



PROACTIVE RELEASE COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Nicola Grigg	Portfolio	Environment
Name of package	Cabinet paper, Cabinet minutes of decision, and Government response relating to the Petitions Committee report on three petitions requesting a ban on the public sale of fireworks	Date to be published	14 August 2026

List of documents that have been proactively released

Date	Title	Author
23 July 2026	Government Response to the Report of the Petitions Committee on Requests to ban the public sale of fireworks	Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport
23 July 2026	Appendix to Cabinet Paper – Government response to Report of the Petitions Committee on Requests to ban the public sale of fireworks	Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport
23 July 2026	Cabinet Legislation Committee Minute of Decision	Cabinet Office
27 July 2026	Cabinet Minute of Decision	Cabinet Office

Information redacted **YES**

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with the Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport's policy on proactive release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Summary of reasons for redaction

Information that is out of scope.

Office of the Minister for the Environment

Cabinet Legislation Committee

Government Response to the Report of the Petitions Committee on Requests to ban the public sale of fireworks

Proposal

- 1 In accordance with Standing Order 256, this paper seeks approval of the Government's response to the Petitions Committee's (the Committee) report on the:
 - 1.1 Petition of Animates NZ Holdings Ltd, Pawprint Petition: Ban Public Fireworks Sales to help protect the Animals of NZ;
 - 1.2 Petition of Suzanne Cook: Ban private sales of fireworks; allow only licensed public fireworks events;
 - 1.3 Petition of Raewyn Harrison: Ban the public sale of fireworks.

Background

- 2 The Committee undertook its inquiry in response to three public petitions calling for a ban on the public sale and private use of fireworks, reflecting growing concern about their impacts. The petitions were prompted by ongoing issues associated with private fireworks use, including injuries, fire risk, distress to animals, and disruption to communities.
- 3 As part of its consideration, the Committee received submissions from interested parties and heard evidence from a range of groups, including emergency services, animal welfare organisations, industry participants, and members of the public. Evidence highlighted both the ongoing harm associated with private, dispersed use and the practical challenges of preventing that harm under the current regulatory model. The Committee's report reflects a view that these risks are difficult to manage effectively through existing controls, and it therefore recommended a shift away from private use toward licensed, controlled public displays.
- 4 The Committee presented its report to the House on 5 May 2026, recommending a ban on the public sale and private use of fireworks. The Government response must be presented to the House within 60 working days (by 28 July 2026).

The Committee's findings

- 5 The Committee's findings were informed by a large number of submissions describing the impacts of fireworks across people, animals, property, and communities. It heard consistent concerns about injury and fire risk, pressure on emergency services, and disruption arising from the unpredictable and dispersed use of fireworks outside the limited retail period.
- 6 A particular focus of the Committee's consideration was the impact on animals. Submitters described widespread distress affecting companion animals, livestock, and wildlife, as well as the difficulty of anticipating or managing that impact given the unpredictable timing of use.

- 7 The Committee also noted that, while the current regime tightly controls the sale of fireworks, it has limited ability to influence how they are used once in private hands. Much of the harm identified arises in private settings and sits beyond the effective reach of existing controls.
- 8 Taken together, the Committee considered that these harms are difficult to prevent under a system of widespread private use, and formed the view that a shift toward controlled, licensed public displays would provide a more effective way to manage risk.

Comment on the Committee's findings and recommendation

- 9 The Government acknowledges that the current system has limitations, particularly in its ability to prevent harm arising from private, dispersed use. However, it considers that retaining the status quo remains an appropriate response when viewed through the lens of proportionality and regulatory reach. Fireworks are a long-standing and widely used lawful activity, and a decision to remove access altogether would represent a significant intervention into private behaviour.
- 10 While a ban would more directly address the harms identified, it would do so by eliminating access rather than improving how risks are managed. The Government considers that, at this stage, it is appropriate to continue relying on a framework that prioritises controlled access and manages harm through targeted restrictions at the point of sale and through general enforcement mechanisms. This approach recognises that not all risks can be eliminated without imposing broader constraints on individual choice.
- 11 Retaining the current model also avoids the implementation risks associated with more significant regulatory or legislative change, including disruption to legitimate operators and the need to establish new enforcement frameworks. It preserves stability while allowing the Government to monitor trends and consider whether further adjustments are warranted over time.
- 12 Ultimately, this reflects a judgement that, while the current system does not prevent all harm, it represents a proportionate response given the nature of the activity and the practical limits of enforcement. In this context, preserving access means maintaining a model that manages harm, without moving to the more interventionist step of removing it altogether.

Timing of the Government response

- 13 The Government response must be presented to the House by 28 July 2026.

Consultation

- 14 Departmental consultation was undertaken with the Department of Conservation; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry for Primary Industries; and Ministry of Health. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet was informed. Officials also sought comment from the Department of Internal Affairs.

