Visiting," or would receive a "Get Out of Jail Free" card. Teams also reached "Free Parking," and while it wasn't publicly announced that money awaited there, the first team to notice the discreet game rules detail claimed the reward.

Events like the Rosebank Business



Challenge offer more than fun - they build stronger business relationships, encourage collaboration, boost team morale, and provide an opportunity to connect outside the workplace.

Every participant received a field prize, with numerous spot prizes awarded during the prizegiving. The Rosebank Business Association congratulates Direct Office Products Depot as the 2026 winners. Special mentions go to Paramount Services for Best Team Name, Studio Q for Best Dressed Team, and Intelligent Environments for Best Team Photo.

The RBA extends thanks to our nine major sponsors, valued contributors Babich, Best Blooms, Cleanery, Hardware Direct, Junk2Go, Molly Woppy, NCFS, Omnigraphics, Paynes Aluminium, Paramount Services, Preston Hire NZ, Rheem, and our volunteers. It is this combination of selfless contribution, continued backing, and the returning teams' enthusiasm that ensures the continued growth and longevity of this exciting community event.

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Rosebank News & Events

News, views and any other tidbits from the Rosebank Business Community.

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Time: 7.45am - 9.30am

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Autex partners with U.S. Textiles Powerhouse, Momentum – the first for a NZ company

Autex, market-leading producer of modern acoustic panels and insulation products, today announced a landmark partnership between its North American branch and Momentum – the largest supplier of textiles and wallcoverings in the United States of America.

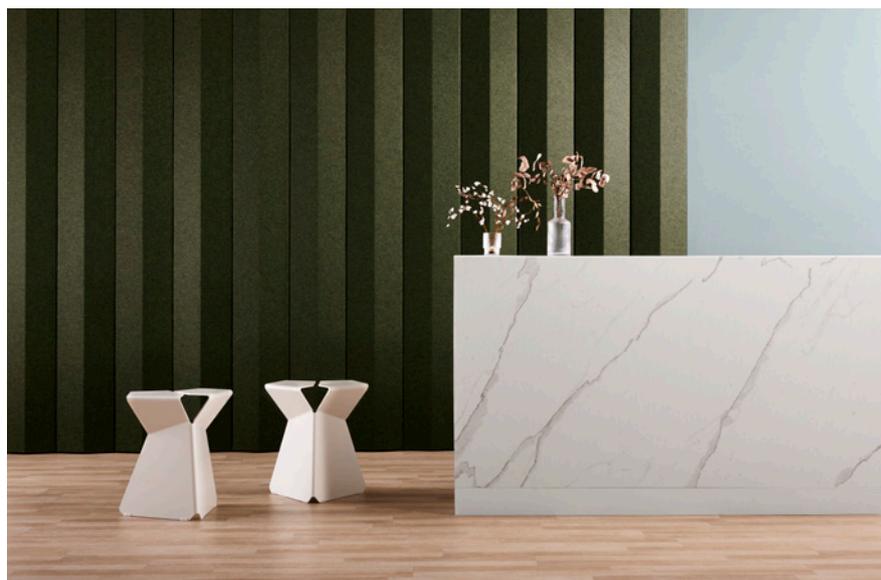
This marks the first time Momentum has partnered with a New Zealand-grown company, strengthening Autex's presence in the highly competitive U.S. market.

First entering the U.S. market in 2015, the partnership is a strategic move for Autex, providing an unprecedented opportunity to scale its manufacturing and sales footprint across the country.

"The U.S. market is fiercely competitive, and cutting through the mass of established players is incredibly challenging," says Rob Woolner, Managing Director of Autex.

"To partner with a leader like Momentum is a huge step for us, and we're really proud to be representing not only circular acoustics solutions in the States, but representing Aotearoa too," adds Woolner.

Momentum, which services over 3,500 design practices across the U.S., first approached Autex about a partnership in early 2025. The collaboration underscores the commitment of both companies to a circular approach to manufacturing and continuous innovation.



"Momentum has always been about setting new standards through high-performing products, new technology and relentless innovation," says Paul Cleary, CEO of Momentum.

"The commitment to circularity that Autex demonstrates, combined with the performance of their acoustic solutions, aligns perfectly with our ethos. We're excited to see the relationship grow, and bring best-in-class, innovative solutions to our vast network of clients."

