



EVENT BRIEFING

Meeting with senior representatives from the nine South Island iwi, 23 July 2025

Date:	18 July 2025	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	BRIEFING REQ-0016214

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon James Meager Minister for the South Island	Meet with senior representatives from the nine South Island iwi.	23 July 2025

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Karl Woodhead	General Manager Strategy, Planning and Performance, Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit (Kānoa)	Privacy of natural persons	
Cory Hagenaars	South Island Lead Advisor, Kānoa	Privacy of natural persons	✓

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

Minister's office to complete:

☐ Approved

☐ Declined

☐ Noted

☐ Needs change

☐ Seen

☐ Overtaken by Events

☐ See Minister's Notes

☐ Withdrawn

Comments



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Purpose

To provide background and supporting information for your meeting with senior representatives from the nine South Island iwi on Wednesday, 23 July 2025.

Recommendations

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) recommend you:

- a **Note** the information in this briefing to support your meeting with senior representatives from the nine South Island iwi.

Noted

Karl Woodhead
General Manager Strategy, Planning and Performance
Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit, MBIE

18/07/2025

Hon James Meager
Minister for the South Island

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Summary

1. On Wednesday, 23 July 2025, from 11.30am to 12.30pm, you will meet with senior representatives from the nine South Island iwi (the South Island Iwi) via Zoom. These are:
 - Ngāti Rārua - Olivia Hall, Rōpata Taylor and Shane Graham
 - Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō - Nicole Akuhata and David Johnston
 - Ngāti Kōata - Caroline Palmer and Turi Hippolite
 - Ngāti Kuia - Waihaere Mason and Eugene Whakahoehoe
 - Ngāti Toa Rangatira - Callum Katene and Helmut Karewa Modlik
 - Rangitāne o Wairau - Janis de Thierry, Calvin Hart and Corey Hebbard
 - Te Ātiawa - Kura Moeahu and Dion Tuuta
 - Ngāti Tama - Anthony Little and Hemi Sundgren
 - Ngāi Tahu / Kāi Tahu - Warwick Tauwhare-George and Ben Bateman.
2. This meeting provides an opportunity to engage with iwi leaders to discuss:
 - your South Island portfolio and vision for the role
 - opportunities to engage with iwi to achieve shared aspirations
 - the 'Together Te Taihu' partnership agreement between councils and iwi of the Te Taihu (top of the South Island) region.

Background

'Together Te Taihu' partnership agreement

3. In December 2023, eight Te Taihu iwi¹, together with the Mayors of Tasman, Nelson and Marlborough regions, signed the 'Together Te Taihu' partnership agreement² (the Agreement).
4. The Agreement establishes a framework to align the aspirations of all parties and strengthen the top of the South Island as a region. It recognises the important and unique roles iwi and councils play in cultural, social, environmental and economic wellbeing.
5. The Agreement is built upon five principles:
 - **Kotahitanga:** Navigating together in unison.
 - **Honotanga:** Recognising each other's autonomy and mandate.
 - **Tauritanga:** Working together to achieve equity in outcomes.
 - **Kaupapa Mau Tonu:** Looking long-term.
 - **Tauutuutu:** Fostering reciprocity and mutual benefit.

¹ Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō, Ngāti Kōata, Ngāti Kuia, Ngāti Rārua, Ngāti Tama, Ngāti Toa Rangatira, Rangitāne o Wairau, and Te Ātiawa.

² [Te Taihu Iwi, Councils sign historic partnership agreement](#)

