



Taitokerau Regional Workforce Plan

Reflections 2023

About Regional Skills Leadership Groups

The Government established independent Regional Skills Leadership Groups (RSLGs) to identify and support better ways of meeting the future skills and workforce needs of Aotearoa New Zealand's regions and cities. RSLGs are connecting with stakeholders, gathering labour market information, and providing advice to decision-makers in regions and central government. Functioning independently, the groups are locally based and regionally enabled, and supported by a team of data analysts, advisors and workforce specialists at the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment. Members of RSLGs include iwi/Māori, regional industry leaders, economic development agencies, community and government representatives, who contribute their knowledge and local expertise.

www.mbie.govt.nz/tai-tokerau-rslg

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Te Purunga ki Te Raki
Regional Skills Leadership Group
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Co-Chairs whaiwhakaaro

To reduce Tai Tokerau's Regional Work Plan to building a workforce of the future would lose the vital elements that it has been built on. There is no denying that this is a fundamental output of our moemoeā.

We need to acknowledge the complex ecosystems that we all operate in. Linear approaches to solving wicked problems will have a similar effect to miscuing a billiard ball. In my view, we are recipients of both the naivety and arrogance of such a playbook. However, this doesn't mean we don't throw the "kitchen sink" at "it". We need to keep an open mind to the many views of what this could be.

Through relationships that care and are invested, we believe we can navigate that journey. Our voyaging Tupuna were clear about the prerequisites that are required to succeed. This higher purpose exists in an environment where we rely on each carrying out specific roles while keeping each other safe. We are seeing this work being included in other Tai Tokerau thought pieces. As we work together, we learn together.

Other than setting a course and being on that journey, The Regional Skills Leadership Group require those seismic shifts in the Tertiary Sector to empower local and regional decision-making. Systems lag is not our friend. Our communities and whanau will disengage if they can't tangibly touch and feel these changes.

Toa and I wish to thank everyone who has actively contributed and continues to contribute. Also, a big thank you to our Kānoa support team.

Nga manaakitanga



Harry Burkhardt
Co-Chair



Toa Faneva
Co-Chair

A photograph of a man in a black t-shirt touching the bark of a large tree in a forest. The man is looking towards the tree with a thoughtful expression. The background is filled with green foliage and sunlight filtering through the trees.

Executive Summary

Kīwaha | Kia tu kaha ai tatou, puta noa te ao

Stand connected with confidence and competence anywhere in the world

These reflections support the Taitokerau Regional Workforce Plan (RWP) which was released in November 2022. In crafting the RWP, Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG worked with iwi, Māori, employers, unions, learners, industry associations, whānau, educators, and government agencies. The development and implementation of the RWP is guided by the principles and values of He Whakaputanga. In practice, honouring this means delivering our actions through whanaungatanga – placing strong relationships at the centre of what we do. It means approaching concepts of trade from a monetary and mana-based economy standpoint. Honouring tino rangatiratanga in practice means providing community leadership and recognising the cultural fluidity that is unique to the North. In the implementation of the RWP we will hold these things strong.

This document provides reflections on the progress of the implementation of the RWP since its publication in November 2022. It aims to provide local insights into where opportunities and challenges exist for regional stakeholders when implementing a plan aimed at building a skilled workforce that places whānau and community wellbeing at its centre. Please refer to Appendix 1 (which can be found on the MBIE website) for further detail on the regional workforce outlook.

Our RWP was built around the kaupapa of the puru (plug in the hull of the waka), reflecting our intent to achieve our aspirations by:

- nurturing our taitamariki for future opportunities
- growing a resilient, sustainable and productive workforce
- increasing Māori participation in training and our workforce
- ensuring everyone has an equitable opportunity to access and be part of the labour market – especially wāhine and those with a disability.

There are challenges that need to be addressed in order to achieve our aspirations. This requires an assertive, coordinated approach that takes action in the now but with a lens to the future. If these complex problems remain unsolved, we do a disservice to our taitamariki. The waste of their talent will be felt for generations.

