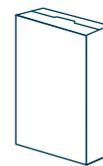


A Guide to Retail Food Labelling



This guide explains the labelling information you must provide to customers about your retail food and drinks.

What is a food label?

Food labels tell consumers important information about the food or drink they are consuming – to help them know which food and drink is right for them, and if it is safe for them to eat/drink. There are rules for what information must go on these labels.

Purpose of this guide

This guide will help you get your food label right. You must label your food so it meets the rules of the [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code](#) (the Code). Your product could be recalled or you could be fined if you get this wrong. If your food doesn't need a label, this guide lets you know how you can share product information to consumers in other ways.

Product labelling under previous allergen labelling rules

Any food packaged and labelled before **25 February 2024** under the previous allergen labelling rules may be sold for a further 2 years (**25 February 2026**).

Who is this guide for?



Importers

You bring packaged food into New Zealand intended for sale to consumers



Packers

You pack or re-pack food for retail sale



Manufacturers

You make and sell packaged food intended for consumers



Caterers/ food service businesses

You serve food to consumers



Retailers

You sell pre-packaged food to consumers



Brand owners

You are responsible for the food, but don't manufacture it

How to use this guide

There are 4 parts to this guide:



Does my food need a label?

Find out how to provide information about your food.



Labelling requirements

What needs to go on your label.

- **Section A:** What goes on your label
- **Section B:** Food that doesn't need a label



The checklist

Make sure you've got the main parts covered, so you meet the rules in the Code.

- **Section A:** Labelling food for retail
- **Section B:** Food that does not need a label