Topics that may be discussed

Fast-track projects

6. Four projects relevant to the South Island Iwi are listed under Schedule Two of the *Fast-track Approvals Act 2024*. Information on the *Fast-track Approvals Act* was provided to you previously (briefing REQ-0011634 refers).
7. Three projects relate to Ngāi Tahu:
 - The Hananui Aquaculture project by Ngāi Tahu Seafood Resources Limited, which intends to develop approximately 2,500 hectares of marine space for marine farming.
 - The Pound Road Industrial Development project by Ngāi Tahu Property Development Holdings, which intends to develop industrial land in Canterbury.
 - The Arahura Papakāinga Housing project by Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Waewae³, which intends to develop Papakāinga beside Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Waewae Marae.
8. One project relates to Ngāti Koata:
 - The Maitahi Village project by CCKV Maitai Dev Co Limited Partnership, which intends to develop 180 new residential allotments, of which 50 will be Ngāti Koata iwi led housing. The project also includes plans for a retirement village with 194 townhouses and 36 in-care units, and a commercial centre to support the communities. The project lodged an application with the Environmental Protection Authority and has now been referred to an expert panel for processing and decision. Information on the Maitahi Village substantive application under the *Fast-track Approvals Act* was provided to you previously (briefing REQ-0011634 refers).

Crown relations with Māori

9. The Treaty of Waitangi requires Crown agencies to consider Treaty principles when carrying out their functions. Treaty principles are primarily concerned with the way in which the Crown and Māori behave in their interactions with one another. These can include: the government's right to govern, the right of iwi to manage their resources, redress for past grievances, equality, and reasonable cooperation by both parties. Public servants are tasked with supporting the Crown in its relationships with Māori under the Treaty.
10. As of 2014, all nine South Island iwi have agreed full and final settlement of all historical Treaty of Waitangi claims. As part of these settlements, four Acts were enacted:
 - *Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998*⁴.
 - *Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō, Ngāti Kuia, and Rangitāne o Wairau Claims Settlement Act 2014*⁵.
 - *Ngāti Kōata, Ngāti Rārua, Ngāti Tama ki Te Tau Ihu, and Te Ātiawa o Te Waka-a-Māui Claims Settlement Act 2014*⁶.
 - *Ngāti Toa Rangatira Claims Settlement Act 2014*⁷.

³ Ngāti Waewae is the smallest hapū of Ngāi Tahu

⁴ [Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 - New Zealand Legislation](#)

⁵ [Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō, Ngāti Kuia, and Rangitāne o Wairau Claims Settlement Act 2014 - New Zealand Legislation](#)

⁶ [Ngāti Kōata, Ngāti Rārua, Ngāti Tama ki Te Tau Ihu, and Te Ātiawa o Te Waka-a-Māui Claims Settlement Act 2014 - New Zealand Legislation](#)

⁷ [Ngāti Toa Rangatira Claims Settlement Act 2014 - New Zealand Legislation](#)

11. These Acts established:

- a formal apology from the Crown and acknowledgement of Treaty breaches
- cultural and economic redress, including recognition of iwi interests in land, heritage, and conservation
- iwi-specific governance entities to represent iwi in dealings with the Crown
- a framework for how the Crown and relevant government departments should engage with iwi on matters of mutual interest, aiming to embed partnership and support ongoing relationships
- the right of first refusal for any Crown land sold within iwi rohe
- protocols and relationship agreements between iwi and government agencies, setting out how engagement should occur on shared interests.

Waitangi Tribunal review

12. On 9 May 2025, Hon Tama Potaka, as Minister for Māori Development, announced the Government will undertake a review of the *Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975* (the Act)⁸ in line with the coalition agreement between New Zealand First and the National Party. This is intended to ensure the Waitangi Tribunal remains focused, relevant, effective and fit for purpose.
13. The review will assess:
- whether the Act clarifies the Tribunal's jurisdiction
 - how different types of claims are managed
 - how the Act aligns with other legislation.
14. An Independent Advisory Technical Group (the Group), together with Te Puni Kōkiri, will carry out the review. The Group expects to commence engagement with Māori and iwi entities, Treaty law experts, and current and former tribunal members by mid-2025. Advice is anticipated to be provided to Ministers, including Hon Shane Jones, by September 2025 to enable legislative proposals to be introduced before the end of the year.

