

**Government support for SMEs – notable actions since start of 2024** (Dates shown are those on the Beehive announcements. Excludes planned actions not yet taken.)

**Agriculture** (Hon Todd McClay)

**20 Government actions free up the rural economy** (18/8/24). “Actions to drive down costs, simplify regulations and build trust as we get Wellington out of farming.” Actions include:

- Disbanded He Waka Eke Noa
  - Removed Agriculture from the ETS
  - Commenced independent review of biogenic methane
  - Increased investment into Rural Support Trusts
  - Introduced pragmatic rules for on-farm water storage
  - Established a Pastoral Group for methane reduction
  - Begun reforming rules around biotech so farmers can lead the world in innovation
  - Introduced legislation to cease the implementation of new SNAs
  - Repealed burdensome Log Traders Legislation
  - Restored the export of logs to India
  - Provided significant investment into animal facial eczema research
  - Increased the number of RSE places.
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**Building and Construction** (Hon Chris Penk)

**Trusted building professionals able to self-certify** (29/10/24). There will be a self-certification scheme for trusted building professionals and accredited businesses carrying out low risk residential building work. “At the moment, a single-story basic home might go through 10 or more separate inspections.”

**Big year of building reforms** (13/10/24). Initiatives include:

- Removing barriers to overseas building products to increase competition and drive down prices for building products.
- Increasing the use of remote inspections to reduce delays in the consenting process.
- Allowing Granny Flats and other structures up to 60sqm to be built without a building or resource consent.
- Exempting small building projects like home renovations from paying the building levy.
- Streamlining building consent changes by defining minor variations - meaning builders don't need to formally amend a building consent for small changes like swapping out comparable building products.
- Making it possible to customise multi-proof designs, which are pre-consented building consents with a fast-tracked approval process.
- Cutting dam red-tape meaning small dam owners don't have to comply with burdensome regulations.
- Investigating the impacts of the recent H1 building code changes to ensure the settings are balancing the impact of upfront costs with energy efficiency.
- Removing compliance costs for councils by reducing the frequency of competence assessments for building control officers.

## **Forestry** (Hon Todd McClay)

**Government reduces Forestry ETS annual charge by 50%** (23/10/24). The proposal is to reduce the per-ha annual charge to \$14.90, as part of the Government's promise to rebuild confidence in the forestry sector and support its role in achieving NZ's exporting and emissions targets.

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**Government repeals costly log trade legislation** (26/6/24). The legislation required the registration of log traders and forestry advisers. The changes came into effect 1 July and the Government undertook to refund any fees or levies already paid to the MPI this season

**Government cancels forestry ETS annual service charges for 2023-24** (14/6/24). The charge was \$30.25/hectare.

## **Immigration** (Hon Erica Stanford)

**Open work rights return for partners of high skilled migrants** (23/10/24) "From 2 December, open work rights will be available to partners of Accredited Employer Work Visa (AEWV) holders working in higher-skilled roles who earn at least 80 percent of the median wage." The same rights will also be available for partners of AEWV holders working in lower-skilled roles who are on a pathway to residence.

**New pathway for essential seasonal workers** (19/8/24). The Government is providing immediate relief to employers with upcoming seasonal peaks by creating a new subcategory of the Specific Purpose Work Visa (SPWV). "Alongside the changes to the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme, we're also making it easier for employers to access other essential seasonal workers they need."

**RSE Scheme revitalised and cap increased** (14/8/24). The cap on the number of workers is increasing by 1,250 to 20,750 for the 2024/25 season. There will also be Improved flexibility for RSE workers to move between employers and regions, multi-entry visas during a season, and the ability for RSE workers to undertake training and skills development not directly related to their role.

## **Oceans and Fisheries** (Hon Shane Jones).

**Red tape cut for marine farm consents** (27/8/24). It is intended that the aquaculture industry, exports and the economy will benefit from the passing of a bill that will extend existing coastal permits for marine farms by 20 years. The measure covers It extends all existing coastal permits for New Zealand's 1200 marine farms.

## **Small business and Manufacturing** (Hon Andrew Bayly)

**Unmask Cyber Crime** (8/10/24). The initiative comprises a series of videos designed to raise awareness and provide small to medium business owners with the confidence to adopt effective cybersecurity practices. Launched through the National Cyber Security Centre [Unmask Cyber Crime: business online security series - Own Your Online](#)

**Free mental health resources for business owners** (27/9/24). Joint initiative "First Steps" with the Auckland Business Chamber to enable mental health and wellbeing resources for business owners to be freely available. First Steps is an online platform with resources designed to support business owners with their mental health and connect them with approved professionals who can provide counselling, therapy and other services.