

Hon Andrew Little

Minister of Health
Minister Responsible for the GCSB
Minister Responsible for the NZSIS
Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations
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Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into the Terrorist Attack on the Christchurch Mosques



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Tēnā koe Arihia

Thank you for your letter of 27 June 2022 on the roopu's assessment of the Government's response to Ko tō tātou kāinga tēnei, the report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the terrorist attack on Christchurch masjidain on 15 March 2019.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the effort of the roopu in this important mahi. It is clear that much thought has gone into the development of this valuable advice. This is the very purpose for which the roopu was established – to provide independent advice on the Government's progress. It is very pleasing to see it delivering on this important role.

The advice acknowledges the work that has been done since the release of the Royal Commission's report in late 2020 – but very correctly points out that there is still a lot to be done to make Aotearoa New Zealand safer and more inclusive.

I have shared the advice with my colleagues as it touches on work underway across a range of Ministerial portfolios. Along with me they will be using your letter to inform decision making on ongoing response priorities, and in interactions with their agencies, to ensure responses effectively speak to the needs the Royal Commission identified. I will also be encouraging my colleagues to consider attending your hui in the future. It is important that they have this opportunity to update the roopu on the work underway in their portfolio and receive feedback from you and members directly. I am aware that some of my colleagues are already intending to do so later this year, demonstrating their commitment to responding effectively to the Royal Commission's report

The advice provides a detailed assessment of the progress made across the 44 Royal Commission recommendations. Acknowledging that work to respond to those recommendations is ongoing, I have enclosed a copy of the recently updated Royal Commission response Public Progress Tracker released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). It shows the full nature and breadth of the work underway as of July 2022. It may be useful for the roopu in identifying specific areas where it may wish to seek additional information from agencies or seek advice directly from my colleagues on intended approaches.

A copy of this can also be found on the DPMC website at <https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/national-security/royal-commission-inquiry-terrorist-attack-christchurch-masjidain-4>.

Noting that the roopu will continue to receive detailed information on the progress of the work programme from officials and my colleagues, I have focused the remainder of my response on other key issues you raised in your letter.

I agree with the roopu that te Tiriti o Waitangi needs to be integrated into this mahi. At its core, the response is about te whakahaumaru tāngata – protecting our people, communities and cultures. To do this, the Government has recognised the response must be guided by te Tiriti o Waitangi and its principles. My ministerial colleagues and I have, at every opportunity, sought to ensure tāngata whenua are engaged and our policies are centred on principles of te Tiriti o Waitangi and te ao Māori. In particular, the integration of these principles has been front and centre to the work on social cohesion and the National Action Plan Against Racism.

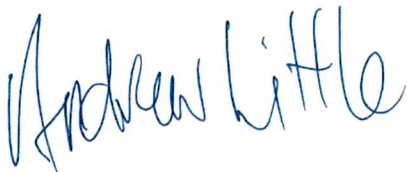
However, I also acknowledge that we can go further. I have asked my officials to continue exploring how we can ensure that engagement with Māori informs the response in a meaningful way. In doing so, I hope we can ensure the foundations of te Tiriti o Waitangi and its principles continue to be integrated into the response in the way the roopu envisages.

The roopu's advice will usefully inform agencies as they consider possible future Budget initiatives for response related activity – including any initiatives that may support communities ongoing participation in the response. However, where Budget allocations are concerned, there will always be competing priorities and any such initiatives will be considered by Government in that context. This is accepting that the Budget is only one avenue for response funding initiatives and agencies will be continuing to explore all avenues to ensure the ongoing response work programme can be adequately funded.

Kāpuia's advice also touched on the need for an effective monitoring framework to measure the success of the response to the Royal Commission's report. Work on this is underway and being led by DPMC. I understand DPMC has engaged with the roopu on this and will continue to do so as it develops a proposed framework for Government to consider. This will include identifying goals, ways to measure our success and the types of data we need to monitor to ensure we are on track, taking into account the long-term nature and impacts of many aspects of the response. I have asked officials to report back on this work and to ensure the roopu continues to be closely involved.

I appreciate Kāpuia's commitment to supporting the government's vision of a safer and more inclusive Aotearoa New Zealand. I look forward to continuing to work with you and the roopu on this important mahi.

Nāku noa, nā



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