Tihore Mai Te Rangi

Tihore Mai Te Rangi
Tihore Mai Te Rangi
Tihore Mai
Mao Mao Mao Te Ua
Whiti Mai Te Rā
Mao Mao Mao Te Ua
Whiti Mai Te Rā
E Rere Kōtare
E Rere Kōtare
Ki Runga Pūwharawhara
Ruru Parirau
Kei Mate I Te Ua
Ruru Parirau
Kei Mate I Te Ua
Tihore Mai
Tihore Mai Te Rangi
Tihore Mai
Mao Mao Mao Te Ua
Whiti Mai Te Rā
Mao Mao Mao Te Ua
Whiti Mai Te Rā

Clear Up Sky
Clear Up Sky
Clear Up
Stop Stop Stop Rain
Come Out Sun
Stop Stop Stop Rain
Come Out Sun
Fly Kingfisher
Fly Kingfisher
Up Onto the Clump Of Astelia
Ruffle The Raindrops from Your
Wings
In Case You Catch a Chill
Ruffle The Raindrops from Your
Wings
In Case You Catch a Chill
Clear Up
Clear Up Sky
Clear Up
Stop Stop Stop Rain
Come Out Sun
Stop Stop Stop Rain
Come Out Sun

karakia: <https://folksong.org.nz/tihore>

Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG have identified the core challenges that need to be addressed:

Challenge 1

Our education system should be mana-enhancing and promote equitable outcomes, it needs to nurture our taitamariki and equip them with the tools to pursue their aspirations – our young people have huge potential, but the high cost of living, including petrol and accommodation, is a barrier to shifting into further education and training. The responsibility on government, education and training partners, is to meet taitamariki where they are at, respecting their agency while creating pathways through which their potential can be amplified.

Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG considers the way forward: our education system should focus on adequate career and pathway planning and increasing the participation of our ākonga in the science, technology, engineering, arts and maths (STEAM) subjects, particularly for ākonga Māori and wāhine, providing the necessary foundational skills learning, and ensuring taitamariki are meaningfully connected with tertiary educators and employers.

Challenge 2

Preparing our people to fulfil their potential in the health sector is key – the needs of a growing regional population alongside critical skills shortages in the health sector presents an opportunity to support our people to pursue a career in health care.

Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG's actions that reflect a way forward: focusing on participation and completion rates by taking a coordinated approach to support our ākonga and whānau who want a career change into this sector.

Challenge 3

Supporting our construction sector requires investment in human capital as well as capital infrastructure – the construction sector presents an opportunity for lifelong learning and a way to contribute to creating a thriving Taitokerau. We need to attract our bright taitamariki and whānau looking for a career change into the trades and construction sector. This includes providing housing so taitamariki can study and work in the region.

Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG's actions that reflect a way forward: continue to promote a feedback loop between industry and education and training providers, so that our taitamariki understand the plethora of mana- enhancing employment opportunities within the sector. There is a need to take a long-term view as opposed to immediate problem solving: by investing in upskilling the lower tier workforce rather than bringing in higher-skilled employees from outside the region.

Challenge 4

Reshaping our energy sector is an opportunity to build workforce resiliency to climate change, but current policy and legislative settings could hinder our aspirations - we have significant natural resource, particularly in wind and solar power. Reshaping our energy sector will create strong career pathways for our people while allowing us to support Aotearoa transition to a green economy. Taitokerau is poised for this opportunity – we have an abundance of natural resources and the necessary regional appetite.

Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG's actions that reflect a way forward: a community led, regionally enabled, centrally supported approach will ensure this opportunity is realised. This includes identifying priorities that do not align at the national and local level, and working together to ensure the pipeline of skills is built at speed and scale.



Tony Foster, Ngā-tōki-mata-whāo-rua, c. 2010

Setting the scene for our reflections

In spite of the conditions of uncertainty that existed for our sea-faring tūpuna, they travelled onto the vast oceans with the resolve to meet whatever came their way, be that choppy seas, storms or swells. This resolve continues within us: whether we meet new settings or continued floods and storms, our resolve remains the same. What needs to shift is the system in which we exist – we detail this below in our reflections on the response to the recent Cyclone Gabrielle.

The impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle

Cyclone Gabrielle has had far-reaching and potentially long-lasting impacts on Northland housing, workforce and business communities. As at February 2023:

Transport – a total of 378 local roads were impacted by closure or restrictions (212 were full closures).

Businesses – those that are dependent on seasonal summer revenue have been significantly impacted.

Housing – 39 houses impacted overall, with 4 red building assessments and 17 yellow building assessments. Rebuilding will further strain the demand for labour in the construction sector.

Tourism – Ongoing roading issues, and continuing rain events means the region is still battling the perception that the rohe is not open for business. Certainly, parts of the rohe are compromised, but in reality most businesses are open and eager for customers.