Founded more than 50 years ago in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, Autex has a long history of punching above its weight. It now serves over 18 export markets, including the UK, Australia, and the UAE.

In the U.S. alone, Autex has been installed in countless iconic spaces including the offices of Google, Apple, Adobe and Microsoft, multiple branches of the Bank of America, and even classrooms and lecture halls in Harvard, Princeton, and UCLA.

"New Zealand companies continue to provide innovative, high-performing solutions that shape how the world lives and works," said Sarah Mason-Banks, New York City Trade Commissioner at New Zealand Trade & Enterprise. "Autex's partnership with Momentum is a strong example of that, combining New Zealand ingenuity with a world-class partner to bring inventive, quality products to more customers across the industry."

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New Bench Seats



The Whau Local Board allocated capital expenditure funding to support locally driven initiatives across town centres within the Whau region. As part of this investment, two bench seats were installed along the Kurt Brehmer Walkway between Charann Place and Saunders Reserve. This enhancement contributes to improved amenity, accessibility, and the overall user experience within the area. The seating provides Rosebank business employees with a convenient and comfortable outdoor space to enjoy their lunch breaks, supporting wellbeing and workplace satisfaction. Additionally, the benches offer a welcoming rest point for local residents and visitors, encouraging greater community use of the walkway during weekends and throughout the year.

Free Fitness Classes

From 6 January to 26 February 2026, Decile One hosted free Community Fitness classes at Eastdale Reserve, as part of their Out and About programme. Centered on community and equity, these sessions offered welcoming, supportive workouts for all fitness levels. Families joined together - from ages 3 to 84 - celebrating the idea that movement is for everyone. Decile One also engaged Rosebank business employees, promoting workplace wellbeing and broader community participation. Drop by 52 Fremlin Place to learn more about Decile One's programmes.



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Auckland's Festival For Sampling Sustainable Living

After three years of offering 300 + events focused on people and planet, EcoFest has well and truly become the time and place to sample sustainability in action. The fourth month-long festival starts on March 22 and is a timely opportunity for everyone living or visiting in Tāmaki Makaurau to experience truly diverse examples of eco-conscious living.

North and West Auckland have a bevy of events to choose from too. Feel like a bike ride and coffee in Hobsonville with cycling locals? What about a coastal clean-up in Whenuapai, Greenhithe or the Whau area? You can take a sunset track walk in Piha to learn about coastal birds and how light pollution harms them, or enjoy an after-dark adventure looking for our native Ruru.

In Avondale alone, you can take part in: a Worm Farm Workshop; several Women on Wheels; Learn to Ride courses; an Avondale Market activity focused on bird habitats called A Resting Place for Kuaka; and food rescue at Fair Food Super Sorters events.

For those who want to learn from home,



join a webinar to understand climate change anxiety, or learn to harvest rainwater from your roof.

EcoMatters have been bringing EcoFest to Auckland for over 23 years, and say these workshops are just a small example of experiences that are often free or low cost. Most only require a couple of hours and are whānau-friendly.

“Delivering this festival has taught us that attending even just one event can create

a positive, impactful connection between each other and the environment,” says EcoMatters CEO, Carla Gee. “Given the challenges happening in Aotearoa and in the rest of the world right now, we know that it’s more important than ever to get involved in fun, light-hearted ways to sample sustainability together. We can’t wait to kick-off the festival once more.”

To check out and book your events, visit ecofest.org.nz today.

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ROSEBANKOPOLY

Creative costumes, big laughs, and plenty of competitive spirit - Rosebankopoly brought the board game to life in the best possible way. The 5th annual Rosebank Business Challenge transformed Riversdale Reserve into a giant game of chance, where 15 teams and 103 players rolled, bid, unlocked, and uncovered hidden cash at every turn. With ingenuity, camaraderie and a touch of luck, this year's event proved once again that business and fun are the perfect partnership.





Our Highlights



1

Hostings

RBA hosts a different venue each month, including a Best Blooms event where attendees raced against the clock to complete flower orders.



3

Rosebank Plus Breakfast Seminars

The RBA delivered a varied group of breakfast seminars to our members over the 2025 year.



