

# Fast-track consenting: timeframes and the role of the Environmental Protection Authority

The COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (the Act) creates a process to fast-track projects aimed at stimulating the economy. The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has some new functions to support fast-track consenting.

The Act became law on 9 July 2020. There are three types of projects that fall under the Act, and each follow a different process.

- **Listed projects:** These are projects that are listed in the Act. Applicants can lodge resource consent applications or notices of requirement directly with the EPA.
- **Referred projects:** These projects must meet eligibility criteria and be referred by the Minister for the Environment, through an Order in Council. Once approved, applicants can lodge applications or notices of requirement with the EPA. Read more about the Order in Council process at: [www.mfe.govt.nz/ses-and-how-get-involved/fast-track-consenting-process-through-order-council](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/ses-and-how-get-involved/fast-track-consenting-process-through-order-council)
- **Work on infrastructure by approved organisations** such as the NZ Transport Agency and KiwiRail: Some work can be carried out as permitted activities (they don't require resource consents) if conditions in the Act are met.

The Act will be repealed on 8 July 2022, although any application that has been commenced will continue to be determined under the Act.

## Role of the EPA

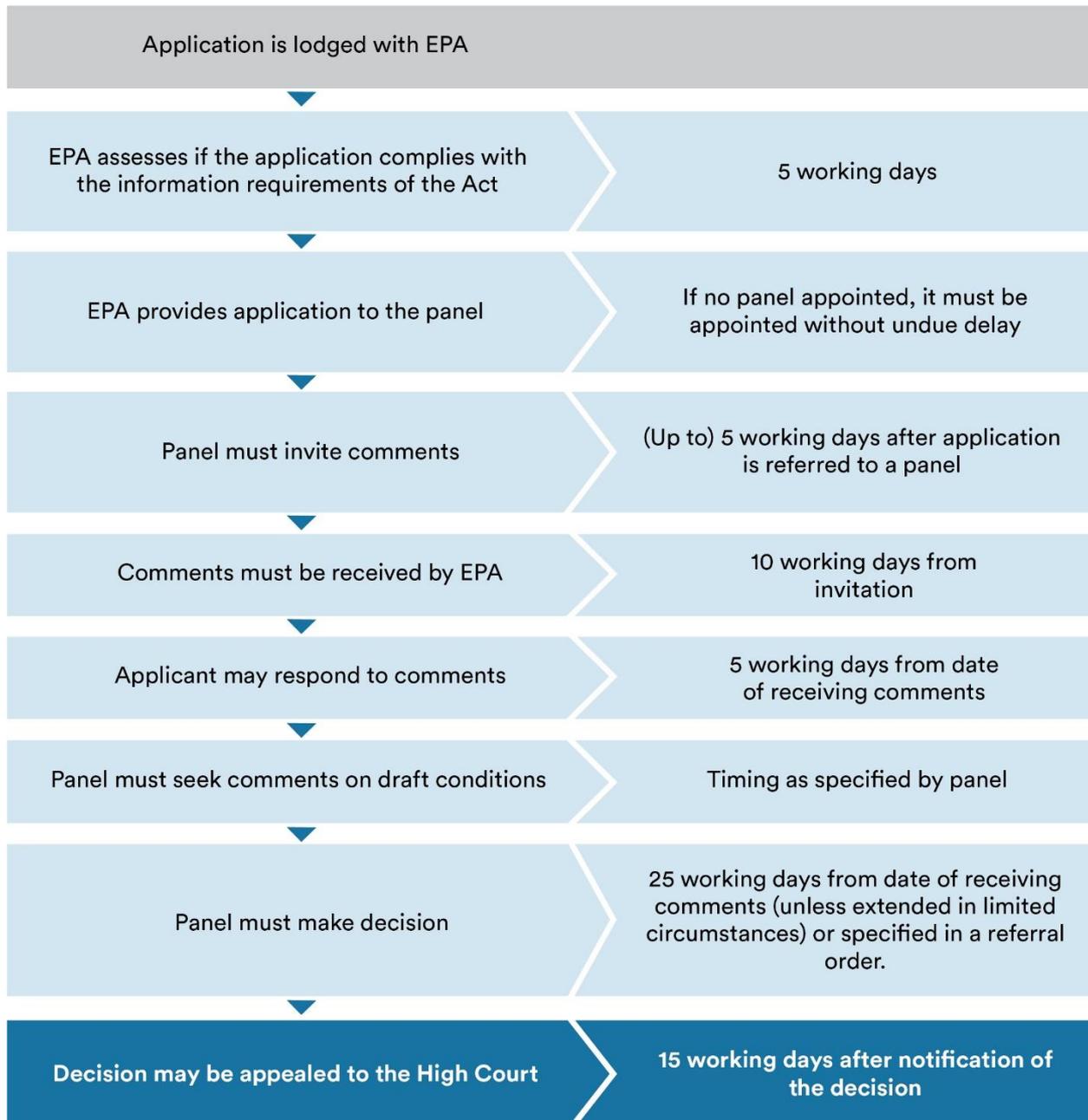
The EPA provides advice and secretariat support to the panel convener and panels. Panels decide applications and are independent of the EPA.

The EPA's responsibilities include:

- supporting the panel convener
- engaging with applicants during the pre-lodgement phase, and receiving applications
- assessing whether applications and notices of requirement meet the information requirements of the Act and can be provided to a panel
- receiving comments on projects
- issuing a notice of hearing and providing support for hearings, should a hearing take place
- supporting panels during decision making
- recovering costs from applicants.

## Timeframes

The Act has a timeframe for processing applications by the expert consenting panels and the EPA.



## Get in touch

If you have a question about fast-track consenting, please phone 0800 080 065 or email us on [fasttrack@epa.govt.nz](mailto:fasttrack@epa.govt.nz)

Read more about the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 at [www.mfe.govt.nz/rma/act-to-fast-track-projects](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/rma/act-to-fast-track-projects)

Read more about the listed projects, expert consenting panels and making an application at [www.epa.govt.nz/fast-track-consenting/](http://www.epa.govt.nz/fast-track-consenting/)