Northland REGIONAL COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Te Taitokerau

Te Ruarangi

Ngā Kupu Pānga | Terms of Reference 2025-2028



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CONTENTS

1. Kupu Whakataki | Background 4
2. Te Kaupapa | Mission 4
3. Te Pae Tawhiti | Vision 2040 4
4. Tikanga/Ngā Uara | Values 4
5. Ngā Whainga | Objectives 4
6. Roles and Responsibilities 5
7. Te Rōpū | The Working Party 6
8. Ngā Mema | Membership 6
8.1 Composition 6
8.2 Current membership 7
8.3 Appointment and Term 7
8.4 Removal and Vacancies 8
8.5 Proxy Members 8
8.6 He Utu | Payment 9
9. Papā o te pānga | Declaration of Interest 9
10. Ngā Heamana | Co-Chairs 9
11. Other iwi/hapū representation on working parties (see appendix) 9
12. Māori Technical Advisory Group 10
13. Hokohitanga o Ngā Hui | Meetings 10
14. Whakaoti raruraru|Conflict resolution 11
15. Annual reporting 11
16. Te Ruarangi not discharged at triennial elections 11
17. Whakamahinga | Operation 12
18. Arataki Tangata | Member Induction 12
19. Ngā purongo | Reporting -accountability 12
20. Arotakenga | Review 12
Appendix – Iwi/hapū representation on council governance structure 2025-2028 13

1. Kupu Whakataki | Background

Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Te Taitokerau / Northland Regional Council (NRC) is committed to giving effect to its responsibilities to tāngata whenua under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Te Ruarangi is an enduring partnership forum between council and iwi and hapū of Taitokerau. Council's decision to maintain Te Ruarangi is one practical way council gives effect to its Te Tiriti responsibilities.

Te Ruarangi is a working party of council and iwi and hapū of Taitokerau, the purpose of which is to foster an enduring partnership of mutual respect and good faith between tangata whenua and council, grounded in He Whakaputanga o Te Rangatiratanga o Nū Tīreni (1835) and Te Tiriti o Waitangi (1840).

This Terms of Reference is guided by the kaupapa, vision, mission and whainga (objectives) of the Te Ruarangi Strategic Intent 2021–2040 ("Strategic Intent") which collectively inform and direct the contributions of Te Ruarangi.

2. Te Kaupapa | Mission

He iwi tahi tātou kia ora ai te taiao – Kawanatanga and rangatiratanga work together for the wellbeing of the environment.

3. Te Pae Tawhiti | Vision 2040

- **He whenua haumoko** – Land that is bountiful
- **He wai mā** – Water that is pure and healthy
- **He iwi whai ora** – People that are flourishing.

4. Tikanga/Ngā Uara | Values

- **Titiro ki ngā taumata o te moana** — Always remain strategic in our approach/intent/view
- **Mahi tahi tūtuki noa** — Identify opportunities, increase collaboration, and complete projects
- **Me whakatau mā roto i te kōrero** — Resolution through conversation
- **Kaitiakitanga** — Dedicated stewardship by tangata whenua of Te Taitokerau.

5. Ngā Whainga | Objectives

These five key objectives from the Strategic Intent inform and guide the governance priorities of Te Ruarangi:



6. Roles and Responsibilities

To advance iwi and hapū involvement in council governance activities and decision making linked with the strategic objectives set out in Clause 5 in a way that upholds council's Te Tiriti responsibilities. Key roles include:

- Monitor and advise on council's compliance with its obligations to iwi and hapū, including (but not limited to) those set out in the Local Government Act 2002, the Resource Management Act 1991, and any successor or replacement legislation.
- Monitor and advise on legislative reforms that could have an impact on the relationship between council and tangata whenua.
- Provide advice to council on topics referred to it by council.
- Provide advice to council on topics of strategic importance and relevance to tāngata whenua.
- To develop pathways (and processes) that will achieve lasting and meaningful relationships between tāngata whenua and council.
- To ensure the views of tangata whenua are taken into account in the exercise of council functions.
- To provide access to specialist Māori technical advice. Te Ruarangi members can provide advice based only on information presented and does not replace council's obligation to consult with iwi and hapū.
- Oversee the implementation of Tāiki ē and council's Te Tiriti commitments, monitoring progress and advising to ensure council is consistently accountable for delivering on these commitments.

