

# Update

August 2012

## Matariki Rises and RCG Celebrates 264 sites live and counting

Matariki signals the Māori New Year. In Aotearoa it is a time of renewal and celebration that begins with the rising of the Matariki star cluster and this year coincided with RCG celebrating the half way mark in the delivery of their new rural network and excellent results for the end of the financial year.

### Me mātau ki te whetū, i mua i te kōkiri o te haere

Before you set forth on a journey, be sure you know the stars.



The RCG network is part of the Government's Rural Broadband Initiative Phase 2 and is delivering fast 4G wireless broadband and mobile services from Spark, Vodafone and 2degrees to rural areas that have been without these critical services.

At the end of June 2021 RCG has achieved the following;

- 23,416 rural residents have access to 4G fast wireless broadband
- 624kms of state highways now have new mobile coverage
- 50 tourism hotspots have new connectivity, allowing visitors to immediately share their experience of beautiful Aotearoa.

This puts us in an excellent position to achieve our targets for the end of the programme in December 2022.



*Sunrise at the newly stood pole - Henga*

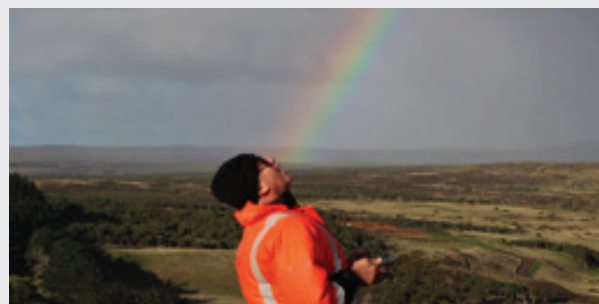
# A new dawn on Chatham Island

RCG and civil build partner Downer have completed the build of five mobile sites and a satellite earth station in record time between April and June. There is still more work to complete with the build of the digital microwave radio linking between the five cell sites and further satellite technology testing to enable the new network to be made live across Chatham Island during September and October.

Back in New Zealand the RCG design team are testing the network equipment over the satellite link and the point of interconnect to the national telecommunications network, which is a telecommunications exchange based in Featherston Street, Wellington. Acceleration technology is also being tested which will maximise the speed of data transfer and reduce the data delay via the satellite backhaul transmission. The team has

worked with engineers from France, South Africa, USA, Singapore and New Zealand to test the satellite links and ensure the traffic is delivered to and from remote Chatham Island. This equipment was tested in an Auckland test lab and is now installed at the teleport station on Target Hill.

Above is the 21 metre pole at Henga which along with the rest of the network on the Island will provide coverage to the Tuuta Airport, 119 kms of the island's road and the majority of the island's households. Chatham Island is a beautiful place and below are some stunning images of our team at work on the island.





RCG is proud to be working alongside Crown Infrastructure Partners and our three professional build companies of Connect 8, Downer and Ventia to deliver this ambitious programme where we are livening at least 30 RCG sites per quarter.

Our build teams are working all over rural New Zealand throughout the year, in all sorts of weather conditions with a superior work ethic and an excellent health and safety record. They have also become keen photographers and here are some stunning shots taken by our build teams.



## 150, 200, 250 ...and counting

We quietly marked our 150th site live in September 2020 which was our site at Tongaporutu and we planned to celebrate our 200th site live at Seafeld Road, Puketapu, in February 2021, however another Level 3 lockdown for Auckland at this time, saw the event cancelled.



RCG's 150th site, Tongaporutu in Taranaki.

200th site at Seafeld Road, Puketapu, Hawkes Bay.

Covid lockdowns do not mean RCG stops work as we hold Essential Service status and only a few months after our 200th site live we welcomed Hon Dr David Clarke, Minister for Digital Economy and Communications, to our 250th site built at Wiltsdown, Waikato.

The Minister acknowledged our willing landowners, our many suppliers, professional build teams and dedicated staff, that all contribute to the success of the RCG network.

The 250th site is located on Drummond Dairy Farms Ltd that milk over a thousand cows per day. The farm is managed by Josh Morris who is ably assisted by his dog Lux.

"As part of the community, we're excited to be able to help with better connectivity, and knowing we can now use the new connectivity for staying in touch with our staff when they're out on the farm, is really comforting. We'll also see added benefits to our productivity and efficiency, such as in our wastewater monitoring and during calving season," says Josh

# The Tararua District

**During the last financial year (1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021) RCG completed a total of 142 sites including nine sites in the Tararua District which the locals celebrated with a community event held in the Kumeroa Hall.**

Hon Damian O'Connor, Minister for Rural Communities, visited Tararua and Kumeroa for the very first time, especially for this event to celebrate connectivity across the Tararua District. The Minister informed the Kumeroa school children that their new RCG network was theirs to enjoy and to be connected with the rest of the world, including the West Coast where the Minister is from.



## The West Coast saw a lot of RCG activity this year

**Seven sites are now connected and a further 21 sites are planned for completion as the Chorus fibre becomes available across the West Coast.**

The RCG has also made significant progress in many other regions, with over 60% of our network now completed in the regions of Northland, Gisborne, Hawkes Bay, Taranaki, Manawatu/Whanganui, Marlborough, Otago, Southland and the West Coast.





