

**From:** Liz Waters [mailto:liz@waihekegulfnews.co.nz]

**Sent:** Wednesday, 29 June 2016 4:54 p.m.

**To:** Registrar

**Subject:** Submission against the merger of Wilson and Horton New Zealand and Fairfax NZ Ltd

To who it may concern

On behalf of the Waiheke's weekly community newspaper Gulf News, I register this submission against Wilson and Horton Ltd (trading as NZME) and Fairfax NZ Ltd which are seeking authorisation to merge their media operations in New Zealand.

A merger between the two largest media companies in the country is not in the best interests of the existing media industry and residents of this country.

The 'Fourth Estate' provides the eyes and ears of citizens. To put that control in the hands of one company with, effectively, a large share of overseas shareholder/ownership (as outlined in their proposal for the demerger), would be seen as a great injustice to all New Zealanders. It would put at risk the right of citizens to meaningful democratic participation in their country.

If this merger is approved it will open up the possibility for:

- A monopolistic news service, covering radio and print.
- Digital news choices reduced to one source, ie currently Stuff and NZ Herald, only one will survive.
- A monopolistic approach to advertising sales, with predatory pricing to the exclusion of Independent publishers across NZ.
- Driving smaller independent publishers out of their respective areas and local community.
- A reduction in the quality and quantity of Editorial scrutiny and content across the country.
- The reduction in employment opportunities in all publishing categories, and the resulting drop in training through the established and approved ITO's, i.e. a dumbing down of the industry.

Yours sincerely,  
Liz Waters, Publisher