

**TE RUNANGA O NGA RINGA TOTA
REPORT TO SFWU NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
23-25 NOVEMBER 2009**

Karakia

*He honore he kororia ki te Atua
He maungarongo ki te whenua
He whakaaro pai ki nga tangata katoa*

Mihimihi

This year has been a huge one for our union and our runanga, raising our union profile, connecting with political allies and being a voice for our Maori members. We started the year off forming 3 working groups from our runanga. This included:

- Funding – Wiremu Jenkins, Runanga convenor
- Treaty of Waitangi education – Stacey Reynolds, Sharryn Barton, Sonny Lewis, Elizabeth Heta & runanga convenor
- Developing our Treaty based union relationship – Elizabeth Heta, Main Te Tai, Seenie Kahukura & runanga convenor

Unfortunately, Sarita who was employed by our union as a funding officer has now left and we never completed our legal entity to form an incorporated society to access funding. Although our discussions to seek funding with Te Puni Kokiri look promising. I would like to acknowledge Woody's patience and support in this area.

We have had a successful year in progressing our treaty education and this has sparked additional interest and energy from our Maori leaders. I have reported below on some of these activities. I would like to acknowledge Stacey, Sharryn and Sonny for their dedication to this kaupapa.

With a busy year of national events, we have had little time to dedicate to nourishing our own union's treaty relationship but we have forged some very sound contacts to explore.

We have represented the voice of our Maori members in many ways and recorded below are some highlights.

HIGHLIGHTS

National Hui

Our national hui was held at Orongomai marae, Upper Hutt on 25-27 September.

We had a great turnout of Maori members from Dunedin, Nelson, Wellington, Hawkes Bay, Taranaki, Hamilton, Auckland and Whangarei. We invited Maori Party and Labour Party MPs Rahui Katene and Parekura Horomia to attend, but unfortunately neither were available.

Laurie Te Nahu who is the Kaiwhakahaere with Careerforce attended to present on his mahi in developing modules and career pathways for Maori and this sparked a lot of interest from our CSD and health workers. He also shared his experience of introducing tikanga Maori practices and Treaty structures within Careerforce and our union could benefit from this knowledge too.

PSA kaumatua Kiwhare Mihaere and Board member Marlene Pitman also attended our hui.

Some very capable delegates made brief presentations of our various union campaigns including Sealords members Vic and Chrissy who shared how disappointed their workmates were in Sealords management and Te Ohu Kaimoana Board which is part owned by iwi.

Congratulations to Main Te Tai, Sonny Lewis and Sharyn Barton for being re-elected onto the national executive. Muriel Tunoho was also re-elected as National Runanga Convenor.

The hui was challenged how we can ensure creating new opportunities for younger Maori leaders who are active and already contributing significantly to developing our Maori membership.

Treaty of Waitangi education

Our union staff in all 3 regions have attended treaty education by Robert Consedine this year. It will be good to gain some feedback from the NMT on what difference this knowledge has meant for our union and share strategies that have been implemented.

We successfully negotiated with Takawai and Chris Murphy to provide 7 one-day treaty workshops in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Nelson and Christchurch for our members. These workshops cost the union \$1000 per workshop plus accommodation and travel. Four workshops held in Wellington, Nelson, Hamilton and Auckland were specifically for Maori members. Funding for these workshops were reliant upon ERE funding.

These workshops continue to be recognised by our Maori membership as being very valuable - not only understanding NZ's history and tangata whenua but also in building more confidence in their own cultural identity too. A young Maori woman attending the Wellington workshop for Maori, disagreed with the separate workshops and complained to the union. However, at the end of the workshop, she understood the importance for Maori to have time to hui separately. This experience also helped her feel more confident in her workplace where she was confronted with racism.

The numbers attending some of these workshops were very good but it was very disappointing that some numbers (5) were insufficient, extremely disappointing and very embarrassing.

This opportunity has created a positive way for our union to develop a strategic relationship with Takawai.

John Ryall and I met with Kathie Irwin at Te Puni Kokiri to explore a funding proposal to support some ongoing treaty education and activities. This will be critical as the early signs of our union securing ERE funding for next year does not look promising.

National Delegates Conference

Our 4th National Delegates Conference and theme Kia hora te tika tangata. Kia it!. Justice for all. Pass it on was incredibly successful. At a difficult time of economic pressures and environmental instability it was wonderful coming together to support each other in our union campaigns, community action and international unity.

Our international guest from SEIU, Eliseo Medina captured everyone by sharing his union's struggles and solidarity for our own union programme.