4

Stand Tall for a workmate

Sixteen Rosebank employees, nominated by colleagues after a challenging year, enjoyed the Giraffe Experience at Auckland Zoo, sharing this meaningful day with a friend or family member.



2

Who killed Rosie Banks – Rosebank Business Challenge

This annual event delivered again, as local business employees embraced their inner sleuths for an afternoon of intrigue, cracking the case in our own lively twist on the classic game Cluedo.



5

Financial Workshop

The Icehouse hosted a two-day Financial Skills Workshop, equipping leaders to analyse reports, build profit plans, forecast cash flow, and drive smarter growth decisions.



Free Hearing tests

RBA partnered with Resonate Health to offer free hearing tests, providing local businesses with valuable insights and practical support.



CCTV Thank You Event

A CCTV thank-you event for 62 businesses and stakeholders who supported Buy a Tile, celebrating their contributions and the vital role they played in this initiative.

in 2025



PTTFT

23 PTTFT Awardees celebrated their achievements with family and workplace leaders on November 13th 2025.



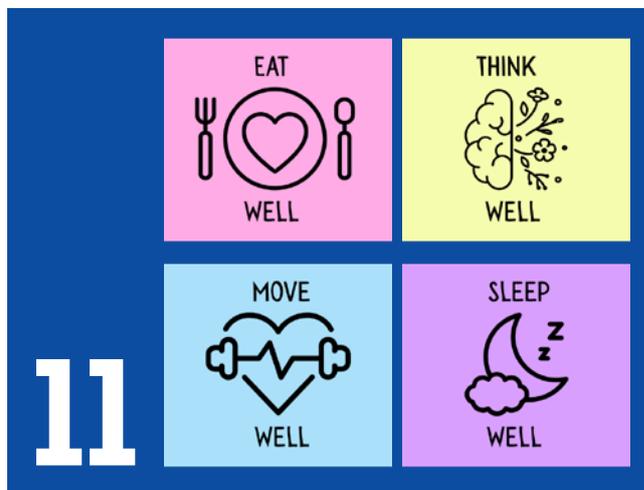
Rosebank School Camp

Since 2023, Rosebank School's biennial Year 6 camp has offered adventure and growth. In 2025, 22 businesses sponsored 25 students, helping them explore nature, build confidence, and form lasting friendships.



Coffee with a Cop

Connecting with New Zealand Police and our Rosebank business community.



Support a Boss

The RBA's Ssshhh... Can You Keep a Secret? campaign celebrated 15 leaders secretly nominated by employees, gifting wellness bundles to recognise their care and support.



Is LinkedIn Still Worth It?

When LinkedIn was launched back in 2003, the social networking platform immediately set itself apart with a firm focus on business, employment, and career development. Twenty-three years later, LinkedIn boasts over 1.2 billion registered users, ranking it in the top ten social platforms worldwide. It has also been roundly mocked for its tone of relentless positivity and hyper-inspirational anecdotes that turn every “setback” into a teachable moment.

For small-to-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), it might feel hard to carve out a place amongst the thought leaders and corporate climbers. Is it worth it for SMEs to create and maintain a presence on LinkedIn?

Absolutely yes, say the experts. Michelle Halvorsen-Jones, founder of specialised LinkedIn agency Momentix, asserts that LinkedIn is an under-utilised platform here in New Zealand—which can translate into better visibility and engagement.

“There are over one billion people on LinkedIn, but only 1% of them post weekly,” says Michelle. “So there is a massive opportunity on that platform compared to Facebook or Instagram, where you’re competing with a huge volume of content. You can cut through a lot more easily, and posts stick around for a lot longer.”

Michelle’s service offering at Momentix runs the gamut from LinkedIn training to profile optimisation and full content management for both companies and individuals. She says she chose to found an agency focused on LinkedIn because of her own “very effective” experience using the platform when she worked as a marketing manager, as well as for its “nicer” culture.

“There’s very little trolling or bad behaviour,” she says. “There’s a bit of political stuff, and that’s probably about as bad as it gets. So it’s a really great place if you want to develop your personal brand. There’s a lot of positivity.”

