

Summary of submissions on Drinking Water Standards

On 17 January 2022, Taumata Arowai commenced a 10-week public consultation on proposed **Drinking Water Standards** (the **Standards**) and other regulatory instruments. The consultation process was a mix of direct engagement and public notices, supported by webinars.

We received 77 submissions on the Standards from a diverse range of submitters. The following three tables and explanatory notes present information about the submitters.

Table 1:

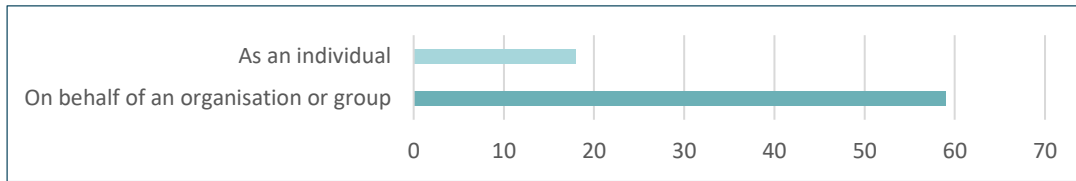
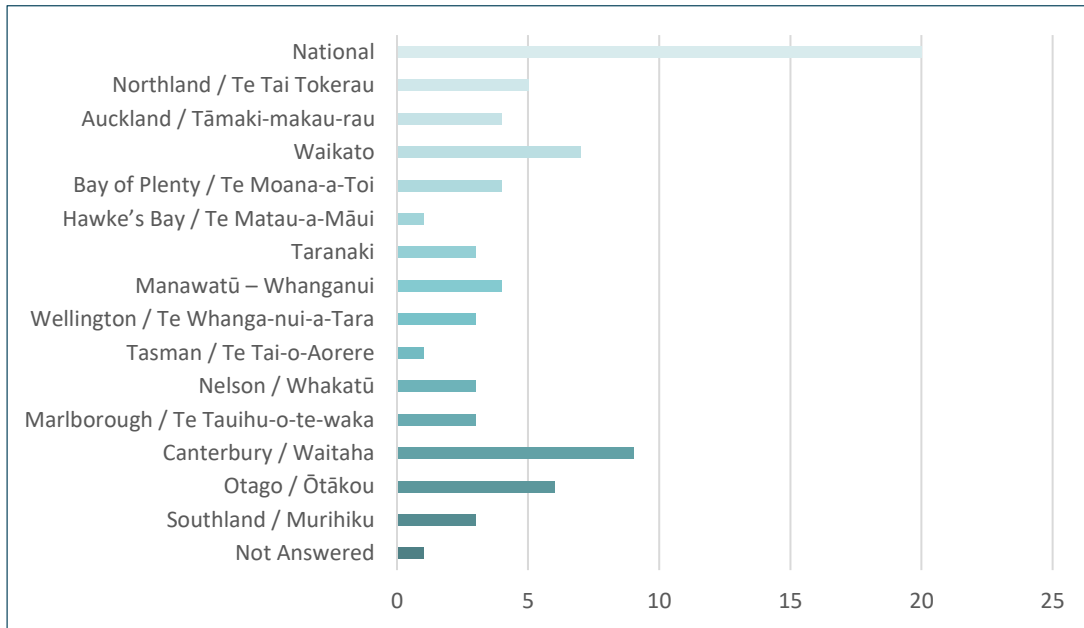
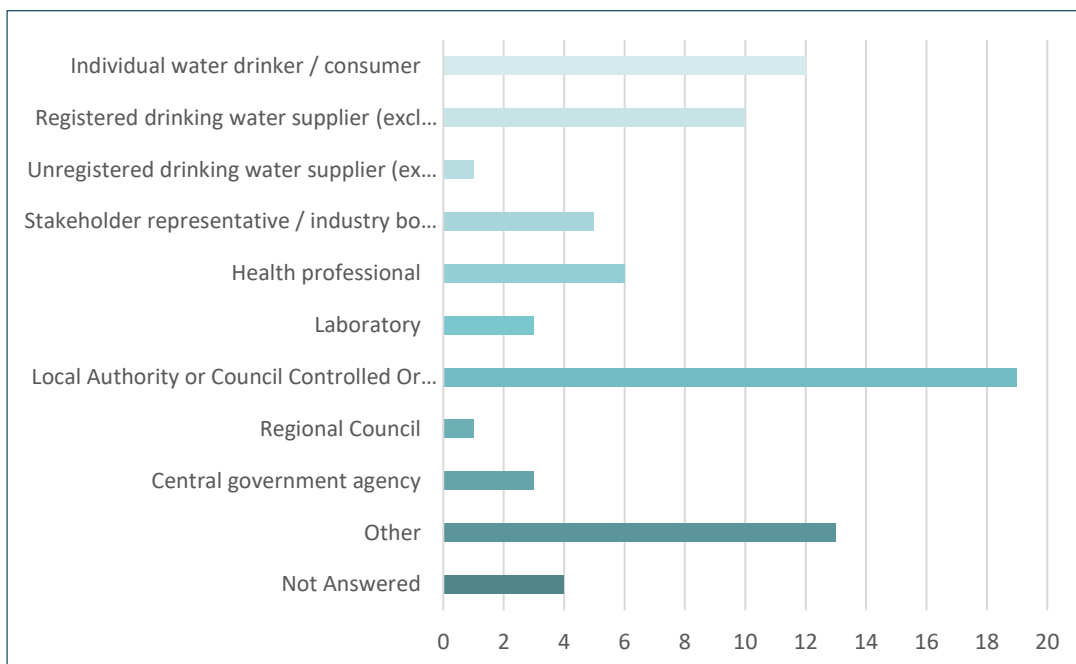
Of the 77 responses received 59 were on behalf of an organisation or group, while 18 were submitted by individuals.

