

Timeline is as follows:

October 2017: RNZ's briefing to the incoming Minister identified "Improving RNZ Music" services as one of six priorities. The briefing said:

"To achieve our audience targets and optimise charter performance we need to optimise the mix of (music) services and use these cost-effectively to deliver different services to different sectors of the population."

April 2018: The Government's public media advisory group issued its recommendations which included " Help RNZ extend its multi-media services to reach more people in different ways".

July 2018 – Cabinet paper recommendation for increased funding for RNZ titled - "RNZ+ Stage 1 funding". Māori and young people identified as priority audiences for RNZ.

Dec 13, 2018: The Broadcasting Minister, in the letter of expectation for 2018-19, sets out six public media objectives for the portfolio, including "Better catering to Māori, Pacific and other under-served audiences". The letter of expectation also set out six specific priorities for RNZ, including:

"Continuing to support the production of more and more diverse local content and boost reach to under-served audiences, in particular Māori, Pacific, regional audiences, children and young audiences."

February 11, 2019: In RNZ's written response to the letter of expectation, the RNZ chairman said: "We serve current audiences well but must expand and diversify our services to meet rising expectations of both the Government and the public and to fill the gaps left behind by commercial media. This requires RNZ to adapt to a disrupted media sector and to the changing needs and preferences of audiences who have more choice than ever in terms of media consumption." The letter said the process of adaptation included, "Diversifying RNZ's audiences and staff composition so that they fully reflect the diversity of the communities we serve." The letter from the RNZ chairman went on to say: "We particularly endorse your (the Minister's) focus on underserved audiences (ie Māori, Pacific people, regional audiences and young audiences). RNZ's future relevance and success will depend in large part on us developing unique and valued services for these groups in a manner that complements our existing successful services."

May 29, 2019

RNZ CE sent a letter to MCH expressing an interest in the 102FM radio band for public broadcasting use and catering for audiences which are not a priority for commercial media.(See appendix)

July 7, 2019: Meeting followed up with email. RNZ briefs Ministry for Culture and Heritage about the new Music Strategy, including the potential implications for RNZ Concert and the question of "whether we could access the 102FM frequencies for a new service for young New Zealanders that would play a large proportion (say, 40%) of NZ music".

August 20, 2019– RNZ Chair and CE meet with Minister. Music plans discussed.

October 1, 2019: Broadcasting Minister attends RNZ board meeting and is informed at a high level about the new Music Strategy.

November 7, 2019: MCH asks for an update from RNZ on whether RNZ had progressed its thinking about a music and youth focused station and whether RNZ was still interested in exploring the use of 102 spectrum. The RNZ email response was that our planning was progressing and that the plan did not require new spectrum but if that was an option we wanted to explore it.

November 13, 2019: After a discussion with MCH about the practicalities of accessing the spectrum, RNZ decided to progress a plan that would not require it.

December 6, 2019: RNZ board approves the Music Strategy. (See appendix)

December 10, 2019: RNZ informs MCH about staff update on new music strategy.

January 28, 2020: RNZ meets with MCH to brief it about the now-confirmed music strategy. Meeting followed up with an email to confirm key points as follows:

- Over the past twelve months RNZ has carried out a full review of its music services, exploring opportunities for music to engage with younger and more diverse audiences in line with RNZ's Charter obligations.
- Arising from this review, from early February RNZ will begin implementing a new music strategy that will expand our range of services to New Zealanders by more efficiently and effectively deploying current resources.
- The objective of the strategy is to diversify and grow audiences by developing an innovative new music brand aimed at young people. The new brand will showcase New Zealand artists and their music.
- The new multimedia brand will be based in Auckland. It will be launched in the second half of 2020 and will be available online, on-demand, on streaming platforms and will be broadcast on FM nationwide.
- As part of the strategy, the RNZ Concert service will continue and will undergo some changes in the next few months. It will be focused on playing classical music 24/7 and will continue to broadcast live and delayed performances of New Zealand orchestras. RNZ will continue recording live performances alongside other established music industry partners.
- From the middle of 2020 RNZ Concert will no longer be available on FM but it will still be widely and easily available through online streaming and on-demand services.
- RNZ Concert listeners will continue to access the content on Freeview channel 51 and Sky Digital channel 422, reaching 86% of homes in New Zealand. It will be available on mobile devices through the RNZ app and our streaming partners like iHeart Radio, Rova, and Spotify, and through any other internet connected device.
- RNZ Concert will also be broadcast nationwide on AM radio on the Parliamentary Network when Parliament is not sitting, making it accessible to more than 3.5 million people or 83% of the New Zealand population.
- Next week RNZ will begin consulting with affected staff. We also have a comprehensive communication and stakeholder engagement plan in place for this project, ensuring the media industry, officials, audiences and orchestras etc are kept informed.

January 28, 2020 – Verbal update given to NZ on Air about new plans for RNZ music.

January 29, 2020: RNZ chairman, CEO and a board member meet with the Minister to discuss matters including the new music strategy and the plan to begin engaging with staff on Wednesday, February 5.

February 5, 2020: RNZ confirms to MCH, Treasury and the Broadcasting Minister's office that at 10am that day consultation with staff would begin.

February 7, 2020 – Brief conversation between the Minister and RNZ CE, where the music plans were discussed.

February 10, 2020: email correspondence between RNZ and MCH on transmission costings of a new network.

March 2, 2020: RNZ chairman and CEO meet with the Minister to discuss options for seeking support for RNZ's proposed new service for young people.