*Nelson Tenth*s

15. In 1839, Māori landowners sold approximately 151,000 acres in Te Taihū to the New Zealand Company, a British joint-stock company that played a major role in the early colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand between 1839 and 1858. The primary form of payment for this land was the reservation of one-tenth of the land (the Tenth)s for the benefit of the Māori owners and their descendants (the Customary Owners⁹). The Tenth)s sections were to be one-acre urban, 50-acre suburban and 150-acre rural sections in the new Nelson settlement.
16. Only 5,100 acres of Tenth)s were reserved for use for the Customary Owners, comprised of urban and suburban sections. The remaining 10,000 acres of rural Tenth)s were never reserved.
17. In 2017, the Supreme Court released its judgement on the Tenth)s¹⁰. It found that the Crown had a duty to act in the best interests of the Customary Owners regarding the Tenth)s and that it had breached these duties by not reserving the remaining 10,000 acres. The court

⁸ The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 establishes the Waitangi Tribunal, as well as the tribunal's functions, jurisdiction and limitations.

⁹ In 1893, the Native Land Court determined the customary owners of this land were Ngāti Rārua, Te Ātiawa, Ngāti Tama and Ngāti Kōata.

¹⁰ [Proprietors of Wakatu v Attorney General \[2017\] NZSC 17.](#)

referred the claim to the High Court to determine the liability, loss and remedy in accordance with the Supreme Court judgement.

18. In October 2024, the High Court released its judgement¹¹, which directed the Crown pay a sum of money to the Customary Owners. The exact figure is to be calculated with consideration to:
 - the current market value of the land that the Crown no longer holds on trust
 - compensation for the value of the beneficial use of the Tenth
 - the amount which would have been generated according to rentals
 - interest.
19. It is expected that before interest, this figure will be less than \$1.00 billion, however, compensation is anticipated to be significant.
20. In November 2024, the Attorney General filed an appeal of the High Court judgment. The Court of Appeal will hear the case in April 2026.

Regional Intersectoral Forum

21. The Regional Intersectoral Forum (RI Forum) was established in 2001 with the purpose of identifying opportunities and aligning support to advance iwi aspirations for enhanced outcomes for iwi and Māori in Te Taihaki. The RI Forum is an established mechanism to make effective and efficient connections in one forum, reducing effort and duplication.
22. The RI Forum's membership consists of leaders of the eight iwi, three councils, and central government agencies¹² in Te Taihaki.
23. The forum is co-chaired by Justin Carter (Pouwhakahaere Te Ātiaki) and Craig Churchill (Nelson, Tasman, Marlborough, and West Coast Regional Public Service Commissioner).

Te Kotahi o te Taihaki Charitable Trust

24. Te Kotahi o Te Taihaki Charitable Trust (the Trust) was set up in February 2021 with support from the Regional Public Service Commissioner, Ministry of Social Development (MSD), and the eight iwi of Te Taihaki. The Trust has a focus on the communities of Te Taihaki, particularly Māori, with an aim of:
 - advancing health and wellbeing
 - alleviating poverty
 - ensuring adequate food is available
 - promoting education and skills.
25. The Trust has delivered various outcomes in the community, including:
 - enabling drivers to obtain licenses through MSD
 - providing Accident Compensation Corporation support services
 - securing two Whānau Ora navigators
 - undertaking stocktake of all emergency containers across the rohe and delivering lock boxes funded by Te Putahitanga to Civil Defence Centres

¹¹ [Stafford v Attorney General \[2024\] NZHC 3110](#).

¹² Ministry of Social Development, Education, Justice, Primary Industries, the Environment, and Business Innovation and Employment; Departments of Corrections, Conservation, and Internal Affairs; Fire Emergency New Zealand, Inland Revenue, Kāinga Ora, Regional Public Sector Service, Nelson Bays Primary Health, Te Whānau Ora, Marlborough Primary Health, Oranga Tamariki, New Zealand Police and Te Puni Kōkiri.

- placing 53 people into apprenticeships through Kei Aku Ringa Māori Trade Training.
26. The Trust is considering additional services, however, the piecemeal contracting and current financial constraints within the Crown funding environment have placed pressure on the Trust, leading the Trust to pursue sustainable options.

South Island challenges and priorities

Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit managed investments

27. Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit manages total approved funding of \$975.00 million of predominantly regional development investments in the South Island and as at 30 June 2025, has paid \$773.20 million into projects in the region. This investment attracted a total of \$1.20 billion in co-investment. Further information on investment into the South Island is provided in the regional dashboard attached at **Annex One**.