Marketing strategist Sheril Mittal adds that there’s a targeted component to LinkedIn that isn’t present in larger, more generalised platforms like Facebook. Sheril, founder of Immersive Marketing, is an active LinkedIn user who uses the platform as part of her toolbox when consulting for or coaching businesses and teams. “What I have really liked using LinkedIn are the filtered networks I

have access to, in comparison to other social media platforms,” she says. “If I were posting on any other social network, the people I would reach or the leads I land wouldn’t be as appropriate in comparison to LinkedIn, which positions me in a way that I can directly speak to decision-makers.”

For SMEs specifically, both say the benefits are well worth an investment of your time, but not as a direct-to-consumer marketing platform. (In other words, LinkedIn isn’t the place to hawk your products or services in every post.)



Michelle Halvorsen-Jones

“You wouldn’t be going on there to sell a product,” says Michelle. “You would be going on there to make sure people know who you are, if you want to be known in the industry. If you’re selling to other businesses, it’s crucial for you to be on LinkedIn because of the level of networking that goes on there. It’s the number one B2B platform, really.”

“It would benefit small-to-medium-sized businesses to have a company page and a personal page,” specifies Sheril. “Especially for service-based businesses. It helps a lot with creating awareness [of your business] and creating leads and inquiries based on the networking that LinkedIn offers. Connecting with similar profiles on LinkedIn and expanding your network within your professional niche helps widen the horizon for service businesses and e-commerce.”

As a founder, leader or business owner, she goes on to explain, your personal page and your company page should be distinct.

“A standard profile is what we call a ‘personal page,’” she says. “Everybody who works for your business can have a personal page because that’s their personal brand.” A company page, by contrast, is the home of your business itself on LinkedIn, and as such, the content should be different. “A company page is more about expanding your reach alongside your personal page,” she says. “The two complement each other.”

Michelle agrees that both are necessary. “Always have a company page,” she advises. “When you say ‘founder’ or ‘director at,’ you want to have a page linked to it to give you that credibility and so that people can see your address, the number of staff, and some information about the company. You might have some links to your

website on it.”

Still, she advises choosing to post on your personal page over your company page for most content.

“If you’re not a big brand like Coca-Cola or Air New Zealand,” she says, “no one is going to care about LinkedIn posts from your company page because people have no desire to connect with a faceless company. People want to connect with a person.” She adds that posts from a personal page “get a lot more impressions and engagement because people want to buy from people.”



Sheril Mittal

So what should you post about, especially if you’re keen to talk about your own business from your personal page?

“Your company values, why you do what you do, the story behind how you started the business, and if you have a team, your culture,” suggests Michelle. “You might want to educate your market. Say you’re a blind installation company and you’re trying to reach developers, which is your target market. You might talk about how easy your process is when your work with developers, post some client success

stories... it’s all inspirational content, usually. People don’t really go on there and post negative things.”

Sheril seconds the educational angle. “If you’re a lawyer, you could talk about the kind of impact your services have on a client’s life. If you’re a lawyer who does mediation, you could talk about the benefits of mediation, educating your audience and generating engagement and interest without selling your services directly.”

She adds that posts that do well are less about being inspirational and more about adding value.

“Usually, what works well is something that adds value to the reader, whether it’s a motivational story or you’re sharing a personal experience. I’ve seen many successful LinkedIn posts on professional profiles that are sharing a story from their personal life, but they add value in some way to the person reading it.”

Michelle agrees. “The number one aim shouldn’t be: ‘I’m writing this post to sell something.’ The number one aim for a LinkedIn post is ‘What value can I give?’”

She adds that no matter what industry you’re in, your presence on LinkedIn can pay off.

“Some industries that haven’t traditionally been on LinkedIn have actually got a bigger opportunity because it’s not flooded with other people posting.” She advises business owners to think about their target market (hair and cosmetic salons, for example, “have their entire target market there: women in their 30s, 40s, and 50s”), as well as who might make a good referral partner.

“Try to post weekly on LinkedIn,” she advises. “Do some behind-the-scenes-type stuff, some ‘I wish all my clients knew’ lists. Think a little more creatively, because there’s a large number of untapped opportunities if you think outside the box.”