7. Te Rōpū | The Working Party

These Terms of Reference are between Northland Regional Council and iwi and hapū members who participate in Te Ruarangi. Both parties are committed to upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi responsibilities and to working as active Te Tiriti partners[1] through meaningful, enduring relationships.

Although iwi and hapū members aspire to reflect the views of tāngata whenua in Taitokerau and act to contribute to the collective benefit of council and Taitokerau, they recognise their advice does not replace council's responsibility to engage directly with iwi and hapū, nor does it usurp the mana of iwi and hapū to represent themselves.

Te Ruarangi provides:

- A kaupapa based forum grounded in te Ao Māori, where Māori perspectives influence and challenge council processes and policy.
- A stable and safe space for whānau, hapū and iwi to connect, communicate and engage in open, forthright discussion.
- Collective leadership that supports strong relationships between tāngata whenua and council.

The partnership is enacted through:

- Ensuring iwi and hapū views and expertise inform council functions on matters of significance to tāngata whenua of Taitokerau.
- Applying Te Ao Māori, including mātauranga Māori, kaitiakitanga and mauri, to council policy, planning and operational processes.
- Giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi through representation, participation and shared leadership.
- Working together to advance Tāiki ē – Te Tiriti Strategic Intent and Implementation Plan, while recognising council's wider statutory and strategic responsibilities.
- Being strategic in the intent with goals that maximise opportunities to achieve meaningful outcomes for Taitokerau.
- Te Ruarangi is a working party and therefore does not have delegated authority of council to make decisions.

8. Ngā Mema | Membership

8.1 Composition

Te Ruarangi will comprise up to 30 members in total consisting of:

- **Councillors**: All nine elected members
- **Taitokerau iwi and hapū**: up to 21 members in total:
    - Twelve iwi authority members, noting that flexibility is retained to kōrero directly where required as iwi dynamics may change over time.

[1] Council acknowledges that in the legal sense, the Crown (central government) and tangata whenua are the Tiriti partners as the signatories to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. However, the Council has statutory obligations that refer to Te Tiriti and its principles. References in this document to Northland Regional Council and iwi and hapū being Te Tiriti partners and having an active Tiriti partnership are statements about how we work together and how the Council has chosen to meet its statutory obligations that reference Te Tiriti and/or its principles.

- Nine hapū members, to maintain broad coverage of Taitokerau and ensure active hapū voices are in the forum.

- Te Ruarangi aims for coverage across all parts of Taitokerau. A catchment lens may be used to help balance geographical knowledge and perspectives in the forum.
- Te Ruarangi may operate with vacancies, which can be filled according to the processes below in sections 8.2 to 8.4.

8.2 Current membership

Despite clause 8.1, which sets a membership limit at 30, Te Ruarangi may have up to 32 members for the current triennium only. This allows for two additional hapū members to be appointed for this term.

Under this temporary arrangement, the membership may include:

- nine elected members of council
- up to 12 iwi members
- up to 11 hapū members

This is a temporary measure only. The long-term membership model remains the same as set out in clause 8.1: a maximum of 30 members, including up to nine hapū members. The two extra hapū seats are subject to a sinking lid. This means that when a hapū vacancy arises above the normal limit of nine hapū members, that vacancy will not be filled, unless this would reduce hapū membership below nine. Over time, as those temporary vacancies occur, the number of hapū members will reduce naturally back to nine. Once that happens, the total membership limit automatically returns to 30.

This temporary arrangement ends at the close of the current triennium. At the start of the next triennium, membership returns to the normal limit in clause 8.1, unless council decides otherwise through a formal amendment to these Terms of Reference.

8.3 Appointment and Term

Appointments of iwi and hapū members are for the council triennium, or until a member resigns or is removed under section 8.4. Re-appointment is permitted if re-endorsed.