Against the backdrop of Cyclone Gabrielle's continuing impacts, the multi-hull waka paddles forth; we reflect on our position and our way forward. We believe we can turn these challenges to our advantage by working together and following the kaupapa set by our tūpuna.

Reflecting on the opportunities within the response:

- **Marae and local community hubs are and historically have been the powerhouse for immediate responses to events** – our tūpuna set a path of resiliency, which our people have followed. While flooding is not new to us, the way Government responds needs to shift to better meet our needs. The strong capability and relationships that exist on the ground need to be reflected in response settings.

The opportunity: if we target investment into marae and other local settings, we will amplify their ability to provide for the community and enable those in the community to be trained in emergency response skills.

- **Shocks to communities are cumulative, and the historical inequities cannot be forgotten** – recent events worsen the inequities that already exist. Successive weather effects, alongside historical under-investment, has had a compounding effect on our infrastructure and economy. The impacts on our people have been deeper: whānau have had to move away to find employment, pulling people away from their whenua.

The opportunity: Government can respond differently by investing in a manner that genuinely reflects 'community led, regionally enabled, centrally supported'. Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG's RWP reflects the appetite from regional stakeholders for iwi-hapū led workforce development, in line with social procurement for government investment in housing and infrastructure.

Reflections

The following chapters turn a spotlight on each of our labour market priorities by outlining:

- the rationale in pursuing a coordinated approach within the sector
- the challenges and opportunities experienced by those who are leading this change
- a brief snapshot of actions taken as part of the kaupapa

In the following chapters, Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG have included recommendations for each sector which reflects our role: they focus on where insights might be needed, where there are ways to better connect with each other, and what support is required at a national level to empower us to lead this change.

The table below provides a high-level summary of progress made on actions (*more detail on actions can be found in Appendix 2 on the MBIE website*).

Overview: number of actions progressed against actions planned

Objective 1	Focus area	Total planned	Actions RSLG progressed in year 1	Planned actions in Year 2	Planned actions Year 3	Outcomes
Te Taiao; Ensuring recovery from COVID-19 and related impacts on workforce, and building workforce resilience due to climate change and other economic disruptions	Hauora Health and Communities	10	3	5	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in decent equitable mahi across the region. • Development of the current workforce through upskilling and cultural competency development. • Build a secure pipeline for kaiāwhina and nurses for the future. • Improved awareness of career opportunities and different health care career options amongst job seekers, especially taitamariki, and Māori workforce.
	Resilient workforce development and whānau enablement	4	-	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a more resilient workforce in time of economic disruption. • Increase in participation of a Māori workforce in local community programmes. • Increase in number of whānau, entrepreneurs and wāhine employment and self-employment.
	Responding to climate change, developing green skills	4	-	1	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved awareness of career opportunities and green skills required for the transition towards climate change adaptation for our region's workforce, especially taitamariki, and Māori workforce. • Development of an approach with key economic stakeholders in our region (policymakers and business leaders) outlining the needs of the workforce and what skills are required to shift talent and growth towards a green skilled workforce. • Increase in a readily trained workforce with green skills in the region to enable environmentally sustainable economic activities.

Objective 2	Focus area	Total planned	Actions RSLG progressed in year 1	Planned actions in Year 2	Planned actions Year 3	Outcomes
Mātauranga; Supporting a productive economy through regional workforce planning and labour market intelligence in core backbone economic sectors	Construction and Infrastructure	4	1	2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in housing in the region. • Creation of a larger pool of skilled workers for the pipeline. • Increase in number of Māori owned businesses in the sector. • Increase in contracts being awarded to local contractors.
	Primary Industry – Agriculture, Forestry and Horticulture	9	2	3	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased seasonal worker wellbeing. • Increased higher level skills across the sector. • Improved on-farm productivity. • Increased employment sustainability and reduced churn of workers.
	Supporting the future of work – digital skills	6	-	-	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in uptake of digital skills in the region. • Increase in micro credentials for digital skills.
	Destination/ Tourism	3	-	-	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased worker wellbeing. • Creation of a larger talent pool of workers in the region. • Increased skills and service levels of current and future workforce.
Objective 3 He Tāngata; supporting skills and training opportunities to enable whānau aspiration, especially wāhine	Education and Skills	7	5	2	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved awareness of career opportunities and different health care and green skill career options amongst job seekers, especially taitamariki, and Māori workforce. • Development of the current workforce through upskilling and cultural competency development.
	Equitable and inclusive workforce	4	1	-	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for a more resilient workforce in times of economic disruption. • Increased Māori participation in local community workforce programmes. • Increase in number of whānau, entrepreneurs and wāhine in decent sustainable employment
	Our people and whānau workforce development	1	1	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for a more resilient workforce in times of economic disruption. • Increased Māori participation in local community workforce programmes. • Increase in number of whānau, entrepreneurs and wāhine in decent sustainable employment. • Increased sustainability and reduced churn in the workforce.