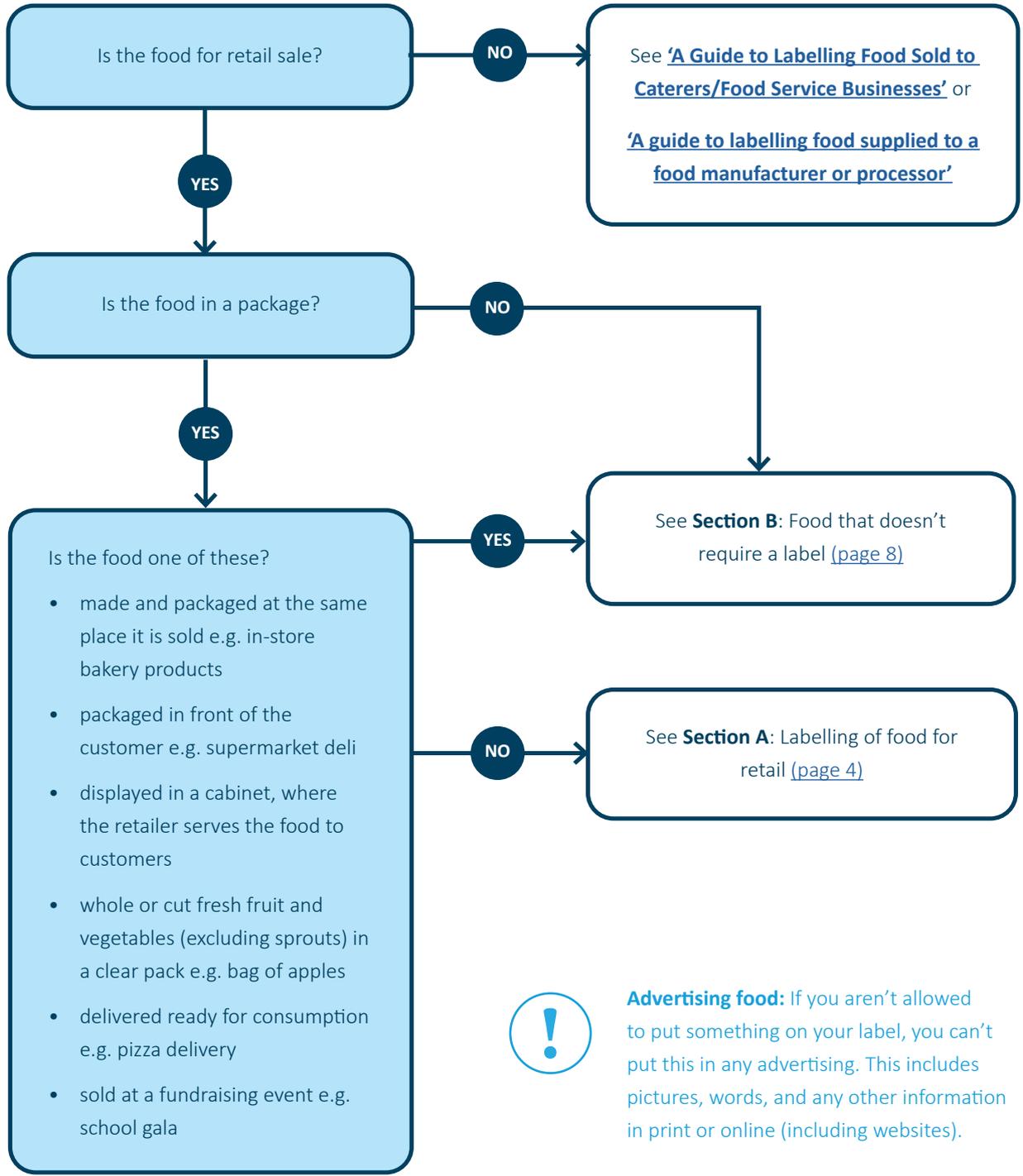


Extra information

This guide only covers the basics, so you may need further help to label your food.



Does my food need a label?



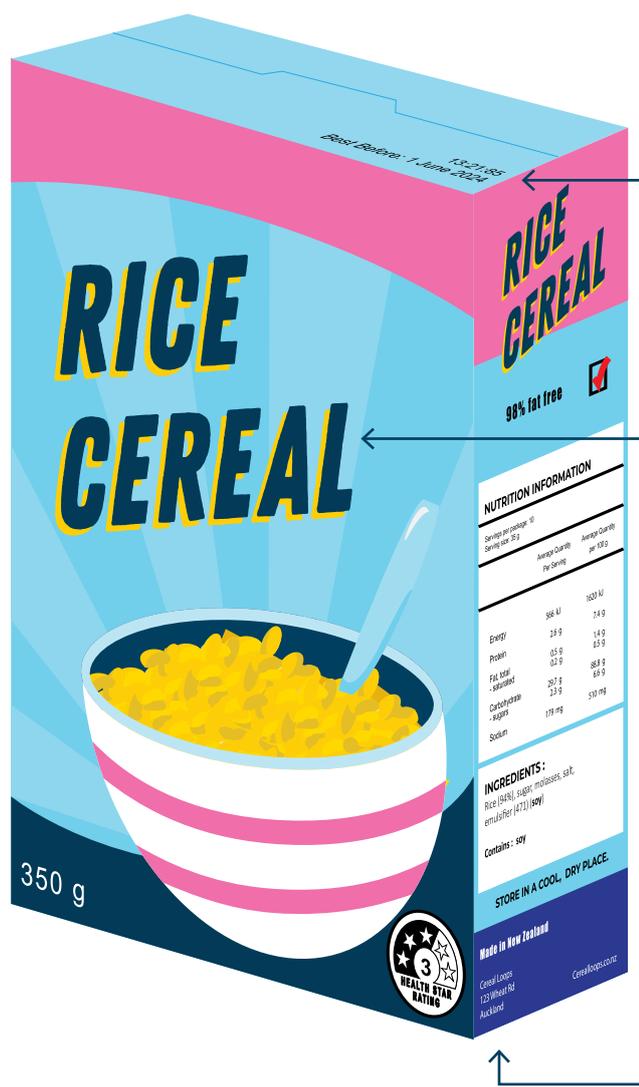
Advertising food: If you aren't allowed to put something on your label, you can't put this in any advertising. This includes pictures, words, and any other information in print or online (including websites).