Councillors

As part of council's commitment to a Te Tiriti-based partnership, all councillors are members of Te Ruarangi.

Iwi and hapū members

Iwi authority members	Hapū members
Kahukuraariki Trust Board	Hokianga o Ngā Hapū[2]
Ngāti Hine	Ngāti Hau
Ngāti Kuri Trust Board	Ngāti Kuta, Patukeha
Ngātiwai Trust Board	Ngāti Manu
Te Roroa	Ngāti Rēhia
Te Rūnanga ā Iwi o Ngāpuhi	Ngāti Tara
Te Rūnanga Nui o Te Aupōuri	Patuharakeke
Te Rūnanga o NgaiTakoto	Te Parawhau
Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua	Te Uri o Hau

[2] Ngati Pakau, Mahurehure, Ngatikorokoro

Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa	Te Waiariki, Ngāti Kororā, Ngāti Takapari
Te Rūnanga o Whaingaroa	Te Whakaminenga o Te Hikutu Hapū-Whānau[3]
Te Rūnanga-a-Iwi o Ngāti Kahu	Te Whakapiko Hapū

Iwi members

Each iwi authority nominates its representative and proxy in writing to the council. Where an iwi chooses not to fill its seat, it may endorse a hapū nominee in writing to hold that seat for the remainder of the triennium. At the next triennium, the iwi has first right to appoint (or re-appoint) a representative to Te Ruarangi.

Hapū members

Priority is given to the hapū listed above that have demonstrated early and ongoing commitment to the relationship and kaupapa, and whose longstanding participation has contributed to the continuity and stability of Te Ruarangi. Each hapū authority nominates its representative and proxy in writing to the council.

Should a vacancy arise, Taitokerau hapū may submit nominations in writing to council to fill that available hapū seat. Where there are more nominations than available seats, the Co-Chairs after appropriate consultation will recommend appointments that best:

- maintain coverage across Taitokerau,
- ensure active participation, and
- align with the values, mission and knowledge sought for the forum.

Endorsement and selection processes are for iwi and hapū to resolve. Iwi and hapū members are responsible for undertaking their own nomination and selection processes to identify their representative and proxy for Te Ruarangi.

Any change to an iwi or hapū member must be formally notified in writing to council but does not require council endorsement. For clarity, a change to a member's representative needs to be notified in writing to the Co-Chairs but does not need to be notified to council.

8.4 Removal and Vacancies

- Membership ceases if a member resigns or their representative fails to attend three consecutive meetings within a 12-month period without providing an advance apology. Written notice of the removal will be provided to the relevant iwi or hapū
- In exceptional circumstances where behaviour is detrimental to effective operation, council may remove a member following a 75% majority recommendation of members present and voting.
- When a member vacancy arises, council (through the secretariat) will invite a replacement as soon as possible consistent with sections 8.2 and 8.3.

8.5 Proxy Members

Each iwi or hapū member may name one proxy in writing, using the same endorsement process required for their primary representative. The role of the proxy is as follows:

a. The proxy may speak and vote when the primary representative is absent,

b. When the primary is present, the proxy does not hold speaking or voting rights nor hold a seat at the table, and

[3] Te Hikutu/Whanau Whero/Whanautara/Ngati Kairewa/Ngati Kerewhiti/Ngati Parenga/Ngati Tuapango

c. The proxy is only eligible to claim under council's non-elected members allowance policy when 8.5(a) applies.

Although proxies may only sit, speak and vote at the table when the primary representative is absent, proxies are encouraged to attend Te Ruarangi meetings as an important way of managing succession by building a good understanding of the role of Te Ruarangi, the kaupapa, history, discussions, and evolving issues.

8.6 He Utu | Payment

Payments for non-elected members of Te Ruarangi (iwi and hapū representatives) for meeting attendance and mileage will be in accordance with the council's 'Non-Elected Members Allowance Policy' and in accordance with this Terms of Reference. Payments that can be claimed include:

- Meeting allowance for meetings of Te Ruarangi
- Mileage and travel time
- Attendance at other working parties, as endorsed by council.

