

Use Rural Proofing to:

- › identify any particular implications of your policy for the **rural community** (rural people or rural businesses);
- › take into account any significant differences between rural and urban communities.

You will have **successfully implemented** Rural Proofing when you have considered the implications for the rural community as an integral part of your policy development processes. Rural Proofing should be used early in the policy process, not as a checklist at the end.

Underlying assumptions

- › All people, no matter where they live, should have a reasonable ability to live, work and run businesses; and contribute to and be part of New Zealand society.
- › Government policy making and implementation should take into account the potential implications for people living and working in rural areas.
- › Māori have a unique relationship with rural tribal lands, marae and wāhi tapu. Collectively owned Māori land operates under a special legislative framework.

What makes rural New Zealand different?

Two key characteristics of rural New Zealand could influence the effectiveness of your proposed policy:

- › **low population density;**
- › **isolation.**

Many rural businesses require the use of large areas of land, contributing to the rural community having a low population density and rural people and businesses being a long distance from services, markets and communication hubs.

Focus of Rural Proofing

Three areas relevant to policy development are especially influenced by population density and isolation:

- › **Connection infrastructure:** efficiently and effectively connecting rural people and businesses to each other and to the world (including roads, telecommunications, electricity supply, postal and broadcasting services).
- › **Access to services:** providing workable and accessible services to people in rural areas (including emergency, health, education, disability support, water supply, public transport and social services).
- › **Ease and cost of compliance:** recognising the practical implications of complying with government requirements in rural areas – considering both the benefits and the costs.