Section A: What goes on your label

Your food label must:

- Be part of or attached to the package
- Be easy to read
- Be written in English
- Have the right information to meet the rules of the Code, the Fair Trading Act 1986 and Weights and Measures Act 1987



Your food label must clearly have:

A **lot/batch identification** which enables you to trace your product if it needs to be recalled.

An accurate **name or description** of the food. Some foods (processed meat, honey and special purpose food) must use the exact names from the Code.

The **name and physical address of your New Zealand or Australian business**. A PO Box, website or email address by itself is not enough.



Your food label must clearly have:

A **date mark** for foods with a shelf life of less than 2 years. You need to write this as:

- **Use By:** If the food must be consumed before a certain date because it could make people sick after this, or
- **Best Before:** If the food declines in quality but is still safe to be consumed, or
- **Bkd On/ Bkd For:** only for bread with a shelf life of less than 7 days.

Health Star Rating

You can choose to put this on the front of your pack to help consumers make informed decisions. If you do, **you must use the Health Star Rating symbol correctly, including calculating the number of stars needed for your food.** See the weblinks on the Extra Information page ([page 14](#)).



Alcohol labelling

Alcoholic drinks need the **number of standard drinks, alcohol by volume %Alc/Vol and pregnancy warning label.** Any other food requires a % Alc/Vol statement when the alcohol content is more than 1.15% Alc/Vol.



Net contents of food

The net contents of food in appropriate unit of measure (e.g. kg, g, ml, l) in text size 2 mm or larger, and be near the name of the food.

Irradiated and genetically modified food:

If any part of your food has been irradiated or genetically modified you must state this.

Your food label must clearly have:

The following 3 statements, if applicable:

Some ingredients/foods need to be avoided by certain people (e.g. people with allergies and pregnant women), or the consumer needs certain information about the food so they don't get sick. These are:

1. Allergen declaration: Some ingredients can cause severe allergic reactions for certain people. See the checklist on [page 9](#) for the ingredients you have to highlight. These allergens must be declared in the ingredients list and in a contains statement.

(a) Ingredients list

- List your ingredients in descending order.
- List any food additives you've used. There are rules about how you list these.
- list any 'processing aid' from an allergen source if used,
- include the allergens using their required allergen name (see [page 9](#)) in **bold**.

Some products don't need an ingredients list, these are: Packaged water; Standardised alcoholic beverages; Food in a package with less than 100 cm² total surface area.

(b) Contains statement

- The contains statement must be distinctly separate but next to (or above or below) the ingredients list.
- It must start with the word 'Contains' and only list the allergens using their required allergen name* and no other words,
- The whole contains statement must be in **bold**, in the same font and size as the required allergen name in the ingredients list.

Check out 'Allergen labelling – Knowing what's in your food and how to label it' (www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/50725-Allergen-labelling-Knowingwhats-in-your-food-and-how-to-label-it) for full details on the rules for declaring allergens.

98% fat free

NUTRITION INFORMATION

Servings per package: 10
Serving size: 35 g

	Average Quantity Per Serving	Average Quantity per 100 g
Energy	566 kJ	1620 kJ
Protein	2.6 g	7.4 g
Fat, total - saturated	0.5 g 0.2 g	1.4 g 0.5 g
Carbohydrate - sugars	29.7 g 2.3 g	88.8 g 6.6 g
Sodium	179 mg	510 mg

INGREDIENTS :
Rice (94%), sugar, molasses, salt, emulsifier (471) (**soy**)

Contains : soy

STORE IN A COOL, DRY PLACE.

Made in New Zealand

Cereal Loops
123 Wheat Rd
Auckland

Cerealloops.co.nz

2. Warning statement: Only applies to some food. You must use the exact words outlined in the Code and they must be 3 mm or bigger (or >1.5 mm for small packages). See the checklist on [page 10](#) for food that need a warning statement.