9. Papā o te pānga | Declaration of Interest

Members will be asked by the Co-Chairs to declare any interests at each meeting.

10. Ngā Heamana | Co-Chairs

A Co-Chair arrangement applies to Te Ruarangi.

Appointment process each triennium

- Council will appoint one elected member (and proxy) to serve as Co-Chair.
- The non-elected members will appoint a Co-Chair (and proxy) from among themselves.
- Both appointments are submitted to council for endorsement.

Participation:

At least one Co-Chair must be present at all formal meetings and marae-based hui of Te Ruarangi.

Responsibilities:

In addition to chairing meetings, the Co-Chairs (or their proxy when applicable) are responsible for:

- attending agenda preview meetings and reviewing actions before circulation
- being available to consider and vet prospective membership applications
- assisting with mediation, in the first instance, when issues arise.

11. Other iwi/hapū representation on working parties (see appendix)

Te Ruarangi nominates and endorses iwi and hapū members to represent tangata whenua on the relevant committees and working parties of council. These members are responsible for reporting back to Te Ruarangi as these other working parties provide structured mechanisms for iwi and hapū to

participate in council governance activities that are relevant to Te Ruarangi strategic objectives set out in Clause 5.

12. Māori Technical Advisory Group

The Māori Technical Advisory Group (MTAG) is an extension of Te Ruarangi. The purpose of MTAG is to provide a forum, supported by council staff, which provides specialist technical advice and guidance to Te Ruarangi with the following aims:

- Strengthen the quality of Māori participation in council decision-making by ensuring iwi and hapū representatives have access to robust technical, policy, and legislative advice.
- Support informed, evidence-based advice from iwi and hapū representatives to councillors and the Council, particularly on complex statutory, environmental, and policy matters.
- Act as technical support to deep dive on matters at the direction of Te Ruarangi.
- Embed Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles into council work, by supporting Māori representatives to engage with council processes on an equitable and well-resourced footing.
- Build and retain Māori technical expertise that the Council can draw on for policy development, strategic advice, and responses to central government reform

Te Ruarangi appoints up to six members of Te Ruarangi onto the MTAG to meet regularly on matters referred to the group by the working party.

13. Hokohitanga o Ngā Hui | Meetings

13.1 Formal Meetings

Te Ruarangi will hold up to five formal meetings each calendar year at council offices. These meetings address the governance-level kaupapa of Te Ruarangi, focusing on the strategic Whāinga, consideration of advice to council, and agreement on recommended actions for council to consider.

13.2 Kōrama | Quorum

A formal meeting will have quorum when:

- at least one-third of elected members (councillors), and
- at least one-third of non-elected members (iwi and hapū representatives)

are present. These thresholds are calculated only on currently filled seats, and vacant positions are not included.

13.3 Marae-based meetings

Up to five marae-based hui may be held each year to focus on local issues important to the haukāinga. These hui are not formal Te Ruarangi meetings and, therefore, cannot agree recommended actions. Marae-based hui are open beyond Te Ruarangi members, and the schedule will ensure geographic coverage across Taitokerau.

All Te Ruarangi members are welcome to attend Te Ruarangi marae-based hui. Members who attend are eligible to claim for meeting fee allowances and mileage.

13.4 Iwi and hapū preparation

When the full Te Ruarangi working party meets at council offices, a meeting room will be made available before or after the formal meeting for iwi and hapū members to caucus. This provides a forum and safe space for open discussion, and collective preparation for the formal meeting.

13.5 Changes to meeting dates

Any changes to meeting dates or locations required outside of a formal Te Ruarangi meeting will be determined by the two Co-Chairs, following consultation with the council Chairperson and the Chief Executive Officer.

