Submission to the Government's Proposed Maori Language Strategy 2013

Preamble

1. This submission has been prepared by Te Waka Angamua, Auckland Council's Maori Strategy and Relations Department. The submission has not been presented by the elected representatives of the council. The consultation timeframe for submissions was not sufficient to enable this submission to be processed and presented for consideration by Council's elected representatives. We welcome the opportunity to respond to the Government's proposed Maori Language Strategy to the Minister of Maori Development.

2. There are other documents and information we could provide that may be helpful to inform this process and the approach the Government may want to consider, based on the Auckland region, if the opportunity is made available.

3. The Auckland Council is committed to encouraging the use and growth of the Maori language with Maori living in the Auckland region. This commitment is described in the Auckland Plan to sustain reciprocal relationships by helping communities to embrace the culture that is New Zealand's key point of difference in the world. 'Te Reo is a taonga, which is at the heart of Maori identity. Tribal dialects are considered iwi taonga and reflect their unique identities and relationships. The Maunga Authority will have the same regard to te reo Maori as it does to the maunga themselves. Auckland Council is committed to celebrating "A Maori identity that is Auckland's point of difference in the world."'[1]

4. The Auckland Plan also describes Auckland's Strategic Direction is to enable Maori aspirations through recognition of Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi and Customary Rights. The transformational shift sought is to 'Significantly lift Maori social and economic well-being'.

5. There are 19 recognised iwi mana whenua and mataawaka Maori from every iwi in Aotearoa live in the Auckland Council area. The highest concentration of Maori people in the world live in Auckland. These characteristics offer a unique opportunity to test and grow te reo in Aotearoa New Zealand. The growth and quality of te reo may benefit by locating Te Matawai in Tamaki Makaurau which would have access to Maori language experts from all iwi and technological advancements as well as educational and learning institutions and a progressive Auckland Council.

6. Auckland Council is committed to be connected to the Maori community and has the Maori Responsiveness Framework to enable the council to sustain outcomes aligned with Maori aspirations. Auckland Council's Maori language programme (see attached) has been recognise by Te Taura Whiri i te Reo by winning the Local Government Maori Language Award in 2012.

7. After making these general comments our submission addresses the key questions in te consultation document.

General

8. The Government's proposed Maori Language Strategy is an effective and appropriate way for the Government to support the revitalisation of the Maori Language. The role of government agencies and local authorities needs to be made clear. The strategy will require efficient and effective infrastructure and methods of implementation as well as connectedness to the community. The proposed strategy notes that it is important for agencies to plan and resource their implementation of their Maori language program which will be monitored by Te Puni Kokiri however the diverse nature of the iwi of Auckland. This

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[1] Report to Claims Concerning New Zealand Law and Policy Affecting Maori Culture and Identity (Wai 262, Waitangi Tribunal 2011, pp441-2 / Auckland Plan

means that the Tamaki Makaurau region has unique issues when implementing program for the Maori language.

9. The Government relies on the good will of local authorities and others to support iwi aspirations for their language. Auckland Council is willing to work with Government to improve outcomes for Maori and particularly with te reo.

10. The Government Strategy might benefit from being amended after the Maori Language Act is reviewed.

Nga Whainga – Key Results

11. The results described in the acquisition (Te Ako i te Reo), status (Te Mana o Te Reo), quality (Te Kounga o Te Reo), and use (Te Korerotanga o Te Reo) are appropriate.

12. Further description on Te Oranga o Te Reo needs to be included in the strategy. The results indicators need to reflect the natural Maori indicators of quality reo alongside national qualification benchmarks. The iwi centric focus of key results in the strategy assumes the issue of the slowly developing numbers of competent kaikorero, kaikaranga and kaiwaiata and composers of haka and waiata on Marae and in whanau will be accelerated. Proficient and competent te reo leaders for Marae and other formal roles should be highlighted in the strategy.

Target Audience

13. The primary target audience is all people however the priority audience are people who are motivated to learn and use te reo, those people who are willing to inspire and share their learning with others and who are committed to preserve the ancient conventions of te reo. The modernisation of the language to adapt to new technologies and behaviours needs to be managed in context and not supersede or replace the conventions of the language from the past. It is important to keep the conversation about te reo vibrant and alive by making it available and visible to everyone who may need practice in pronunciation or in writing with issues such as the convention of whether to use macron's or double vowels.

14. Engagement with whanau Maori, hapu and iwi to support them to develop and implement their own Maori language plans is a priority.

Nga Maataapono – Key Principles

15. Generally we support the key principles on the proposed strategy. The term "Strengthening Maori Leadership" is unclear and suggests more than it is intended t deliver. The reference to this role could be better refined to reflect leadership in strengthening te reo.

16. A principle that may be considered in the strategy is the focus on kupu a iwi (iwi or hapu dialects and local words).

Nga Mahi – Key Initiatives

17. The strategy may benefit by including a list of initiatives and their priority over time. Crown agencies should identify their initiatives in their short, medium, and long term statement of intent. Where an initiative includes several agencies there should be an identified lead agency other than Te Taura Whiri or Te Puni Kokiri. An example of an appropriate initiative is "all public transport and public notices to be presented in both English and te reo using local reo or kupu a iwi. Initiatives to promote the 'visibility' of te reo in public situations are vital to enabling all New Zealanders to access and practice and participate in the preservation and protection of te reo."