3. Advisory statement: Only applies to some foods/ingredients. You can choose how to write your advisory statement, but you must make it clear why your consumer needs this information. See the checklist on [page 10](#) for foods that need advisory statements.

If you have multipack products, these statements must be included on all layers of packaging.

Your food label must clearly have:

Nutrition content claims and health claims

If you choose to make nutrition content and/or health claims about your product, you must:

- Check you can make a claim for your product;
- Be able to prove the claim you have made;
- Add the nutrition information for your claim to your Nutrition Information Panel (NIP). This rule overrides any exception to having a NIP.

You can find information on how to make a nutrition claim here. [Introduction to health and nutrition content claims](#). This can be a complex area of labelling and you may need to ask an expert.

Nutrition Information Panel (NIP)

- The NIP shows the amount per serving and amount per 100 g (or 100 ml for liquids).
- There are different types of NIPs. So yours may look different from this example depending on your product. As a minimum, you must have all of the information shown in this example.

Your NIP must meet the rules about layout and content as stated in the Code. Some products don't need a NIP, including:

- Most alcoholic beverages;
- Herbs and spices, tea, and coffee;
- Fresh fruit, vegetables, meat, poultry, and fish;
- Prepacked filled rolls and sandwiches;
- Food in a package with less than 100 cm² total surface area.

Percentage labelling

If some or all of your food product's ingredients are printed on your label (in words, pictures, or graphics), you must show what percentage of the food is made up by each of these ingredients.

Any specific food **storage instructions/directions for use** to keep food safe to eat for the duration of the shelf life must be added to the label.

98% fat free 

NUTRITION INFORMATION

Servings per package: 10
Serving size: 35 g

	Average Quantity Per Serving	Average Quantity per 100 g
Energy	566 kJ	1620 kJ
Protein	2.6 g	7.4 g
Fat, total - saturated	0.5 g 0.2 g	1.4 g 0.5 g
Carbohydrate - sugars	29.7 g 2.3 g	88.8 g 6.6 g
Sodium	179 mg	510 mg

INGREDIENTS :
Rice (94%), sugar, molasses, salt, emulsifier (471) (**soy**)

Contains : soy

STORE IN A COOL, DRY PLACE.

Made in New Zealand

Cereal Loops
123 Wheat Rd
Auckland

Cerealloops.co.nz



Section B:

Food that doesn't need a label

These food products for retail sale don't need labels:

- Unpackaged food;
- Food made and packaged at the same place it is sold, or food packaged in front of the customer e.g. supermarket deli;
- Displayed in a cabinet that the seller serves to customers;
- Whole or cut fresh fruit and vegetables (excluding sprouts) in a clear pack e.g. a bag of apples;
- Food delivered ready for consumption e.g. pizza delivery;
- Food sold at a fundraising event e.g. school gala.

Although these foods do not require an attached label, you will still need to provide information about it in other ways. The specific information required will depend on the type of food for sale, and will need to be:

- Displayed in connection with the food e.g. sign near the food; or
- Declared or provided to the purchaser verbally or in writing; or
- In information accompanying the food for sale e.g. a flyer; or
- Provided to the purchaser on request.

The information required and ways to present it are provided in the checklist on [page 12](#).

Check out '[Allergen labelling – Knowing what's in your food and how to label it](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/50725-Allergen-labelling-Knowingwhats-in-your-food-and-how-to-label-it)' (www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/50725-Allergen-labelling-Knowingwhats-in-your-food-and-how-to-label-it) for full details on the rules for declaring allergens.

Note: The above food products that are sold in a packet are required to state the net contents.