13.6 Attendance and conduct at meetings

a) Councillors, including the Chair, will endeavour to prioritise attendance at Te Ruarangi meetings.

b) Iwi and hapū members are expected to attend consistently, participate constructively, and report back to nominating iwi or hapū, as appropriate.

c) If a member is unable to attend, their nominated proxy may attend in their place, in accordance with the proxy provisions set out in these Terms of Reference.

d) Regular non-attendance without approved leave may result in the member's position being reviewed under clause 8.4.

e) A member may request a leave of absence if they are unable to attend meetings for an extended period. Leave of absence requests should be submitted to the Co-Chairs for consideration. Approved leave protects the member from being reviewed for non-attendance under section 8.4 and ensures continuity of representation through the nominated proxy where appropriate.

14. Whakaoti raruraru|Conflict resolution

Should conflict occur, the Council Chair and Te Ruarangi Co-Chairs and Te Ruarangi members will be responsible for working together to resolve the conflict in the first instance. If the conflict persists, the council will only intervene at the request of the majority of Te Ruarangi members.

15. Annual reporting

An annual report detailing the work Te Ruarangi has undertaken will be prepared for an annual meeting and will cover:

- Review of achievements towards the objectives contained within the Terms of Reference
- Reporting on work that demonstrates the strategic Whāinga of Tāiki ē.

16. Te Ruarangi not discharged at triennial elections

Pursuant to Clause 30(7) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002, the council has resolved that Te Ruarangi is not discharged at the triennial elections. However, on coming into office following an election, a council may choose to review its appointments to Te Ruarangi.

17. Whakamahinga | Operation

Council's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Executive Leadership Team are the senior managers responsible for supporting Te Ruarangi. Executive Leadership Team members will attend meetings as required to support agenda items or the broader purpose of Te Ruarangi

The CEO will ensure Te Ruarangi is appropriately supported through the Executive Leadership Team and be responsible for coordinating the administrative support required for Te Ruarangi, including venue arrangements, minute-taking, and catering.

Support for Te Ruarangi also extends to the council-controlled organisation Northland Inc, through the CEO and relevant staff.

18. Arataki Tangata | Member Induction

All new members joining the Te Ruarangi will receive an induction pack which will include the Terms of Reference, relevant policies and procedures and information outlining the council's function and processes.