# RCG connecting with rural people

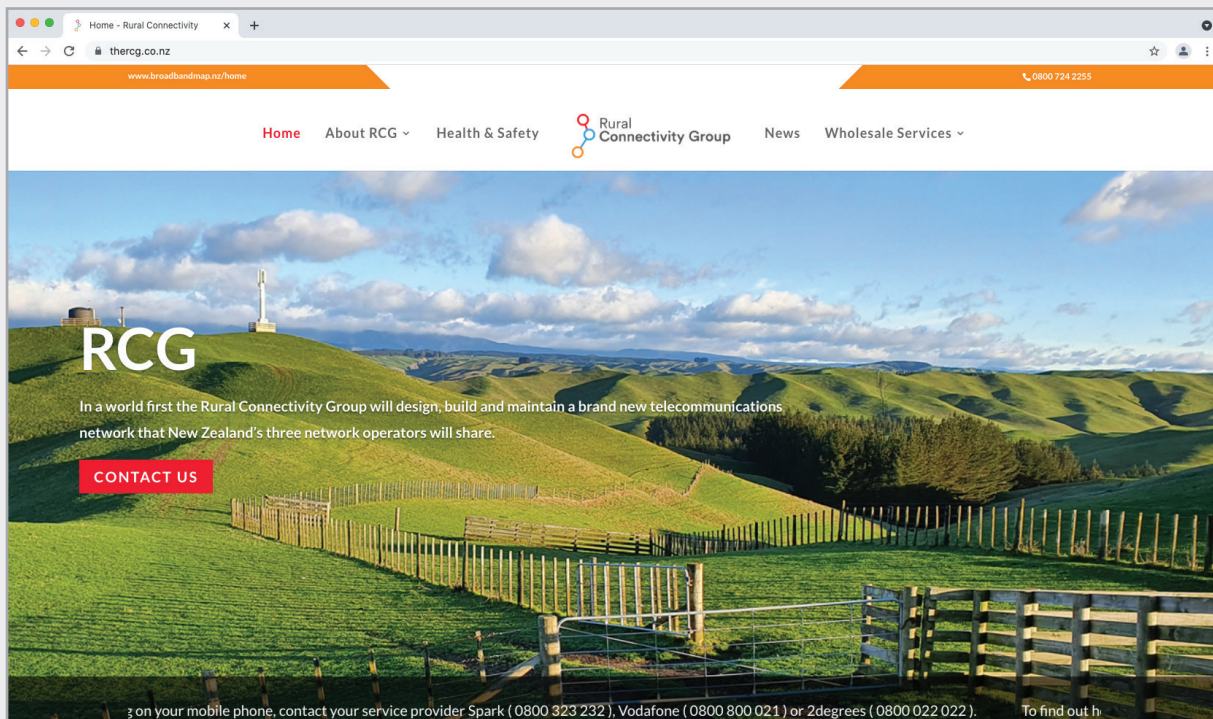
RCG's work around Aotearoa has our team meeting a lot of rural people, working in interesting places. We very much enjoy engaging with landowners, hapū representatives, archaeologists, Heritage NZ and DoC staff about site locations.



The whanau of Waiohau pose with manuhiri in front of Tama ki Hikurangi following the pōhiri to celebrate the switching on of the RCG tower.

It is a privilege to learn the Maori history of the whenua where we are working and how whanau are embracing the opportunities that access to wireless broadband and mobile service provides. The whanau of Waiohau Marae were delighted to be included in the RBI2 programme and held a pōhiri once their new site was completed to embrace the new technology, and to discuss how the connectivity can help their whanau whether they are based in Waiohau or anywhere else in the world. Shanna Butler speaking on behalf of the marae committee stated "this opportunity will happen once in our life time and we want to express our gratitude towards it".

## Inspired by the reflective and renewal nature of Matariki we are ready to embrace the new year ahead of us.



We recently launched our new look website which reflects our development from a total start up business to RCG now being a team of high performing infrastructure delivery specialists. Please take a look at our website and let us know what you think [www.theRCG.co.nz](http://www.theRCG.co.nz)

To date our team have negotiated 350 leases with willing landowners and are busy investigating the other site locations around the country to complete the programme. We have some interesting technical challenges ahead of us as we move into more remote places where power and backhaul are non-existent.

Our team are passionate about solving these challenges and delivering coverage to the northern Coromandel Peninsula, the Wairarapa East Coast, Wellington's coastal regions, Banks Peninsula and the scenic Milford road, all the way to Milford Sound.

**We are all motivated by the wonderful feedback we receive from rural people who are so happy to have new connectivity where they live and run businesses. A very grateful business owner in the Wairau Valley wrote:**

"Covid 19 has highlighted the importance of this project with many people retreating to rural areas and relocating as a result of lockdowns, job-losses and other impacts of this unforeseen pandemic. It is obvious by the time taken and the massive area to be covered that this project has been the result of a huge amount of hard work by a great many people. I would like to express my thanks and to say that from my point of view - and I am sure this sentiment is shared by many other country people, the effort has been worth it and is very much appreciated."



**“Ngā mihi o Matariki, te tau hou Māori”**

**All the best from the RCG team.**