Financial implications

- 15 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this paper.

Publicity

- 16 The attached Government response will become publicly available following tabling in the House.

Proactive Release

- 17 I intend to proactively release this Cabinet paper within 30 working days of Cabinet making its decision.

Recommendations

The Minister for the Environment recommends that the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1 note that on 5 May 2026 the Petitions Committee presented its report to the House entitled:
 - 1.1 Petition of Animates NZ Holdings Ltd, Pawprint Petition: Ban Public Fireworks Sales to help protect the Animals of NZ
 - 1.2 Petition of Suzanne Cook: Ban private sales of fireworks; allow only licensed public fireworks events
 - 1.3 Petition of Raewyn Harrison: Ban the public sale of fireworks
- 2 note that the Select Committee recommended that the Government ban the public sale and private use of fireworks;
- 3 note that the Government response must be presented to the House by 28 July 2026;
- 4 approve the Government response to the Petitions Committee, attached as Appendix 1;
- 5 invite the Minister for the Environment to present the Government response to the House in accordance with Standing Order 252;
- 6 invite the Minister for the Environment to write to the petitioners enclosing a copy of the Government response to the report of the Petitions Committee on the petitions, after the response has been presented to the House.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Nicola Grigg

Minister for the Environment

**Government Response to
Report of the Petitions Committee Komiti Whiriwhiri Take Petihana
on
Petition of Animates NZ Holdings Ltd, Pawprint Petition: Ban Public
Fireworks Sales to help protect the Animals of NZ
Petition of Suzanne Cook: Ban private sales of fireworks; allow
only licensed public fireworks events
Petition of Raewyn Harrison: Ban the public sale of fireworks**

Presented to the House of Representatives

In accordance with Standing Order 252

Government response to Report of the Petitions Committee on Requests to ban the public sale of fireworks

Introduction

- 1 The Government has carefully considered the Petitions Committee's (the Committee) report on the petitions of Animates NZ Holdings Ltd, Suzanne Cook, and Raewyn Harrison to ban the public sale of fireworks and allow only licensed public fireworks events.
- 2 The Government does not intend to progress the Committee's recommendation at this time, preferring instead to manage fireworks within the current regulatory settings.
- 3 The Government responds to the report in accordance with Standing Order 252.

Recommendations and Government response

- 4 **Recommendation:** The Committee recommends to the Government that the public sale and private use of fireworks be banned.
- 5 **Response:** The Government acknowledges the Committee's recommendation and the harms associated with fireworks use, including impacts on people, animals, and property. It also notes that these harms often occur in private and unpredictable settings, which makes them difficult to prevent through regulation alone. However, the Government has decided to retain the current regulatory framework at this time. While a ban would more directly address these risks, it would also remove access to a long-standing and widely used lawful activity. The Government considers that retaining the status quo remains a proportionate response, balancing the need to manage harm with the importance of maintaining individual choice. The current framework continues to provide controls at the point of sale and mechanisms to address misuse, while allowing the Government to monitor whether further change is warranted.

Conclusion

- 6 The Government has decided to retain the current regulatory framework, recognising the significance of removing access to a widely used lawful activity. It will continue to manage risks through existing controls while monitoring whether further changes are warranted.

Timing of the Government response

- 7 The Government response must be presented to the House by 28 July 2026.



Cabinet Legislation Committee

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Government Response to the Report of the Petitions Committee on Requests to Ban the Public Sale of Fireworks

Portfolio **Environment**

On 23 July 2026, the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1 **noted** that on 5 May 2026, the Petitions Committee presented a report to the House relating to three petitions requesting a ban on fireworks;
- 2 **noted** that the report recommended banning the public sale and private use of fireworks;
- 3 **noted** that the Government response must be presented to the House by 28 July 2026;
- 4 **approved** the Government response to report, attached as Appendix 1 to the submission under LEG-26-SUB-0149;
- 5 **invited** the Minister for the Environment to present the Government response to the House in accordance with Standing Order 252.

Vivien Meek
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon Louise Upston (Chair)
Hon Erica Stanford
Hon Paul Goldsmith
Hon Simon Watts
Hon Casey Costello
Hon Scott Simpson
Hon Nicola Grigg
Hon James Meager
Hon Cameron Brewer
Hon Andrew Hoggard
Stuart Smith MP
Todd Stephenson MP
Jamie Arbuckle MP

Officials present from:

Officials Committee for LEG



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Report of the Cabinet Legislation Committee: Period Ended 24 July 2026

On 27 July 2026, Cabinet made the following decisions on the work of the Cabinet Legislation Committee for the period ended 24 July 2026:

Out of scope

LEG-26-MIN-0149

**Government Response to the Report of the Petitions
Committee on Requests to Ban the Public Sale of
Fireworks**
Portfolio: Environment

CONFIRMED

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet