

Before the Southland Regional Council Hearing Panel

Under the Resource Management Act 1991

In the matter of APP-20233670 - resource consent applications to authorise proposed activities at and around the Manapōuri Lake Control Structure, including the Waiau Arm at the confluence of the Waiau Arm and Mararoa River

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**Statement of Evidence of Fiona Black on behalf of Real Journeys Limited (trading as Realnz)**

5 September 2024

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## **Introduction**

- 1 My full name is Katherine Fiona Black. I work for Realnz Limited and its group, predominately maintaining the companies' Fiordland and Rakiura Department of Conservation Concessions, Resource Consents and other regulatory authorisations, along with other operational related duties. I am authorised to give this evidence on the behalf of Real Journeys Limited the operating company of Realnz's Fiordland 'tourism' products.
- 2 I have worked in the New Zealand Tourism industry for 37 years; the last nearly 21 years, for Realnz; in the first instance as the Milford Sound Branch Manager and for the last eighteen years in my current role.
- 3 I have Bachelor of Home Science Degree University of Otago and a Postgraduate Diploma in Business and Administration - Massey University. I am also a qualified skipper holding Commercial Launch Master Certificate of Competency, although I have not worked in the capacity as a launch master since 2001. Also, from 2011 until 2021, I was a member of the Southland Conservation Board.
- 4 In preparing this evidence, I have reviewed the following documents:
  - (a) Assessment of Environmental Effects – Manapouri Lake Control Improvement Project – Final - dated December 2023;
  - (b) The Councils s42a report;
  - (c) Meridian Energy Limited Appendices – Hearing 17 September 2024 APP-20233670;
  - (d) Statement of Applicant Evidence – Mr. Andrew Feierabend – Meridian Energy Limited;
  - (e) Statement of Applicant Evidence – Mr. Daniel Murray – Planning;
  - (f) Statement of Applicant Evidence – Dr. Dougal Clunie – Construction Methodology; and
  - (g) Statement of Applicant Evidence – Dr. Jo Hoyle – River Geomorphology.

## **Background Information**

5. In September 2022 Real Journeys Limited obtained two resource consents numbers AUTH-20222195-01 (Land Use) and AUTH-20222195-02 (Discharge Permit) to enable the establishment and use of a temporary

slipway on the bed and shoreline of the Waiau Arm, approximately 725 metres upstream of Manapōuri Lake Control (MLC) structure – refer figure 1 below.

6. Real Journeys also has a licence agreement with Meridian Energy Limited to access the Meridian Energy land (Section 1 SO 12223) at this site, to undertake the works approved under resource consent numbers AUTH-20222195-01 and AUTH-20222195-02.
7. This slipway was to be installed and used periodically when required (1x in 2022), to slip Real Journeys Lake Manapōuri catamarans to undertake out of water, vessel surveys and maintenance. Typically, Real Journeys undertakes this out of water survey and maintenance work on a three yearly cycle, however we are still subject to our Marine Surveyor's stipulations which can require a more frequent out of water vessel inspection of a vessels running gear, seacocks and through hull fittings.



*Figure 1. Photo of "Titiroa" on temporary slipway in the Waiau Arm in 2022*

8. Furthermore, Real Journeys Lake Manapōuri vessels can be subject to log strike on Lake Manapōuri, which can damage vessel propellers, prop shafts, and or rudders. If the damage is significant and cannot be repaired by divers, the vessel needs to be slipped to effect repairs.
9. The reason we sought resource consent approval to establish a temporary slipway, as and when required, at this site, was because there is no slipway

on Lake Manapōuri or the Waiau Arm that is large enough to accommodate Real Journeys Lake Manapōuri catamarans, the good heavy vehicle access, and the provisions of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan make it challenging to establish a temporary slipway on the shores of Lake Manapōuri.

10. This Manapōuri Lake Control Improvement Project (MLCIP or the project) proposed new channel will run through the site where Real Journeys can establish and use of a temporary slipway – refer figure 1 of Dr Clunie’s Evidence, below. Accordingly Real Journeys will no longer be able to utilise this existing site to slip Real Journeys Lake Manapōuri catamarans.