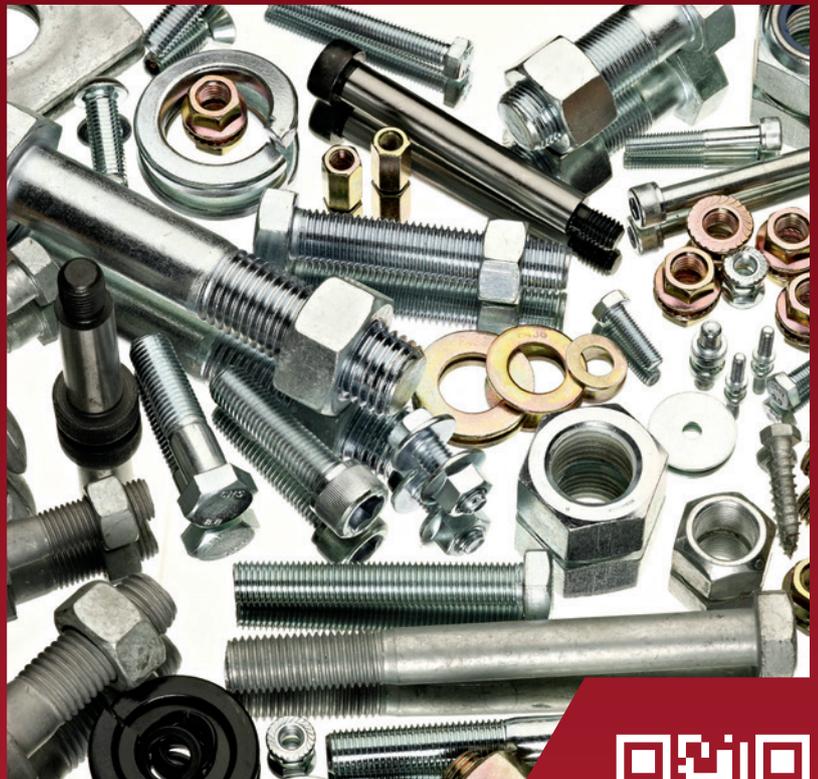
“There is a lot of opportunity to pitch your service or product without actually having to advertise or create a sales pitch each time, like on other platforms,” says Sheril. “Building a lot of organic interest is possible just by engaging with people.”

Special thanks to Michelle Halvorsen-Jones (www.momentix.nz) and Sheril Mittal (www.immersivemarketing.nz). Story by Beth Caunter.

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Novalab Systems: Precision in Every Space

For nearly 50 years, Novalab Systems has been shaping laboratory, educational, and medical environments that go beyond meeting technical standards. These spaces are designed around the people who use them every day. As a proudly locally owned and operated business in West Auckland, Novalab brings deep industry knowledge and a strong commitment to creating high-performance, sustainable spaces across New Zealand.

Collaboration is at the heart of Novalab's approach. Working closely with architects, project managers, facility planners, and end users, their team delivers tailored solutions that balance functionality, safety, and durability with thoughtful design. Every project is approached with care and precision, ensuring each space is fit for purpose and built to last. High-quality materials, innovative thinking, and attention to detail enable environments that are intuitive, efficient, and easy to operate.

Equally important is Novalab's people-first culture. The team sees itself as a whānau, supporting one another, sharing expertise, and taking pride in the work they do together. This culture is reflected in the quality of their outcomes and long-standing client relationships.

Over the decades, Novalab has delivered hundreds of projects, from school science classrooms and heavy-duty joinery through to major government science facilities, commercial research and development environments, healthcare projects, and highly specialised PC3 laboratories. Across every project, their focus

remains the same: supporting innovation, wellbeing, and effective learning.

Looking ahead, Novalab Systems is excited to continue shaping the future of New Zealand's laboratories, schools, and medical facilities. They look forward to sharing insights, milestones, and updates with the Rosebank Business Association community as they build spaces where people can work safely, learn confidently, and push boundaries.



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Fire and Emergency Levy Reform: Why Commercial Property Owners Should Be Paying Attention Now



Charlton Cowley
Abbott Insurance Brokers

The Fire and Emergency Levy is a government-mandated charge collected through insurance policies to fund New Zealand's Fire and Emergency services. From 1 July 2026, a new Fire and Emergency Levy regime is expected to come into effect, subject to

legislation currently before Parliament. The reform fundamentally changes how levy exposure is calculated and where it sits, particularly for commercial property owners and asset-intensive businesses.

For many businesses, this is not simply a rate change; it's a structural shift that brings asset valuation, sums insured, and insurance cover into much sharper focus.