19. Ngā purongo | Reporting - accountability

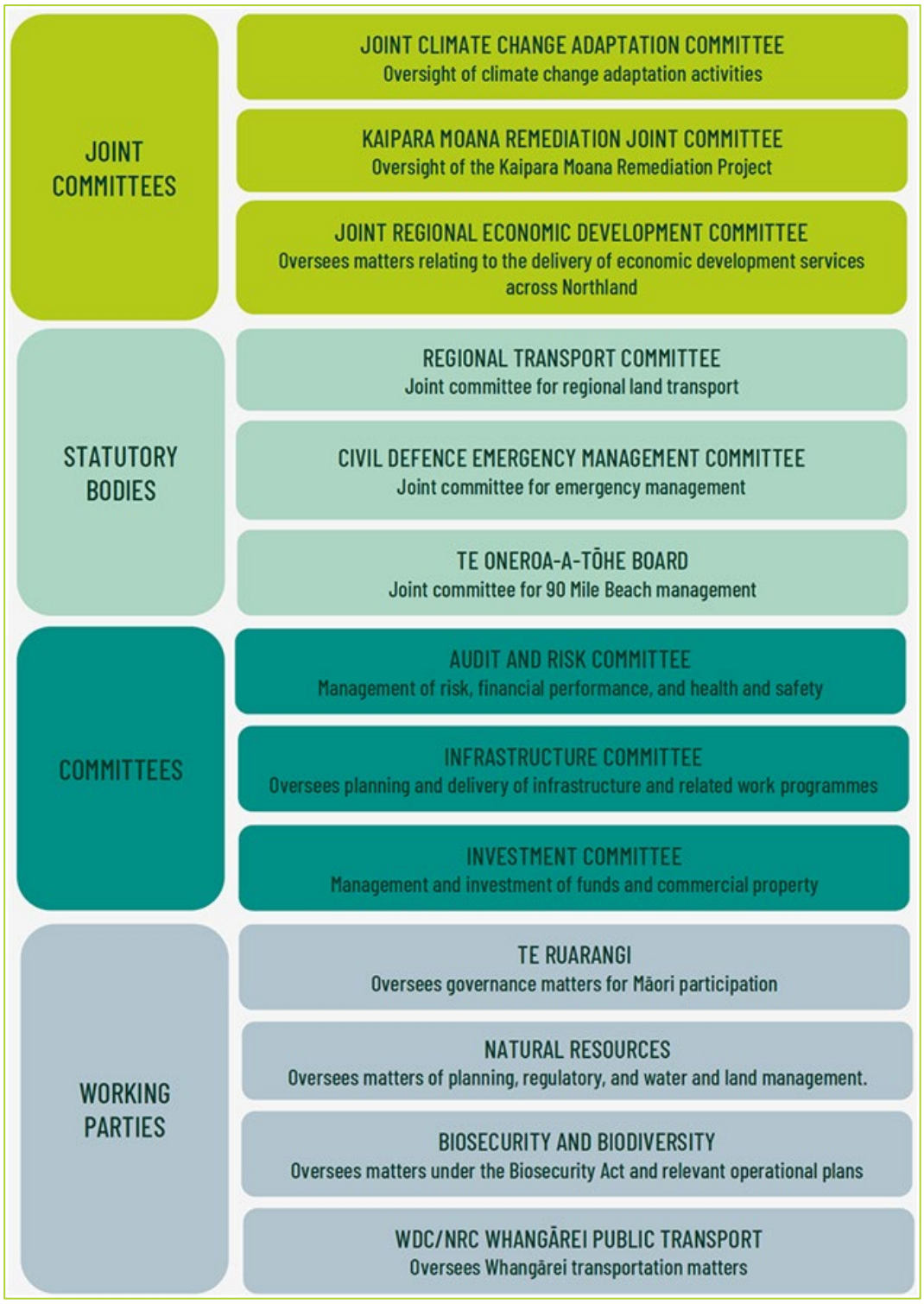
Te Ruarangi, through the Co-Chairs will provide a summary report to the council following each meeting.

Officers of council will be responsible for promoting Te Ruarangi and any initiatives developed (once considered and approved by council), to the wider public through a range of media including print and radio promotion, the council's website and social media.

20. Arotakenga | Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed as required. All changes to the Terms of Reference will be subject to the approval of Northland Regional Council through a recommendation made by Te Ruarangi.

Appendix – Iwi/hapū representation on council governance structure 2025-2028



Committee / Group	Representation
Te Oneroa ā Tōhe Board	A joint committee with Far North District Council, Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa, Te Manawa o Ngāti Kuri Trust, Te Rūnanga Nui o Te Aupouri Trust, Te Rūnanga o NgāiTakoto
Joint Climate Change Adaptation Committee	One representative from iwi / hapū appointed by each council from within their jurisdiction. Where possible, this appointment should follow recommendations from council Māori advisory groups or committees.
Kaipara Moana Remediation Joint Committee	The Kaipara Moana Remediation Joint Committee consists of 6 appointed Kaipara Uri entities, three elected members appointed by Auckland Council and three elected members appointed by NRC.
Audit and Risk Committee	Two Independent Tangata Whenua Members: George Riley and Dee-Ann Wolferstan. Steve Watene is Independent Risk Advisor
Investment Committee	One Independent Tangata Whenua Advisor: George Riley
Infrastructure Committee	Two Independent Tangata Whenua Members: George Riley and Dee-Ann Wolferstan
Natural Resources Working Party	Four members of Te Ruarangi Working Party: Janelle Beazley (Te Rūnanga Ā Iwi o Ngāpuhi), Abe Witana (Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa), Ihapera Paniora (Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua) and Mahue Greaves (Ngāti Tara)
Biosecurity and Biodiversity Working Party	Four members of Te Ruarangi Working Party: Jaycee Tipene-Thomas (Ngāti Hine), Kipa Munro (Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Rehia), Mira Norris (Te Parawhau Hapū Authority Charitable Trust), Niki Conrad (Te Rūnanga Nui o Te Aupōuri).

Northland
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