

Tukituki Catchment

Practice Note Overseer versions in FEMPs and consents

The Tukituki Catchment Plan (PC6) was made operative in 2015. It includes new ways to manage production land use activities.

Production land use consent categories are based on a farm's individual nitrogen loss in relation to a nitrogen loss table in the plan (table 5.9.1D).

The table was created in 2012 using an older version of Overseer (v 5.4.3), and since then over a dozen updates have happened.

The only available Overseer version farmers can use to compare against this is now part of Overseer FM, a new platform, currently version 6.3.3.

OverseerFM is a web-based platform that is only available for use through an annual subscription.

In the past, Overseer versions could be downloaded and stored on computers. That version could then be used for as long as it functions. However OverseerFM will regularly change and can't be downloaded so that a single version can be used.

When landowners are submitting updated Farm Environmental Management Plans (FEMPs) or consent applications for production land use, nutrient budget data must be determined using the latest version of OverseerFM.

The reasons for this are detailed below:

- Overseer Ltd has indicated that they no longer have the source code for the version and cannot change the version to extend its life beyond December 2020. v5.4.3 is becoming increasingly unstable with updated Windows operating systems and the risk of software failure is increasing.

- v5.4.3 is based on outdated science and provides much less options for farmers.
- Older versions of Overseer allowed input and output files to be downloaded (such as by regional councils). This can no longer occur. For councils to access input and output information, the farmer needs to 'publish' the information to the council online.
- The definition of a nutrient budget in the Tukituki Catchment Plan includes '*The information requested by the Hawkes Bay Regional Council shall be provided in an electronic format compatible with HBRC information systems*'

The Council will only consider a nutrient budget from Overseer/FM prepared by a suitably qualified person