Welcome
Welcome to the newsletter about the Wellington region’s planning and preparations for Rugby World Cup 2011. Coordination of the region’s RWC 2011 planning is handled by Wellington City Council. For more regional RWC 2011 information check out www.WellingtonNZ2011.com

Additional tickets on sale now
Additional RWC 2011 tickets are currently on sale – get in quick for the perfect Christmas gift. You can also create a personalised RWC 2011 Christmas gift card to print out and put under the tree! Visit www.rugbyworldcup.com/tickets

Spotlight on local Rugby clubs
Club Rugby in Wellington began almost 140 years ago. There are 33 individual clubs in Wellington, Wairarapa and on the Kapiti Coast.

Clubs are the often called the backbone of New Zealand Rugby, for good reason. Understandably, the clubs’ excitement for RWC 2011 is huge and clubs are thinking about what the Tournament means to them and their memberships.

In order to increase participation for the good of the Game in the Wellington region, Wellington City Council is working with the Wellington Rugby Football Union (WRFU) on a major registration drive. This will fall under the NZRFU’s national Community Rugby brand, one of several legacy projects aimed at increasing participation in the Game on the back of RWC 2011.

Plans are well under way for an event day and promotions coinciding with WRFU’s Rugby Awareness Week, 21–27 February 2011.

Rugby clubrooms have often been a favourite destination for visiting international fans. Wellington City Council is also working with the WRFU’s 18 member clubs to help them understand what they can do to make the most of RWC 2011 and provide a welcoming atmosphere for visitors. A guide to what’s on in clubs is being developed for distribution to international travel agents and national Rugby unions.

Some clubs will provide motorhome parking for visitors wanting a kiwi Rugby club experience – this idea is being worked through and Wellington City Council has been compiling a list of these and other temporary sites around the region. The resulting resource is being promoted and distributed by Positively Wellington Tourism.

For more information on any of the above, please email jamie.delich@wcc.govt.nz

Volunteer update
We’d like to thank the hundreds of people who turned up to interviews at Wellington Town Hall in November, as part of the official RWC 2011 volunteer selection process. Your passion and commitment was inspirational.

Late registrations from people with the right skills are still welcome – register now at www.rugbyworldcup.com/volunteer

Wellington’s festival taking shape
Just in time for Christmas, many groups behind event and activity proposals for Wellington’s 2011 festival have found out their funding applications to the REAL NZ Festival Lottery Fund have been successful. Results from the Council’s latest cultural grants pool will also be announced in a week or two. Watch for more exciting festival details in the new year.
**Team profile – Tonga**

Tonga’s Ikale Tahi (Sea Eagles) will be based in the Wellington region for six nights during RWC 2011 and will be training on the recently-upgraded Hutt Recreation Ground. Tonga will play France at the Wellington Regional Stadium on Saturday 1 October. Team management visited in September to check out the region’s facilities.

*Did you know?*

- Rugby was introduced to Tonga in the early 20th century by sailors and missionaries. The Tonga Rugby Football Union was formed in 1923 and Tonga beat Fiji 9–6 in their first test match in 1924.
- Their greatest home victory was in June 1999, a 20–16 defeat of France in Nuku’alofa.
- In Rugby World Cup 2007, Tonga won two of their pool matches and nearly defeated eventual champions South Africa before going down 30–25.
- Like their Polynesian neighbours, the Tongan team starts its matches with a war dance – the Sipi Tau, which is a form of the Kailao, imported from Wallis Island.

Source: www.tongarugbyunion.com

**Update on Wellington CBD projects**

Wellington City Council has brought forward millions of dollars’ worth of projects to ensure the city is looking its best for RWC 2011. Here’s an update on some of the key projects.

The highest-profile work has been the reintroduction of buses to Manners Street, as part of restoring the ‘Golden Mile’. Buses are now using the new bus lanes, helping to make public transport through the city quicker and more reliable. Work on a shared space for pedestrians and vehicles in lower Cuba Street will begin in January and be completed before RWC 2011.

Towards the northern end of the Golden Mile, on Lambton Quay, Midland Park has been given a facelift in time for summer – and to ensure it’ll be looking its best for RWC 2011. Work, which included drainage improvements, lighting upgrades, new seats and the realignment of an entrance, was completed in late November.

At the other end of the Golden Mile, the Courtenay Place public toilets, near the Embassy Theatre, have just been upgraded. This follows public demand for more and better toilets in the area, close to drinking establishments. Improved facilities will be extra important with tens of thousands of people expected in Courtenay Place during RWC 2011 – especially over the quarter-finals weekend.

Another project under way is the Waterloo Quay upgrade, transforming the pedestrian route between the cruise ship terminal and the city centre. Work, including a mixture of beautification and infrastructure upgrades, is progressing well on this vital ‘first impression’ of the city for many visitors. It will be finished mid-2011.

For information on all these projects, go to www.Wellington.govt.nz/projects

**Survey winners**

Thanks to everyone who participated in our survey about this newsletter. Your feedback was really useful and provided some great ideas for future issues. We’ll be making some other changes in response to the feedback, such as slightly increasing the frequency of issues as RWC 2011 draws nearer.

The survey prizes have been drawn and the winners contacted – congratulations to the ten winners of smaller prizes and to B Anderson, the winner of the major prize pack of official RWC 2011-branded goodies.

**Important dates**

- From January Successful volunteer applicants will start receiving offers of employment for RWC 2011
- 6 February Waitangi weekend is going to be huge! Celebrate our national day, hit the Sevens, celebrate the opening of the waterfront Wharewaka and much more

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