The biggest shift: replacement value matters

Under the new regime, levy calculations for commercial buildings will be based on replacement value, not indemnity value, and on the full sum insured for all commercial plant and contents.

In practice, this means levy exposure will increasingly reflect:

- full rebuild costs
- modern building code compliance
- demolition and professional fees; and
- current replacement assumptions, not legacy or depreciated values.

Abbott Auckland Manager Charlton Cowley explains:

"For commercial property owners, the levy outcome is now much more closely tied to how accurately replacement value is understood and documented. Buildings that haven't changed physically may still attract levy increases, simply because the calculation basis has changed."

Valuations key

Another important change is that valuations used for levy calculations must now be prepared and signed by a registered valuer. Quantity surveyors are excluded.

For some property owners, this raises practical questions:

- Are current valuations compliant under new rules?
- Should ancillary assets, such as car parks or external

structures, be included in sums insured?

- Are replacement values being understated or overstated based on outdated assumptions?

No levy cap for commercial property

Unlike residential property and contents, commercial buildings do not have a levy cap under the new regime. The levy is calculated at 7.76 cents per \$100 of sum insured, applied to the full replacement value.

So while the standard levy rate itself is lower than under the previous regime, because it will apply to full replacement values, commercial policyholders may notice a significant increase in the Fire and Emergency Levy portion of their overall insurance costs.

Plants, contents, fleets, and contract works

The reform also brings greater visibility and consistency across other commercial asset classes as follows:

- Commercial plant and contents: levy calculated on the full sum insured.
- Commercial motor and fleet (including trailers): a flat \$25 levy per vehicle regardless of vehicle size or cover type.
- Aircraft, forestry, and farm livestock now attract a levy.
- Contract works: levy calculated at 3.38 cents per \$100 sum insured, based on 50% of non-residential sum insured, including demolition and professional fees.

Importantly, levy declarations will no longer be required, simplifying administration but placing greater emphasis on getting sums insured right.

The takeaway for Rosebank businesses

The Fire and Emergency Levy reform doesn't change the need for insurance, but it does change how insurance values feed into statutory costs.

For commercial property owners and asset-heavy businesses, the key insight is that the levy exposure is now far more directly linked to how your assets are valued, categorised, and insured.

Understanding that connection early is not just good risk management; it's good commercial sense.

"Our role is helping clients understand change drivers and respond accordingly," Charlton adds. "If you own commercial property or operate a fleet, we highly recommend factoring the levy reform into your forward planning now."

This article is provided for general information purposes only and is not intended as insurance, financial, or legal advice. The application and impact of the Fire and Emergency Levy regime will vary depending on individual circumstances. Readers should seek advice specific to their insurance arrangements.



Nathan Tetzlaff
Smith & Partners

Opportunities and Challenges As Disputes Tribunal's Jurisdiction Increased to \$60,000

The jurisdiction of the Disputes Tribunal doubled from \$30,000 to \$60,000 on 24 January 2026, creating significant changes for collecting medium-sized debts.

The reform aims to improve access to justice and reduce the need for costly District Court litigation for mid-range disputes.

Previously, claimants with disputes between \$30,000 and \$60,000 faced an unenviable choice: either commence an expensive District Court proceeding or abandon part of their claim to fit under the old \$30,000 limit. The increased jurisdiction means claimants no longer need to sacrifice value for accessibility. Many disputes that once required formal court action can now be resolved more quickly, pragmatically, and at lower cost in the Tribunal.

Aside from the new limit, and a higher filing fee for claims over \$30,000, the Tribunal process remains largely unchanged. Hearings continue to be informal and inquisitorial, focused on achieving substantial fairness, rather than applying strict legal rules. Lawyers still cannot appear at hearings, although parties may obtain legal advice beforehand. Appeal rights remain narrow and largely confined to procedural issues.

The Tribunal still cannot assist with collecting undisputed debts. In those cases, applying to the District Court for Summary Judgment will often remain the most efficient approach.

What this means for people and businesses

The increased jurisdiction allows many disputes between \$30,000 and \$60,000 to be determined in a forum that is generally faster, cheaper, and more accessible than the District Court. Hearing dates

are typically sooner, procedural steps are minimal, and parties avoid the significant legal costs associated with formal litigation.