The checklist:

Section A: Labelling food for retail

Complete one checklist per product

WHAT MUST BE ON LABEL	Must have this	Depends on the product	It's on my label Tick once complete	Comments If the item is not applicable for your product, write N/A in the comments box
Name or description of the food	✓			
If your food is a processed meat, honey or special purpose food, have you used the exact name from the Code?		✓		
Name and physical address of your New Zealand or Australian business	✓			
Lot/batch identification	✓			
Date mark for food with a shelf life of less than 2 years:	✓			
Which one will be on your product?				
Best Before		Use By		
Bkd On / Bkd For				
Storage instructions/directions for use to keep food safe to eat		✓		
Allergen declaration. Applies to foods containing (in any form):		✓		
crustacean		almonds		
mollusc		Brazil nuts		
fish		cashews		
egg		hazelnuts		
milk		macadamias		
sesame seeds		pecans		
lupin		pine nuts		
barley**		pistachios		
oats**		walnuts		
rye**		added sulphites*		
wheat***		soybeans		
peanuts				
Complete the checklist in 'Allergen labelling – Knowing what's in your food and how to label it' (www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/50725-Allergen-labelling-Knowingwhats-in-your-food-and-how-to-label-it) for full details on the rules for declaring allergens.				

* technically an intolerance, but must be declared

**requires gluten in the contains statement

***requires wheat and gluten in the contains statement

Section A checklist continued

WHAT MUST BE ON LABEL	Must have this	Depends on the product	It's on my label Tick once complete	Comments If the item is not applicable for your product, write N/A in the comments box
Advisory statement applies to foods containing:		✓		
bee pollen and propolis		quinine		
milk or milk substitutes made from cereal/nuts/seeds		food additives with a known laxative effect		
phytosterols or phytosterols or their esters		aspartame or aspartame-acesulphame salt		
unpasteurised milk products		unpasteurised egg products		
guarana or caffeine				
Warning Statement Only applies to royal jelly, kava, special purpose food products, foods for infants and formulated sports foods.		✓		
Used the exact wording from the Code		Text 3 mm or bigger (or >1.5 mm for small packages)		
Ingredient list:	✓			
In descending order	✓			
Food additives declared		✓		
Exemptions/exceptions		✓		
Processing aid of an allergen source				
Net contents of food (g, kg, ml or l) in text 2 mm or bigger	✓			
Nutrition information panel (NIP):	✓			
Amount per serving	✓			
Amount per 100 g (or 100 ml for liquids)	✓			
Serving per package and serving size	✓			
Used the right NIP for your product	✓			
Layout from the Code followed	✓			
Listed the energy and 6 main nutrient components	✓			
Exemptions / exceptions		✓		

Section A checklist continued

WHAT MUST BE ON LABEL	Must have this	Depends on the product	It's on my label Tick once complete	Comments If the item is not applicable for your product, write N/A in the comments box
Alcohol labelling		✓		
Number of standard drinks		✓		
Alcohol by volume		✓		
Pregnancy warning label		✓		
Health Star Rating (this step only applies if you have chosen to include a health star rating on your product)		✓		
Correctly calculated number of stars		Used the Health Star Rating symbol correctly		
Your label is easy to read	✓			
Your label is in English	✓			

The checklist:

Section B: Food that does not need a label

3.



Complete one checklist per product

WHAT MUST BE PROVIDED	Must have this	Depends on the product	How this information can be provided	I can provide Tick once complete	Comments If the item is not applicable for your product, write N/A in the comments box
Name or description of the food	✓		Information can be displayed with the food		
If your food is a processed meat, honey or special purpose food have you used the exact name from the Code?		✓	OR Provided on request		
Storage instructions to keep food safe to eat		✓ unpackaged food	Information should accompany food		
Allergen declaration. applies to foods containing (in any form):		✓	Information can be displayed with the food		
crustacean			OR		
			Provided on request		
mollusc					
fish					
egg					
milk					
sesame seeds					
lupin					
barley**					
oats**					
rye**					
wheat***					
peanuts					
<p>Complete the checklist in Check out 'Allergen labelling – Knowing what's in your food and how to label it' (www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/50725-Allergen-labelling-Knowingwhats-in-your-food-and-how-to-label-it) for full details on the rules for declaring allergens.</p>					