Te Taihū region

28. The Te Taihū region has a number of challenges, including:
- productivity
 - housing
 - health.
29. The Te Taihū region has 14.7 per cent lower productivity when compared to the national average. To close this productivity gap by 2050, the region's productivity would need to grow at almost twice the national average. The average household income in the region is also 15.9 per cent below the national average. This is driven in part by a large proportion of retirees, however, the region's workforce population also earn less when compared to the rest of New Zealand, with average annual wage earnings 12.8 per cent lower than the national average in 2024.
30. Te Taihū has poor housing affordability, with lack of affordable housing set out as a key challenge in the Nelson City Council Long Term Plan 2024-2034¹³. To address this issue, Nelson City Council (NCC):
- Established the Housing Reserve Fund (the Fund), with the aim of doubling the number of community housing units from 50 to 100 by 2026. The Fund has allocated \$3.85 million over four grants to not-for-profit community housing providers in the region. These providers will develop and provide social and affordable housing, as well as accommodation for vulnerable and high needs individuals.
 - Proposed 'Plan Change 29', an amendment to the Nelson Resource Management Plan (NRMP) intended to introduce more flexibility around housing policies and rules. This is aimed at enabling greater housing supply and intensification. The changes are expected to be in operation by September 2025.
31. The population aged over 65 years in Te Taihū is growing at a rapid rate, now representing 23.1 per cent of the population compared to 18.4 per cent in 2013. This is putting pressure on healthcare services in the region, with some general practitioners estimating the over 60 age bracket accounts for up to 80 per cent of primary care appointments.
32. In October 2023, 16.7 per cent of Māori in Te Taihū were not enrolled with primary health care, compared to 4.3 per cent for non-Māori. To reduce inequitable health outcomes in the

¹³ [Nelson City Council - Long Term Plan 2024-2034](#)

region, Te Piki Oranga (TPO) was established in 2014. TPO is a Māori health services provider which operates in-home, mobile and community outreach services in Te Taihū.

33. On 26 May 2025, Hon Simeon Brown, as Minister of Health, announced the Government will invest over \$500.00 million to upgrade Nelson hospital¹⁴. These upgrades include:
- Expansion of the hospital's emergency department, set to cost \$11.00 million, and complete in early 2026.
 - Refurbishment and seismic strengthening of the hospital's two main buildings, expected to cost \$73.00 million to design and complete.
 - A new patient building, with 128 beds, an acute assessment unit, a pharmacy, a blood bank, and dedicated areas for assessment, treatment, and rehabilitation services. The building is scheduled to conclude construction in 2029.
 - A modular, portable inpatient unit with a capacity of 32 beds, which will enable ongoing care during construction. This is expected to be delivered by May 2026.

Previous briefings

34. Information on challenges and priorities for the South Island regions was provided to you previously, including:
- Meeting with Nelson Regional Development Agency (briefing REQ-0011930 refers)
 - Visit to West Coast (briefing REQ-0012753 refers)
 - Canterbury Mayoral Forum (briefing REQ-0009348 refers)
 - Meeting with representatives from Destination Queenstown and Queenstown business leaders (briefing REQ-0015306 refers)
 - Visit to Invercargill (briefing REQ-0011013 refers).

About the audience

35. You will be meeting with senior representatives from the South Island Iwi. Biographies of attendees are below.



Olivia Hall, Chair, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Rārua

Olivia was appointed Chair of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Rārua in November 2011.

She is Lead Chair of the National Iwi Chairs Forum, and a member of the Māori Education Advisory Committee.

Olivia has qualifications in mātauranga Māori, teaching and leadership, as well as a Master of Business Administration.