18. The strategy could also require the New Zealand Geographic Board and local authorities to use Maori names (not transliterations) wherever possible when naming or re-naming streets, parks, geographic boundaries or other such opportunities.
19. The Independent Maori Statutory Board's Maori Plan identifies the key direction for Auckland relating to Te Reo Maori which support the establishment of a regional te reo forum, develop naming protocols to apply Maori and Mana whenua names to streets, buildings, spaces, and communication avenues such as websites, and to grow community support to advocate for compulsory te reo in schools.
20. We celebrate and support all efforts to learn and teach and use te reo in Auckland. A pathway to support foundation learning into iwi based reo should be clearly specified.
21. Emphasis should be given to events and activities that focus on the tikanga through te reo. Such as the language used to describe things to do with multi spots / Tri-Maori, waka ama, kapa haka, manu korero, Maori kai and other festivals.

Te Aronga o Te Taura Whiri ki nga Whanau me nga Iwi

22. Te Taura Whiri needs to be governed by iwi to drive the whanau hapu, iwi centric strategy.

23. The community is not engaged in the work nor outcomes proposed in the strategy. A presence of Te Taura Whiri in the Maori and general community is necessary for transformation to occur in the region and across the nation.
24. The standardisation of te reo as a strategy has achieved its purpose to ensure there is a foundation to grow te reo by whanau, hapu and iwi. The next stage of development for te reo is to strengthen iwi, hapu, whanau based reo and that of the general population of New Zealand i.e. strengthening dialectical variations and use of te reo in both the traditional and contemporary realm.

Nga Hangarau o te Ao Hou

25. Access to education to provide a foundation to te reo is vital to this strategy. A bold initiative for the government may include mandatory te reo programmes in schools and preschools. A more achieveable initiative would be to support career learning pathways for graduates of kura kaupapa Maori and kura wananga. The function of Kohanga reo, Kura kaupapa Maori and Kura wananga are to be maintained although consideration should be given to managing local institutions through local infrastructure.
26. Another useful initiative approach would be to promote the use of te reo in the workplace. Employers would be encouraged to develop a te reo action plan such as the one developed for Auckland Council (see attached). ICT should be used in education to assist in revitalising te reo.
27. Information, and Communications Technology (ICT) presents a vast range of possibilities and should be a focus for the strategic intent of the Government's approach to te reo. Examples could be give in the strategy to guide the development and inspire new tools in ICT to be developed. And example could include the development of on line te reo kupu a iwi, hapu, whanau on Marae websites, new and affordable te reo applications for smart phones similar to Hika Lite and on line live te reo coaches and 'clubs', digitised Maori games such as Mu Torere and shared software to play stick games among friends, virtual interactive lessons in te reo, more talking books in te reo for Maori deaf, automated bi-lingual public vending machines where people buy train/bus/event tickets or while travelling with tour commentaries pronouncing the place names correctly, stories of Maori hero's and legends in English and te reo as well as local tribal stories to move touch and inspire people to act.

28. The ICT fund should be used to benefit whanau who are committed to growing te reo through the development of whanau based activities in sport, arts, learning, employment and social settings. A virtual te reo coach and kupu a iwi database could help facilitate this.
29. Maori are the Kaitiaki of te reo and must be enabled to participate and lead the growth and sustainability of te reo as a taonga.

Kia Tu Rangatira Ai te Ao Maori

30. Government can support Maori language organisations by restoring the role of pakeke, matua and kaumatua as whanau first teachers. Compliance and reporting processes are expensive and a distraction for people and organisations which are focussed on te reo. Administration is a necessary part of accountability and should not be a distraction.

31. The decentralisation of national organisations would benefit iwi to lead the development of their reo. Tamaki Makaurau is unique in that all iwi reo can be heard and learned in the region. Most iwi organisations are present and represented in some way in Tamaki and can provide quality assurance along side iwi and rohe accountability.

Mahi Ngatahi

32. A regional te reo forum and governance body would ensure local kupu and reo are being developed and used. Issues could be raised, debated and resolved among whanau hapu and iwi. The establishment of regional control over te reo development could ensure resources allocated to those region were used in the regions and local audit and accountability on quality and application of te reo would be self regulated in line with tribal conventions and then added to the national database for future reference.
33. The establishment of a regional te reo forum for Tamaki would be beneficial to achieving the key results described in the Maori Language Strategy given people of Tamaki Makaurau are familiar with regional ways of working and travel from major Maori populations is reasonably efficient to arrange.

Te Matawai

34. The proposal that iwi participate in the selection of members of the three Maori language entities is a positive approach to decentralising the sustainability of te reo in the future.
35. The concept of Te Matawai and the regional forums will be an effective way for the Crown and Maori and Local Government to confer on progress with the new Maori Language Strategy.
36. The process to appoint members to Te Matawai similar to the establishment of Auckland's Independent Maori Statutory Board is appropriate.
37. There should be representatives from the seven regions to govern as well as regional forums to act as a place for local debate and clearing house of issues before presentation on the governing body agenda.

Mahi Totika

Nga Tohu Reorua

38. The use of bilingual signage and audio visual messages in te reo and Maori sign language (not NZ Sign language describing Maori concepts) should be used wherever possible. Resources should be allocated annually to develop these resources for all people.

39. The government can ensure that all regional offices of government departments use iwi reo in their signage and it should be mandatory for regional offices to display bilingual signs and audio visual Maori messages.