

**TE RŌPŪ WHAKAMANA I TE TIRITI O WAITANGI**

Wai 2700

**E PĀ ANA KI**  
*CONCERNING*

the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

**Ā,**  
*AND*

the Mana Wahine Kaupapa  
Inquiry

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**HE PĀNUI WHAKAHAU O TE KAIWHAKAWĀ REEVES**

**MEMORANDUM-DIRECTIONS OF JUDGE REEVES VACATING HEARING  
WEEK TWO**

15 Tihema 2025

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## **Purpose**

1. This memorandum-directions confirms the decision to vacate the hearing set down for 9 – 13 February 2026 and the reallocation of its resources to the week of 11 – 15 May 2026.

## **Background**

2. In memorandum-directions dated 31 October 2025, I directed coordinating counsel to file a draft hearing plan for hearing two by 28 November 2025 (Wai 2700, #2.6.9).
3. In submissions dated 6 October 2025, coordinating counsel advised that claimants wished to explore the possibility of increasing hearing time. Counsel proposed the use of single day hearings via audio-visual link (AVL) to hear technical evidence, noting this would better facilitate and prioritise claimant evidence while minimising additional costs and resourcing requirements for full in-person hearings (Wai 2700, #3.2.39 at [23]–[28]).
4. On 13 November 2025, I confirmed that a discrete AVL hearing to hear technical evidence would take place on 14 and 15 May 2026 (Wai 2700, #2.6.12).
5. On 1 December 2025, the Tribunal received from coordinating counsel:
  - (a) a memorandum of coordinating counsel dated 28 November 2025 (Wai 2700, #3.2.61);
  - (b) a draft hearing plan for the hearing two (Wai 2700, #3.2.61(a)); and
  - (c) indications of claim allocations across hearings two and three (Wai 2700, #3.2.61(b)).
6. At paragraphs [14] and [15] of the above memorandum, counsel advise that due to many claimants preferring to appear at hearing week three on 4 to 8 May 2026, only two hearing days are required to hear claimant and technical evidence in the hearing set down for 9 to 13 February 2026.
7. Counsel state they are in the Tribunal's hands as to whether the remaining three days are vacated and reallocated or if they are used to hear the technical evidence planned to be heard in the discrete AVL hearing on 14 and 15 May 2026.

## **Vacation of February hearing dates**

8. Following my consideration of the draft hearing plan, the above indications from coordinating counsel and the availability of panel members and technical witnesses, it is my preference to vacate the February hearing in full and reallocate its resources to the week of the discrete AVL hearing, 11 to 15 May 2026.
9. I have consistently reminded parties that time and resources for this inquiry are finite and must be used efficiently. In my view, a two day in-person hearing would not be an efficient use of the limited resources allocated, and significant replanning would be required to fully reallocate the February hearing week. At this late stage, I do not believe this is feasible and our options for resource reallocation are limited.

10. Consequently, I confirm that:

(a) hearing two will now take place from 4 – 8 May 2026; and

(b) hearing three will take place in the week following from 11 – 15 May 2026.

11. I acknowledge that undertaking and participating in consecutive hearing weeks will take great efforts from all parties. That said, I reiterate that our current options are very limited, and it is my view that this alternative course of action will negate the time pressures associated with the additional filing and planning deadlines a completely reallocated February hearing would require.

12. Therefore, it is my expectation that parties will keep to all future deadlines. Failure to do so will impact our ability to conclude the Rangatiratanga Pou in this financial year as well as the remaining resource allocations for this inquiry.

13. Furthermore, I encourage counsel to ensure their clients are well supported and prepared for the upcoming filing milestones and hearings to ensure there are no further disruptions to the timeline of this inquiry.

#### **Removal of resources for the discrete AVL hearing**

14. I refer parties to the following paragraph from memorandum-directions dated 13 November 2025 (Wai 2700, #2.6.12 at [11]):

I note that the discrete hearing is approved on the proviso that the hearing time previously afforded will be well used across both hearing weeks. If the draft hearing plan for hearing two shows that the hearing time has not been subscribed efficiently, the AVL hearing will be removed. This will mean all remaining evidence, including technical witness evidence, will need to be accommodated within the remaining week for hearing three.

15. Further to the above, I now confirm that the additional resource that was made available for the discrete AVL hearing has been revoked. This means that all claimant evidence, technical evidence and Crown evidence for the Rangatiratanga Pou will need to be accommodated within the two hearing weeks now set down for May 2026.

16. This will require claimant and Crown counsel to be highly coordinated and disciplined with planning, deadlines and time allocations. I encourage claimant and Crown counsel to collaborate closely in the coming months to ensure the spread of evidence is balanced and that the future draft hearing plan reflects the efficient use of hearing time. I also remind parties to consider techniques such as the use of claimant witness panels to facilitate the efficient use of hearing time (Wai 2700, #2.6.7 at [22]).

#### **Draft hearing plan**

17. With the above indications in mind, I direct coordinating counsel to file draft hearing plans for hearing two and hearing three by **5 pm, Thursday 12 February 2026**.