Figure 1: Proposed channel excavation alignment

11. To accommodate Real Journeys requirements, an alternative slipway (slipway ramp) site has been allowed for in the project design at approximately: NZTM 2000 Easting: 1185932; Northing: 4935392 (refer drawing numbers E2243-102 and E2243-109). This ‘slipway ramp’ will be available for use by Real Journeys on the completion of the MLCIP and on an ongoing basis.

### Evidence

12. Real Journeys appreciates that Meridian Energy is seeking two resource consents (a water permit and a discharge permit respectively) under sections 14 and 15 of the RMA and that the land use consents for the likes of earthworks are predominately outside the scope of this Meridian Energy

application, as such activities are already authorised under the Manapōuri – Te Anau Development Act (MTADA).

13. However, under regulation 47 of the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NES-F) activities such as vegetation clearance, earthworks and land disturbance in and/or near a natural inland wetland are deemed restricted discretionary activities and require resource consent approval.
14. Nevertheless, given that no wetlands have been identified within or immediately adjacent the proposed footprint of the 'slipway ramp'; the earthworks required to establish the 'slipway ramp' as per project drawing numbers E2243-102 and E2243-109, fall outside the purview of the resource consent applications that are the subject of this hearing.
15. Yet, Real Journeys wishes to ensure that the hearing commissioners are cognisant of our requirement for the 'slipway ramp' to be established as part of MLCIP and that no conditions are included in the Manapōuri Lake Control Improvement Project resource consents that will compromise the establishment of the 'slipway ramp' or Real Journeys ability to vary resource consents numbers AUTH-20222195-01 and AUTH-20222195-02 to enable the activities approved under these two resource consents to occur at the new 'slipway ramp' location.
16. Real Journeys cannot emphasis enough how critical a slipway is to service its Lake Manapōuri vessels. Out of water marine vessel surveys, inspections, and maintenance activities are non-negotiable. This work must occur at regular intervals to keep Real Journeys Lake Manapōuri vessels in service.
17. Also, this slipway location (Section 1 SO 12223) off Weir Road has an additional advantage for slipping vessels due to the access on to Weir Road. Specifically, Real Journeys can trailer its vessels from the Waiau Arm to (and from) Real Journeys Te Anau workshop to undertake vessel maintenance tasks such as exterior painting, undercover in Real Journeys workshop shed.
18. Moreover, Real Journeys largest Lake Manapōuri catamaran "Titiroa" must be slipped in 2025 to renew its New Zealand Certificate of Survey. It is Real Journeys preference to slip the "Titiroa" in the winter months or early spring before the main tourist season commences in October, when the "Titiroa" is needed to provide sufficient passenger capacity to transport Real Journeys clients back and forth across Lake Manapōuri to service Real Journeys Doubtful Sound Patea cruise offerings.

19. Specifically, the “Titiroa” must be slipped prior to 8 November 2025 as this is the date the “Titiroa’s” certificate of survey expires, and the setup of the temporary slipway rails takes about three days consequently works required to slip the “Titiroa” need to commence on Monday 4 November 2025 at the latest.
20. Accordingly, Real Journeys requests that the resource consents that are the subject of these Meridian Energy applications are granted in a timely manner to enable the MLCIP works to be completed within the proposed 19-week timeframe, if ‘normal’ hydrological conditions prevail. Which in turn will facilitate the slipping of the “Titiroa”, preferably before October 2025.

### **Conclusion**

21. Real Journeys asks that the proposed ‘slipway ramp’ is provided for as per drawing numbers E2243-102 and E2243-109, irrespective of the resource consents granted for the Meridian Energy Manapōuri Lake Control Improvement Project and that the resource consents approved for this project are granted as quickly as possible to ensure the “Titiroa” can be slipped before the expiry of its certificate of survey in 2025.

Fiona Black - Concessions & Consents Manager Realnz

5 September 2024