



## October 2023 Newsletter | Freshwater farm plan certifier and auditor programme

Dear Contact,

Kia ora and welcome to our third newsletter on the freshwater farm plan certifier and auditor appointment programme. The programme is well underway now with over 50 applications received to date for certifiers in Southland and Waikato.

If you've only just joined our mailing list, please take a look at our [previous newsletters](#) which provide plenty of introductory information about the programme.

**In this issue we provide some more detail about the application and assessment process, including:**

- [Preparing for your certifier application](#)
- [National training assessment process](#)
- [What can be published about you on the National Register](#)
- [Pathways to becoming an auditor](#)

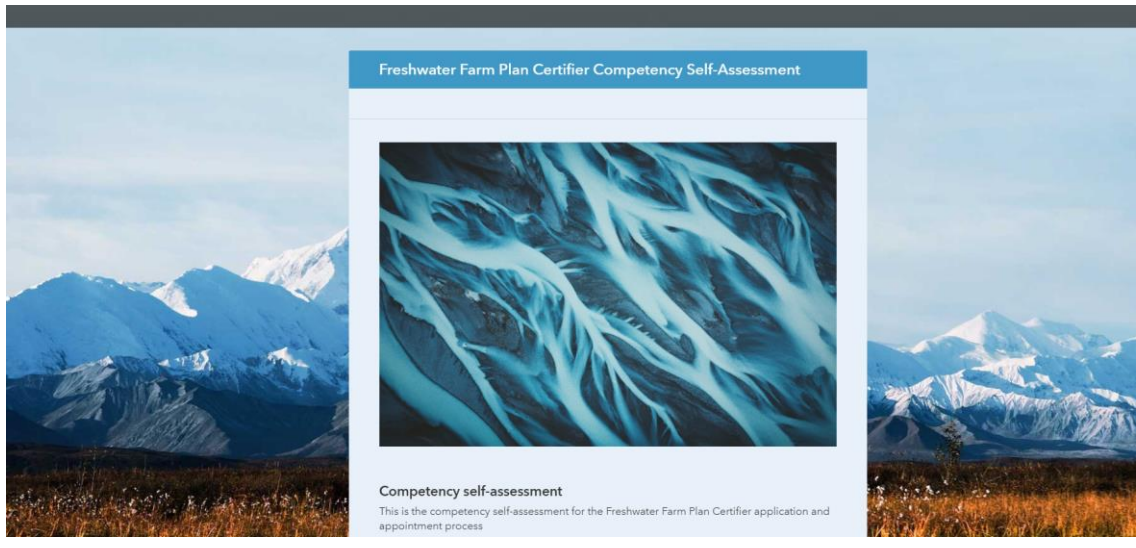
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### Preparing for your certifier application

We've launched a new Certifier Competency Self-Assessment tool which provides a quick and easy check to determine your eligibility for a successful application. You can use it to check your current level of understanding of the competencies for certifiers as required under the Freshwater Farm Plans Regulations 2023, and whether your application would pass and be accepted, or if you should upskill in some areas prior to submitting an application.

We've also created a downloadable version of the certifier application form that you can use to help prepare your answers to the application questions. It is a copy of the online form, showing all instructions and listing all questions you'll need to respond to, along with a few tips. Please note this downloadable form is provided only to help you prepare offline, once you are ready to apply, you must complete the online form.

You can find these tools here: [FW FP Certifier Application Form — Freshwater farm plan certifier and auditor programme \(farmplancertifiers.nz\)](https://farmplancertifiers.nz)



### How does the National Training work?

Once you've been accepted into the programme, you will complete national training, which consists of learning and assessment activities. Your results in the national training form part of the information provided to the regional council to inform their appointment decision.

National training consists of nine compulsory modules and one optional communication module, and you have 28 days to complete all modules and assessments. Make sure you read through the modules carefully as they contain the information you'll need to help you answer the assessment questions.

Assessments take the form of between five and eight multi-choice questions per module. The pass rate required is 100% for each module and you have three attempts per module to achieve this. If you fail a module you will need to contact [farmlplancertifiers@asurequality.com](mailto:farmlplancertifiers@asurequality.com) to request a reattempt. If you fail that same module again for a second time you may be required to complete a standdown period of up to one week to enable you to upskill. You may be charged an additional fee to reattempt the assessment. In the event of a third failure no further attempts would be allowed.

### What will be published on the national register?

A national register of appointed freshwater farm plan certifiers and auditors will be available at [www.farmlplancertifiers.nz](http://www.farmlplancertifiers.nz). If you are appointed to either role, your details will be published on the register, but you choose how much information about you is displayed. As you complete your application form, you will choose whether to display only minimum mandatory details, or to publish select additional details.

The minimum mandatory details are:

- Your name
- Regions you are appointed within
- Your certifier / auditor appointment number.

You can choose to add any of the following information, for example, if you wish to promote your services to local farm operators.

- Organisation / company
- Contact details
- Farm types you specialise in (the register will be filterable by speciality)
- A short professional bio

- A photo of yourself

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### Criteria for appointment as auditor

There are two pathways to becoming an auditor. As part of the application process, applicants will select which pathway they follow.

#### **Pathway 1: Membership of a professional auditing body**

The applicant must be a member of a professional audit body and demonstrate an understanding of the competencies for auditors.

The audit body must be recognised by JAS-ANZ or IANZ, and operate a quality management system that covers:

- professional standards and the management of impartiality,
- roles and responsibilities,
- document control, and
- internal audit process, and complaint handling and corrective actions.

#### **Pathway 2: Auditor experience**

The applicant must have at least three years' **auditing experience** in a field related to the competencies for auditors. This means demonstrating skills and competencies in all the following areas:

- holding technical and working knowledge of primary industry, farm systems, environmental management
- knowledge of the RMA Section 9A, NES-F and Freshwater Farm Plan regulations
- knowledge of audit principles, practices and techniques, including risk management, sampling, and evidence gathering
- audit management skills, including scheduling, planning, and executing the audit.
- effective communication and questioning techniques
- acting in an impartial, ethical and professional manner
- completed a course provided by a recognised audit body in audit techniques.

In addition to their selected pathway, the applicant must successfully complete training in the catchment context, challenges, and values and the competencies for auditors, as required by the regional council. National training for auditors will be available soon.

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### How to contact us

New Zealand has highly competent and passionate rural professionals working with our farm operators, and we look forward to supporting as many people as we can to become appointed as freshwater farm plan certifiers and auditors.

Let's get behind the programme and help our farm operators keep up the great mahi underway on their farms for the care and protection of our environment.

Ngā mihi

AsureQuality Appointment Process Management (APM) team

- [AsureQuality – farmplancertifiers@asurequality.com](mailto:farmplancertifiers@asurequality.com)
- [Ministry for the Environment – freshwaterfarmplans@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:freshwaterfarmplans@mfe.govt.nz)

- Waikato Regional Council – [pie@waikatoregion.govt.nz](mailto:pie@waikatoregion.govt.nz)
- Environment Southland – [farmpans@es.govt.nz](mailto:farmpans@es.govt.nz)



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