18. As previously directed, the hearing plan should include the following in relation to each week:

- (a) the focus for hearing two and hearing three;
- (b) which aspects of the Tribunal Statement of Issues (TSOI) will be addressed;
- (c) indications of participation, including:
  - i. specificity as to which claims are seeking to be heard in person and which are seeking to be heard on the papers;
  - ii. the issues the evidence will cover in relation to the TSOI;
  - iii. the amount of hearing time sought for each claim seeking to be heard in person; and
- (d) whether the Crown intends to present evidence at the hearing and expected time sought.

19. The Tribunal is open to an approach that evenly spreads evidence across the two weeks. I encourage coordinating counsel to consider, where possible, employing an approach that logically or thematically groups claim issues together so relevant evidence can be heard in proximity, and to support an efficient and well-structured hearing timetable.
20. The draft hearing plan received 1 December 2025 (Wai 2700, #3.2.61(a)) and the original allocations for the discrete AVL hearing suggest it is possible to allocate nine hearing days across the two weeks, indicating a surplus of one day. I note, however, that the hearing plan provided did not indicate hearing time for the presentation of Crown evidence. The Tribunal is open to a four-day hearing if the efficient use of time allows it, however, the viability of this option will be assessed once the hearing plans are received.
21. Finally, I remind parties that following the filing of the draft hearing plan for hearing two and three, the Tribunal will decide what evidence is heard during those hearings. Factors will include numbers of claims seeking to be heard in person versus time available, as well as evidence we consider best addresses the focus for the hearings and/or matters set out in the Statement of Issues.

*Appearance of Tribunal commissioned technical witnesses*

22. Dr Annie Te One has indicated she is available to present her report, '*Wāhine Rangatira me te Kāwanatanga: Wāhine Māori Access to Decision-Making Roles in the Public Sector from 1990 to 2020*' (Wai 2700, #B1) during hearing two via AVL. It is the panel's preference that Dr Te One's evidence is presented early in the week.
23. The following Tribunal commissioned witnesses had previously confirmed their availability for the discrete hearing via AVL set down for 14 – 15 May:
- (a) Dr Rachel Wolfgramm, '*Mana Wāhine Māori i Ngā Wā ō Mua: The impacts of Crown legislation, policy and practices on the rangatiratanga, status and roles of wāhine Māori c.1840-1950*', (Wai 2700, #B9);

(b) Associate Professor Lara Greaves and Sasha-Leigh Douglas, 'Mana Wāhine i Te Ao Hurihuri: Equity and Disparities in Wellbeing for Wāhine Māori from the 1950s to 2000', (Wai 2700, #B3); and

(c) Dr Fiona Cram, 'Mana Wahine – Whānau & Whakapapa, c.1840-2023', (Wai 2700, #B11).

24. Tribunal staff will seek availability of these witnesses for the wider two-week period and I will update parties in due course, so that it may inform the development of the hearing plan, and subsequent draft timetables.

### **Briefs of evidence and opening submissions received**

25. Parties were directed to file briefs of evidence and opening submissions for the now vacated hearing in February by 28 November 2025 (Wai 2700, #2.6.9).

26. On 26 November 2025, the Tribunal received a joint memorandum of counsel seeking an extension until 5 December 2025 to file opening submissions and summaries for hearing two (Wai 2700, #3.2.54).

27. I granted an extension on 28 November 2025, via an email from the Registrar, for opening submissions to be filed by 5 pm, 3 December 2025.

28. I note that all briefs of evidence and opening submissions filed for the vacated hearing will be placed on the Wai 2700 record of inquiry and do not need to be refiled prior to the hearings in May. Should these parties wish to amend their evidence or submissions on the Wai 2700 record, they may file an amended version before the relevant updated filing deadline. This amended version will replace the corresponding document on the record.

### **Updated filing timetable**

29. The Tribunal has reviewed the filing timetable and made appropriate adjustments to account for the vacation of the February hearing dates and the reallocation of resources to what is now hearing three.

30. I advise that due to the nature and complexity of managing and preparing for back-to-back hearing weeks, filing milestones associated with the original May fixtures, have been brought forward.

31. An updated filing timetable for both hearings is attached as **Appendix A**.

32. Parties may file submissions on the above matters by **12 pm, Friday 19 December 2025**.

### **Issues raised in recent submissions**

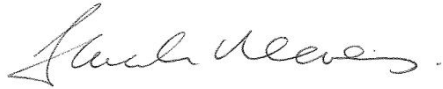
33. On 26 November 2025, the Tribunal received a joint memorandum of counsel raising concerns about the approach to cross-examination outlined in the 13 November 2025 memorandum directions (Wai 2700, #3.2.54).

25. I indicate to parties that these submissions are under consideration and memorandum-directions to address them are to follow.

Me tuku atu te Kairēhita i tētehi kape o tēnei whakahau ki ērā ki te rārangi whakamōhio mō Wai 2700, te Mana Wahine Kaupapa Inquiry.

*The Registrar is to send a copy of this direction to all those on the distribution list for Wai 2700, the Mana Wahine Kaupapa Inquiry.*

**WHAKAPŪMAUTIA** ki Pōneke te 15 o Tīhema 2025



Kaiwhakawā Sarah Reeves  
Tumuaki Pakirehua

**TE RŌPŪ WHAKAMANA I TE TIRITI O WAITANGI**