However, the expansion is not without controversy. Larger and more complex disputes are now entering a forum designed for small claims, where:

- The Tribunal must have regard to the law but is not required to apply strict legal rights, forms, or technicalities. This flexibility promotes fairness but may lead to unpredictable outcomes.
- There is no formal discovery process, meaning relevant documents may not be disclosed before the hearing.
- Referees are not always legally trained and may be more likely to make errors than District Court judges.
- Self-represented parties may struggle to present evidence and argue legal issues without the assistance of counsel at the hearing.
- Appeal rights remain very limited, usually only for procedural unfairness, not errors of law.

For small disputes, these trade-offs may be acceptable. But for amounts up to \$60,000, which can be significant or even business critical, the risks of an unpredictable, informal process may cause concern.

Claims filed before 24 January 2026

If a claim was filed under the old \$30,000 limit and the excess was abandoned to fit under that cap, it cannot be:

- amended later to add the abandoned amount; or
- withdrawn and refiled after 24 January 2026 to claim up to the new \$60,000 limit.

How we can help

Thorough preparation is crucial. Strong evidence, well-structured submissions, and a clear, factual narrative significantly improve the likelihood that your case will be properly understood and fairly assessed. For higher-value disputes, mistakes or incomplete evidence can have serious consequences.

Obtaining legal advice before lodging your claim or defence is especially important under the new jurisdiction. A lawyer can help you identify strengths and weaknesses, anticipate challenges, and ensure your submissions address the issues that matter. This guidance can be invaluable in navigating the Tribunal's flexible approach to evidence and procedure while avoiding costly missteps.

If you are involved in a dispute of up to \$60,000 and require assistance preparing your Tribunal claim or response, we invite you to become a client of Smith and Partners. For tailored legal advice, please contact Nathan Tetzlaff at nathan.tetzlaff@smithpartners.co.nz or phone 09 837 6844 to arrange an appointment.



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Smarter Security Starts with Camera Quality

In today's security environment, camera quality is no longer defined by resolution alone. Modern systems must deliver intelligent, verified, and actionable information. At Matrix Security, we use advanced camera technology enhanced by AI-driven analytics to reduce false alarms, support faster response, and give clients greater clarity, confidence, and control.

Why Camera Resolution Matters

High-definition imagery remains important, but true camera quality is measured by real-world performance usable footage when it matters most.

Modern systems now exceed traditional 1080p (2MP), with 4MP considered the new baseline for residential security. For most commercial environments, 5MP–6MP cameras provide an ideal balance between image clarity, storage efficiency, and bandwidth usage. For larger or higher-risk sites, 8MP (4K) and 12MP cameras offer significantly deeper forensic detail. A 12MP sensor captures approximately 36% more pixel data than 4K, which can be critical when identifying faces, licence plates, and suspicious behaviour at extended distances.

Infrared (IR) and Low-Light Performance

Resolution alone doesn't ensure usable evidence. Many incidents occur in low light or darkness, so night performance is equally important. Advanced infrared (IR) technology captures clear monochrome images in total darkness with improved IR range, smarter illumination, and reduced glare. The latest cameras go further by delivering full-colour night imaging through enhanced low-light sensors and intelligent lighting, ensuring key details such as clothing colour, vehicle paint, and surroundings, remain visible even in challenging conditions. Ultimately, the most effective systems combine the right resolution, strong low-light performance, intelligent processing, and efficient storage to provide clear, reliable evidence day and night.

Video Verification - Turning Alerts into Action

One of the most important advancements in smart security



Image is for illustration purposes only

technology is video verification. By providing immediate visual confirmation of events, it allows monitoring teams to quickly determine whether an incident is genuine. This significantly reduces false alarms, improves response efficiency, and enables verified events to be prioritised with accurate information shared with emergency services for faster, more effective outcomes.

Intelligent Analytics for Proactive Protection

Modern camera systems use AI-powered analytics to distinguish between people, vehicles, and environmental movement, ensuring alerts focus on genuine security risks. Custom detection zones and behaviour-based alerts turn cameras from passive recorders into proactive security tools.

Integrated Smart Security Solutions

Matrix Security specialises in fully integrated smart security solutions that combine high-quality cameras, video verification, and intelligent analytics to deliver smarter protection for businesses across New Zealand. Contact **Ravina Ram at Matrix Security** today for a free security risk assessment.