¹⁴ [Government to deliver redevelopment of Nelson Hospital - Beehive.govt.nz](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/government-to-deliver-redevelopment-of-nelson-hospital)

	Rōpata Taylor, Chair, Ngāti Rārua Rōpata has held Trustee and Director roles with Ngāti Rārua Ātiawa Iwi Trust since 2000. He currently serves as Chair of the Trust, and is a member of the Education, Audit & Risk, Remuneration and Whakapapa Committees. Rōpata also works as General Manager People & Culture at Wakatū Incorporation.
	Shane Graham, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Ngāti Rārua Shane was appointed CEO of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Rārua in February 2020. Prior to his appointment, he worked as a Senior Advisor at Te Pūni Kōkiri.
	Nicole Akuhata, Chair, Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō Nicole was appointed Chair of the Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō Trust in April 2025 after serving as a Trustee since September 2022. She also works as Director of Māori & Learner Success at Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology.
	David Johnston, General Manager, Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō David was appointed General Manager of Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō Trust in July 2025. Prior to his appointment he worked as Head of Survivor Voice and Insights at the Crown Response Office. David serves as Director for the Nelson Regional Development Agency and Kururangi Consulting Limited.
	Caroline Palmer, Chair, Ngāti Kōata Caroline was appointed Chair of the Ngāti Kōata Trust Board in 2022.

	Turi Hippolite, CEO, Ngāti Kōata Turi was appointed CEO of Ngāti Kōata in April 2023.
	Waihaere Mason, Chair, Ngāti Kuia Waihaere has been Chair for Ngāti Kuia since 1999. He retired from teaching as Principal, Nelson Intermediate School, in 2006 after 45 years of service. Waihaere was recognised as a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for services to Iwi.
	Eugene Whakahoehoe, CEO, Ngāti Kuia Eugene was appointed CEO of Ngāti Kuia in June 2023. He also acts as a Trustee for Te Kotahi o Te Tauhi and the Māori Soldiers Trust.
	Callum Katene, Chair, Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Callum was appointed Chair of Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira in 2021. He also works as a Director at Atea Systems Ltd.
	Helmut Karewa Modlik, CEO, Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Helmut works as CEO of Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira. He has a background in accounting and finance, and founded and ran a management consultancy for 12 years.

	Janis de Thierry, Co-Chair, Rangitāne o Wairau Janis has served as Co-Chair of Te Rūnanga a Rangitāne o Wairau for over five years.
	Calvin Hart, Co-Chair, Rangitāne o Wairau Calvin has served as Co-Chair of Te Rūnanga a Rangitāne o Wairau for over five years.
	Corey Hebbard, General Manager, Te Rūnanga a Rangitāne o Wairau Trust Corey was appointed General Manager of Te Rūnanga a Rangitāne o Wairau Trust in April 2021, prior to which he worked as Commercial Property Manager for Rangitāne Investments Limited. Corey also acts as Trustee for Te Kotahi o Te Tauhi Charitable Trust.
	Kura Moeahu, Chair, Te Ātiawa Kura serves as Chair of Te Rūnanganui o Te Ātiawa. He also acts as Chair for Waiwhetu Marae and is a member of the Board of Creative New Zealand and the WelTec Māori Advisory Board. Kura has also worked as a Principal Advisor (Māori) for Parliamentary Services since 2007.
	Dion Tuuta, CEO, Te Ātiawa Dion was appointed CEO of Te Ātiawa in January 2021. Prior to his appointment he worked as CEO for Te Ohu Kaimoana.

	Anthony Little, Chair, Ngāti Tama Anthony has served as Chair of Ngāti Tama ki Te Waipounamu Trust for over nine years.
	Hemi Sundgren, CEO, Ngāti Tama Hemi was appointed CEO of Ngāti Tama ki Te Waipounamu Trust in March 2022. Prior to his appointment he worked at Tourism New Zealand as Advisor – Māori. Hemi also acts as a Director for Taranaki Mounga Limited.
	Warwick Tauwhare-George, Board Chair, Ngāi Tahu Holdings Warwick was appointed Chair of Ngāi Tahu Holdings Corporation Limited in September 2024. He also works as Deputy Director-General Māori Partnerships and Investment at the Ministry for Primary Industries.
	Ben Bateman, CEO, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Ben was appointed CEO of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu in October 2024, following a seven month period as acting CEO. Ben has a leadership background, working at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the New Zealand Defence Force.

Risks and mitigations

36. No risks identified.

Annexes

Annex One: Kānoa managed investments in the South Island

Annex One: Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit managed investments in the South Island

