

Report

Subject: **Late Item - Three Waters Reform Programme and Taumata Arowai**

To: Te Roopuu Ahi Kaa Komiti

From: Department of Internal Affairs, via Peter Beggs

Date: 5 February 2021

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Te Roopuu Ahi Kaa (TRAK) with information that has been reported by the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) on in the Three Waters Reform Programme and Taumata Arowai: Hui-ā-Motu Summary Report. The information has been provided to Council by DIA.

2 Context

- 2.1 In September and October 2020 a number of hui were held between members of the Three Waters Reform Team and Taumata Arowai. The purpose was to engage with iwi, hapū and Māori throughout the country while (re)introducing the Three Waters and Taumata Arowai kaupapa; provide an overview of the direction of travel of this mahi; and listen to the perspectives of those who they were engaging with.
- 2.2 The hui-ā-motu have been attended by over 300 representatives from many different iwi, hapū and Māori organisations.
- 2.3 The next DIA Te Ao Māori technical working group hui is scheduled for 24 February 2021 and, in addition to ongoing informal discussions with iwi across the motu, are hoping to engage directly with Te Maruata, LGNZ's Māori Committee.
- 2.4 A formal invitation with further details on the workshops, and how to RSVP, will be sent to Mayors, CEs and iwi representatives shortly. However, in the interim for your diary management, the Zone 3 meeting will be held on 11 March from 9.30-4.30, Palmerston North Conference and Function Centre, 354 Main Street.

3 Emerging Themes as reported by the DIA

- 3.1 Key points of discussion:
- Support for a stronger partnership between tangata whenua and the Crown.
 - Tangata whenua need to be embedded as Treaty Partners from the very start, including but not limited to representation around the table and anywhere decisions will be made. It was made clear that iwi, hapū and Māori advisory roles were not of an acceptable standard.
 - A number of iwi hapū and Māori expressed disappointment with the current relationship they have with their councils specifically around water service. This

extended to no explicit mechanisms or expectations for councils to work with iwi/hapū on how the stimulus funding would be spent.

- Some iwi have acknowledged and reflected that strong relationships have been formed with councils and there is a fear of what the reforms might mean for that relationship.
- Iwi, hapū and Māori have called for support to develop avenues so that there will be meaningful participation in the reform process.
- It was highlighted this is an opportunity for both education and employment for iwi, hapū and Māori.
- It presents an opportunity to develop a better process than the current status quo.
- Iwi attendees questioned how Taumata Arowai, the Three Waters Reforms and councils will incorporate information and findings already available through existing iwi reports and iwi Environmental Management Plans into the reform process and the ongoing work.
- Protection of rights, roles and responsibilities to their wai also need to be addressed through the reform.
- Concerns have been raised around council/private suppliers who have more resourcing, capacity and capabilities yet have long ignored their problems regarding drinking water quality, the health of waterways and puna management, and wastewater and stormwater discharges. This led to further concerns around small suppliers' responsibilities under the Water Services Bill and Taumata Arowai's enforcement of these.

4 Specific to the Horizons Region

4.1 Feedback from meetings held within the Horizons Region included:

- An iwi attendee in Palmerston North noted that a rural marae in their rohe needs a wastewater plant but has had to close because it can't afford to invest in this. In support of this, there were calls for equitable registration fees from Taumata Arowai and for marae and papakāinga to have minimal, or preferably nil, fees.
- Concerns about the fire suppressant at Linton and Ohakea affecting the ground water and wanted to know how Taumata Arowai will appropriately manage the risk and effects of fire water run-off.
- It was questioned how the Te Awa Tupua Act would apply to Taumata Arowai and how the new water service entities will interact with it.
- Iwi attendees noted that, in Whanganui, they are different with their Te Awa Tupua legislation, but also with their councils. Iwi operate as hapū katoa, iwi do not speak on behalf of hapū. When needed as a legislated entity the iwi will come in and speak for hapū.
- Iwi attendees noted that Palmerston North were going through a wastewater process and questioned what impact the water reform would have on this. An iwi attendee noted that Rangitāne are river people that have been impacted by settlement, regulation, policy and development. There are nine rivers all draining from a wide catchment area. All swamps have been drained. What is the impact on the aquifers? Development of stop banks and controlling of the waterways disregarding the cultural impact – a long term view of impact on the aquifers is needed.

5 Summary

5.1 Below summarises the high level findings of the report:

- Iwi, hapū and Māori have expressed that they want to be involved at all levels of the reform programme and the new entities, especially where they can provide the greatest change.
- Iwi, hapū and Māori who met with the DIA were generally supportive of the three waters reform because it is seen as an opportunity to work together to design something that is not the status quo.
- Officials are committed to ongoing engagement with iwi, hapū and Māori with the next formal round scheduled for early 2021.
- The full Three Waters Reform Programme and Taumata Arowai: Hui-ā-Motu Summary report is available using the link [Three Waters Hui a Motu - Summary Report 2021.pdf \(dia.govt.nz\)](https://www.dia.govt.nz/3waters/hui-amo/summary-report-2021.pdf)

6 Recommendation

6.1 That the report on 'Three Waters Reform Programme and Taumata Arowai' be received.

Peter Beggs
Chief Executive