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Paul Jarvie,
EMA Employment Relations & Safety Manager

Risk-Based Reset of Health and Safety Rests on the Details

New Zealand has been wrestling with stubbornly poor health and safety outcomes for years. The introduction of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 was a watershed moment, born from tragedy and intended to fundamentally lift performance. A decade on, the Health and Safety at Work Amendment Bill 2026 is before Parliament.

At the Employers and Manufacturers Association (EMA), we support the broad direction of travel. A more clearly articulated risk-based framework that prioritises the most serious sources of harm is the right conversation to be having. But if we get the details wrong, we risk creating new blind spots while trying to fix old frustrations.

A modern risk-based approach differs from the current system. Broad, performance-based duties have created confusion and, in some cases, overcompliance. Many businesses have struggled to demonstrate compliance to regulators with confidence. Refocusing on critical risks - those likely to result in death, notifiable injury, serious illness, or occupational disease - is intended to sharpen clarity.

That is a worthwhile goal. But risk does not neatly align with business size.

Under the bill, businesses with fewer than 20 workers would only be required to manage critical risks, while larger businesses must continue managing all risks, prioritising the most serious ones. The problem is that size has no bearing on risk profile. A small engineering firm can face the same machinery hazards as a large one. A small retailer can experience the same violence and aggression risks as a national chain.

Strains, sprains, and back injuries remain the most common causes of workplace harm across sectors. These would not typically meet the critical risk definition. Nor would many psychosocial risks, including stress and fatigue, or workplace violence in lower severity cases. Yet these issues drive enormous human and financial costs.

Low-level harm often signals bigger problems. Near-miss reporting, minor injury trends, and early indicators help mature organisations identify what may happen next. If we narrow the

lens too tightly, we risk losing that predictive capability.

Another challenge is allowing other legislation to override health and safety requirements if duties are covered elsewhere.

For example, airline maintenance providers may be regulated under Civil Aviation Authority rules governing aircraft maintenance and crew safety. If those rules require specific processes to manage risks, such as magnesium fire hazards or pressurisation issues, satisfying them could count as complying with the Health and Safety at Work Act for those hazards.

On paper, this aims to reduce duplication. In practice, without clear boundaries, it could create uncertainty. We already see areas where regulatory systems pull in different directions. Without careful drafting and guidance, businesses could find themselves navigating new grey zones rather than enjoying the clarity promised.

The EMA strongly supports strengthening Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs). Under the amendments, ACOPs will carry a "safe harbour." If a duty holder follows an approved code for a specific risk, they will be deemed to have complied with their duty for that risk. That is a significant and positive shift.

Equally important is allowing industry groups, employer representatives, and worker organisations, not just the regulator, to draft and submit codes for approval. This formalises a more industry-led approach. The regulator will still review, consult, and recommend codes to the minister, but the pipeline for practical sector guidance should widen.

The EMA sits on the Industry Guidance Advisory Committee, which has worked through processes and expectations for industry-developed ACOPs. The goal is actionable, plain-English guidance that reflects how work is actually done in specific sectors. If code development is collaborative, evidence based, and focused on real risks, it can lift standards while giving businesses certainty.

Another welcome clarification relates to governance. Officers' duties are confined to their governance role, with an exhaustive list of due diligence steps. The distinction between governance and operations is critical for directors and executives who need to understand where their responsibilities begin and end.

The bill also reprioritises the functions of WorkSafe, emphasising guidance and advice alongside enforcement. This is something the EMA has long advocated for, and that cultural balance is important. Employers need consistent, practical advice they can rely on. A risk-based model will only succeed if the regulator is well resourced, modern in its approach, and collaborative in its engagement with business.

The question is not whether we should focus on critical risks. We should. It is whether we can do so without diminishing attention to everyday harms that accumulate quietly, but relentlessly.

The EMA supports the intent of the reforms to reduce unnecessary compliance cost, increase certainty, and drive down fatalities and serious injuries. But intent alone is not enough. The regulations beneath the act must align. Definitions must be watertight. Guidance must be timely. Ultimately, employers have a vital part to play in making work safe. Laws and regulations set minimum standards, not the benchmark for excellence.



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