* technically an intolerance, but must be declared

**requires gluten in the contains statement

***requires wheat and gluten in the contains statement

Section B checklist continued

WHAT MUST BE PROVIDED	Must have this	Depends on the product	How this information can be provided	I can provide Tick once complete	Comments If the item is not applicable for your product, write N/A in the comments box
Advisory statement applies to foods containing: bee pollen and propolis milk or milk substitutes made from cereal/nuts/seeds phytosterols or phytostanols or their esters unpasteurised milk products guarana or caffeine		✓	Information can be displayed with the food OR Provided on request		
Warning Statement only applies to royal jelly, kava, special purpose food products, foods for infants and formulated sports foods: Used the exact wording from the Code Text 3 mm or bigger		✓	Information can be displayed with the food OR Provided on request		
Percentage labelling		✓ unpackaged food or made on site	Information can be displayed with the food OR Provided on request		
Listed irradiated foods		✓	Information can accompany food OR be displayed with the food		
Listed GM foods		✓ unpackaged food	Information can accompany food OR be displayed with the food		
Information is easy to read	✓				
Information is in English	✓				
Net contents of food (g, kg, ml or l) in text 2 mm or bigger		✓ packaged food	On the packet		



Extra Information

This guide only covers the basics, so you may need further help to label your food.

Specific product labelling guides

New Zealand Food Safety has published some ready-made guidance for labelling specific foods:

- **Honey:**

www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/26491-a-guide-to-new-zealand-honey-labelling

- **Alcoholic drinks:**

www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/31404-a-guide-to-alcoholic-drinks-whats-in-them-and-how-to-label

- **Hemp seeds in food:**

www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/31608-A-Guide-to-Labeling-Food-Containing-Hemp-Seeds

Nutrition Panel Calculator

www.foodstandards.gov.au/business/labelling/nutrition-panel-calculator

Health Star Rating

www.mpi.govt.nz/food-safety/food-safety-for-consumers/understanding-food-labels/health-star-ratings/

Pregnancy Warning Labels

www.foodstandards.govt.nz/industry/labelling/Pages/pregnancy-warning-labels-downloadable-files.aspx

Getting Your Claims Right Guidance

www.foodstandards.gov.au/publications/gettingyourclaimsrigh

Information on the Code

www.mpi.govt.nz - this includes the health star rating guidance and calculator.

www.foodstandards.govt.nz

Nutrition, health and related claims

www.foodstandards.govt.nz/consumer/labelling/nutrition

Nutrient Profiling Scoring Calculator for Glycaemic Index and Health Claims

www.foodstandards.gov.au/business/labelling/nutrition-health-and-related-claims/nutrient-profiling-scoring-criterion

Fair Trading Act fact sheet Unsubstantiated Representations

Don't forget to check your label has the right information to meet Fair Trading Act and Weights and Measures Act requirements.

comcom.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0030/89850/Unsubstantiated-representations-Fact-sheet-July-2018.pdf

Country of Origin labelling (NZ)

comcom.govt.nz/consumers/product-safety-and-consumer-information-standards/country-of-origin-food-labelling-guidance

Packaging and/or selling goods by quantity (Ministry for Business, Innovation & Employment)

As a packer, manufacturer, importer or retailer your packaged goods must meet the requirements of the Weights and Measures Act 1987.

www.trademeasurement.tradingstandards.govt.nz/for-business/packaging-and-or-selling-goods-by-quantity/

Export requirements for food

www.mpi.govt.nz/export/food/

Country of Origin labelling (for food exported to Australia)

www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/16726/direct

If you still need help, we recommend you contact a food labelling consultant to help write your label.

www.mpi.govt.nz/food-business/starting-a-food-business/hiring-a-food-consultant/

For questions about food rules and food safety, visit www.mpi.govt.nz/food-business, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call 0800 00 83 33.