The impact of struggles placed on whanau were brought to the fore thanks to presentations by CleanStart, speeches from locked out workers from Visionstream and Open Country Kitchen and blessings on our Pacific cousins dealing with grief, devastation and survival since the tsunami in Samoa, Tonga and Malaysia.

Greens Party MP Metiria Turei and Co-President and her whanau attended our hui to celebrate the signing of an MOU between our union and the Greens. We look forward to breathing life into this formal relationship.

There were 10 different speed workshops looking at justice from a much more broader perspective and our members really enjoyed these. I facilitated a workshop on Health for All and was concerned about the struggles our members face to access affordable primary health care.

Overall, the wairua at the conference was very positive and even the robust debate was appreciated.

Thank you to Sonny and Percy for leading us in karakia and mihi and to runanga members for introducing waiata throughout our hui.

PSA merger talks

The PSA initiated these talks and a governance group with representatives from each of unions was formed. Our delegation included our national secretary, national president, vice president, assistant national secretary and 2 regional secretaries.

Ross Wilson facilitated our meetings and the overall process of engagement was very respectful and useful. Following our last joint meeting, it was disappointing that the PSA chose not to proceed with further talks with us before getting around the table again.

I am proud that our delegation ensured that no further concessions were made by our union to jeopardise our political autonomy and food sector members.

Despite some anecdotal feedback from Maori PSA Board members who were very positive about the proposed merger, in the end this is not the outcome. Our joint governance group was exploring establishing a Maori manager role within the new structure but sadly this opportunity has gone begging.

Political lobbying

Labour Party

Our runanga has finally established some linkages with the Labour party Maori caucus. We met twice this year to discuss our union campaigns and some members were involved in experiencing what it means working as a caregiver. Thank you to Darien Fenton for her patience and tenacity for making these hui happen.

Maryan Street has also been a strong advocate for our Sealord's workers and I have conveyed our appreciation for this.

Many members attended the Labour Party conference.

Maori Party

We have been unsuccessful in building a formal relationship with the Maori party and have concentrated on working on specific projects, particularly with Te Tai Tonga MP, Rahui Katene.

Rahui has also been a strong advocate for our Sealord's workers, speaking out on the "profit before people" approach and management, challenging iwi leaders and petitioning iwi. Despite these efforts, these workers continue to be threatened by job loss and profitability values.

We took a small union delegation to Parliament to support the introduction of Rahui's first members' bill, Matariki Bill, promoting an additional statutory holiday. Unfortunately, she did not have sufficient support from their coalition partners and this bill was defeated.

The Maori party is being confronted with the challenge of balancing iwi interests and juggling the needs of low paid Maori and well paid Maori and this is likely to escalate next year.

NZCTU Runanga

Percy Harrison, Beryl Lawson and Karen Bruce attended the biennial hui held at Orongomai marae earlier this year. Thomas Webster and Syd Keepa were elected to be co-convenors. Most of the CTU runanga meetings clashed with our own union hui this year. Thank you to Karen Bruce and Sonny Lewis for attending in my absence.

Kaumatua

Our runanga has been enriched by the active support of our kaumatua Anaru Pokaia, Mere Broughton and Whatu Ward. Sadly, Anaru made himself unavailable for runanga activities but he continues to support our southern region Whanau. Mere has since moved to Otaki but she has always been a very loyal supporter of our union. Whatu lead us onto Te Papa marae when we gathered to celebrate Luci Highfields' life and acknowledged the significant contributions she made to our union.

General

- We have included 'iwi affiliations' to collect on our union membership forms now. This is critical if we want to be strategic in building leverage for our union campaigns.
- We have started a runanga page on our union website.
- We have profiled Maori media stars.

Looking to the future

- We will continue to develop our runanga leaders and improve communication. Seeking the support and knowledge of kaumatua will be critical to build our confidence in te reo me ona tikanga Maori.
- Meet with Rahui Katene to pursue our earlier talks to formalise a relationship with the Maori party.
- We will evaluate former treaty workshops and pursue our commitment to treaty education.
- We will continue to build whanaungatanga across unions, political parties, regions and iwi.
- We will develop a consistent kaupapa for our regional hui planned for 2010.

He mihi whakamutunga

This has been an active year filled with new experiences, challenges and fantastic possibilities.

Thank you to all our runanga members for their support and participation. Many thanks to Karen Bruce for her generosity and patience in providing loyal support to our runanga. She has also been outstanding in modelling manaakitanga to others.

Thank you also to our union secretaries, staff, ROC and national executive members for supporting the important work which is carried out by our union runanga.

No reira, kia tau nga manaakitanga ki a tatou katoa.

Muriel Tunoho (Ngati Raukawa)
National Runanga Convenor

9 November 2009