Table 2:

Of the 77 responses received 20 identified as a national response. Otherwise, we received responses from 14 regions. We did not receive responses from the following 2 regions: Gisborne/Te Tai Rāwhiti and West Coast/Te Tai Poutini.

Table 3:

Most responses received were from individuals, organisations or groups that identified themselves as Local Authority or Council Controlled (19), Individual Water Drinker/Consumer (12), and Registered Water Supplier(s) (10).

Table 1

Table 2

Table 3


Below is a summary of the responses received to the specific questions asked as part of the consultation. Note not all submitters answered all questions.

Survey Question	Submission Response		
	Yes	No	Don't know
Do you agree that the process used to review the Maximum Acceptable Values (MAVs) for drinking water standards was appropriate?	23	6	11
Do you agree that the proposed MAVs will support the objective of ensuring that drinking water suppliers provide safe drinking water to consumers?	23	7	10
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Aluminium?	7	2	4
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Barium?	5	3	4
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Boron?	2	1	2
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Molybdenum?	4	2	4
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Nitrite, long term?	5	6	3
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Perchlorate?	6	2	4
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Selenium?	5	2	4
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Uranium?	4	3	5
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Anatoxins?	2	4	5
Question – Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Atrazine?	4	4	4
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Azinphos-methyl?	4	3	4
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Cyindrospermopsins?	4	1	3
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Homoanatoxin-a?	3	4	3
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Hydroxytrazine?	6	2	3
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for MCPA?	4	4	3
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Metalaxyl?	3	4	4
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for N-nitrosodimethylamine?	6	0	5

Do you agree with the proposed MAV for PFHxS + PFOS?	5	1	3
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for PFOA?	6	0	3
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Sodium dichloroisocyanurate (as cyanuric acid)?	5	1	4
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Trichloroethene?	4	4	3
Do you agree with the proposed short-term MAV for 1080?	6	1	3
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Total alpha activity?	6	2	3
Do you agree with the proposed MAV for Total beta activity?	6	2	3

The following additional issues were raised by submitters:

- The MAVs for nitrate, lead, and arsenic should be lowered.
- The MAVs are silent on Māori public health and deeper implications around Te Mana o Te Wai and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The science-based approach could be supplemented by other considerations impacting Māori and their relationship with wai (water). A Māori Impact Analysis should be provided where MAVs significantly impact tangata whenua and their traditional relationships with wai.
- There should be a MAV for asbestos and chronic nitrate exposure.
- There should be a risk assessment provided for each change in a MAV.
- The adjusted World Health Organisation’s risk assessment for drinking water is not appropriate as it is based on a 70kg adult; this creates risks for women, children and the ill.
- The European Union default value is more appropriate to use for some determinands compared to the World Health Organisation guideline values.
- The Standards should have a specified allowable exceedance.
- The Standards should specify the health risk from long term exposure, or an acute health risk.
- There is a cost impact for testing for more determinands.
- Questioning if there is sufficient laboratory capacity or expertise to undertake the new tests.
- A formal process for reviewing the Standards needs to be developed.
- There should be established a national database of compliance of water suppliers with the Standards.

Current status

The next step is the creation of new Drinking Water Standards and publishing a Gazette notice. The Minister of Local Government may recommend making regulations that set Standards.