

Guidance for Engagement with Iwi

Engaging with tangata whenua and iwi impacted by our operations is not only required in legislation, but also just a good idea and satisfies the generally held view that those affected by a decision have a right to be involved in decision making.

The Treaty of Waitangi commitments can only succeed where we establish mutually beneficial relationships based on trust and mutual respect. The terms collaboration and partnership are used often to ensure that engagement is not about talking to “stakeholders”, but our “partners”.

The following guidance will hopefully help you with your engagement with iwi:

Question: I need to make contact with iwi, how do I know who to speak with?

It's often not easy to ensure you have engaged fully, or with the right tangata whenua. Be aware that there may be more than one iwi with an interest in an area.

Some council websites contain information regarding engagement with iwi groups. For example Wellington City Council have a [website](#) dedicated to mana whenua and resource consenting applications. Auckland Council have a [similar website](#). You add your property address, and the website gives you the name and contact for all iwi you must engage with.

[Māori Maps](#) is a great source of online information. Once you've received the information regarding iwi of the region you now need to do more searching for actual contact names of iwi of that region.

Te Kāhui Māngai (Directory of Iwi and Māori Organisations) is a Te Puni Kokiri initiative and a way to find information on iwi of a region.

Don't use iwi you get on with as a box ticking exercise. You need to reach out to all identified iwi as you won't know if what you are doing is significant to more than one iwi. If those who are seeking to develop land don't know or truly understand iwi concerns and aspirations in any specific significant area, it makes for an uneasy relationship. Take the time to carry out meaningful engagement and understanding and it will prove mutually beneficial.

Question: Can I do this myself or do I need to engage iwi advisers?

You don't need consultants or advisers. Iwi themselves are the advisers and building personal relationships are an important part of engagement.

Advisers may be useful where they understand or have access to the right people. If you are going to use an adviser, find one that can help navigate you through the potential risks and the potential iwi politics. If you get it right up front, unlocking the opportunities together will be better for iwi, better for the community and better for the future of your development.

Question: How much will engagement cost?

There will be costs associated with iwi engagement. The extent depends on the level of engagement required. Meetings will be charged for along with the preparation of a Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) or Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA), if required.

CVA's are prepared by an iwi authority or their nominee. A CVA provides information around the cultural values associated with the site and the impact that the proposal may have on identified cultural values. The CVA will also recommend measures to mitigate the effects of the proposal.

Costs will also vary depending on whether you are meeting with iwi environmental officers or iwi governance and whether you are asking iwi to come to you or you are meeting at the marae, online (Zoom/Teams/Skype) or in your office.

It is important to discuss costs, how much of their time you require and how you plan to resource them for this.

Question: Are there places I can go for help?

There are groups that you can go to for advice including Papa Pounamu (NZ Planning Institute), Māori Planners, cultural advisors Ngā Aho (NZ Institute of Landscape Architects), The Office for Maori Crown Relations – Te Arawhiti, and Te Puni Kokiri Ministry for Maori Development.

Question: How long will the process take?

Allow plenty of time as it will take as long as it needs!! What you may want to achieve may not be completed in one meeting, or five meetings and early engagement is key. It's important to keep in mind that many iwi groups are deluged with requests and under resourced to treat with requests. Iwi engagement should not be seen as some just-in-time commodity. Early engagement is critical as the process may take more time than you expect. Don't expect iwi to work to your timelines.

Only by spending time with tangata whenua in te ao Māori (Māori worldview), can meaningful relationships be forged.

Question: What are the key things I need to be aware of?

1) Up front you should be asking:

- What is the kaupapa? Clearly define the purpose of your engagement and what you want to achieve.
- What do I have to offer iwi?
- What do iwi want to achieve and how do I authentically partner with iwi to help them achieve their aspirations?
- What's the culture of my organisation and how do I authentically partner with iwi?

- The Office for Māori Crown Relations – Te Arawhiti – have a range of tools available that have been designed to assist in developing meaningful engagement with iwi.

2) Never underestimate the small things you do i.e. a simple greeting like 'kia ora'. Sometimes we place value on the big things when we should remember and revel and busk in the delight knowing that it was a range of small things that got us in to the room. Humility says the greatness you have achieved is also those who helped you get to where you are. 'Ahakoa he iti he pounamu' – though it is small it is treasured.

3) It is important to understand how you are dealing with iwi and leaders. Respect is the cornerstone of every relationship and it's not the one on the marae doing the speeches at the front, but the one sitting to the side discreetly, either nodding or shaking their head when decisions are made.

4) Ideally you should start engagement with an open mind and the ability to make changes to your proposal. If the proposal is unable to be changed it is not genuine engagement.