Education and skills



Photo: Northland Inc

Our education system needs to nurture our taitamariki in a way that equips them with the tools they need to pursue their aspirations. The responsibility on government and education partners is to meet taitamariki where they are at, respecting their agency while creating pathways through which their potential can be amplified. The RSLG has a role to play in achieving this – our mandate is to identify where change is needed, through insights and advice, to achieve wellbeing for our people through a highly skilled labour market.

What barriers do our ākongā face?

- **Poverty is a barrier for our taitamariki** – in our geographically dispersed and remote rohe, travel is expensive. The cost of child and whānau care also poses a barrier. Our digital connectivity does not have the stability or reach to service our people. These challenges are particularly felt by Māori, Pasifika, and disabled persons, especially those living remotely.
- **Ākongā are not being equipped with the correct subjects to pursue the careers they want** – stakeholders and data indicates ākongā are not continuing with science, technology, engineering, arts and maths. Our current system places ākongā in a position where bridging courses are then needed, which adds additional cost and time to their qualification journey.

What is the way forward?

- **Provide support that is tailored to our regional and local needs** – digital connectivity remains a significant challenge for education. An initiative that aims to address this is the Government's Remote Users Scheme¹; which provides one-off grants of up to \$2000 to support households that do not have connectivity
- **The role of early career advice cannot be overstated** – adequate and tailored career and pathway planning is needed to ensure our taitamariki are equipped to fulfil their potential. Good practice includes programmes such as Education to Employment (E2E)² where local businesses are actively connected to school teaching staff and career advisors, and Te Mahere Whai Mahi, the Māori Employment Action Plan an all of government strategy, which focuses on tailored careers advice for ākongā.

1. <https://remoteusersscheme.crowninfrastructure.govt.nz>
2. <https://www.e2ewhangarei.com>

An improvement that can be made would be putting in place a mechanism for careers advisors at the secondary school, tertiary and workplace levels to communicate with and support one another.

Mahi that demonstrates this approach is being led by NorthCATE. NorthCATE is hosting the National CATE Conference in late November, in Whangārei with upwards of 900 delegates expected

- **Kura are better than mainstream education at serving our taitamariki Māori needs** – recent data released by Kura Kaupapa suggested that 58 per cent of Māori ākongā left with NCEA Level 3 at Kura, compared to 35 per cent in mainstream education. The evidence indicates that while Te Mahau, Ministry of Education are committed and working hard alongside our ākongā to address the challenges raised above, mainstream education is not designed for our Māori ākongā. A claim asking for the establishment of a Ministry of Mātauranga Kaupapa Māori is currently being heard under urgency by the Waitangi Tribunal.



Photo: Te Rūnanga o Whaingaroa

- **Getting foundation skills right for our ākonga will position them to take advantage of the opportunities created by the vocational education reforms** – Te Pūkenga has expanded its geographic region (Mai Tāmaki ki te Rerenga wairua, within which Te Purunga ki Te Raki resides) alongside importing programmes from the national network. Providing the courses locally breaks down access barriers caused by distance, unreliable infrastructure and costs of moving across country. For example, Te Pūkenga, through a ‘lift and shift’ tailored approach will be bringing Otago’s occupational therapy programme to Taitokerau. This programme will be re-designed to suit local needs, with an emphasis on Mātauranga Māori. Te Pūkenga has indicated there is potential to duplicate this approach for green skill programmes, early childcare training, dental therapy, medical imaging and phlebotomist training.

- **Ensure creative qualifications are available at every level of the tertiary sector so that we position our taitamariki to take advantage of the active recruitment for creative skills** - many sectors now recognise that those with creative skills are able to look differently at persistent challenges and develop innovative solutions. Creative industries can play a critical role in building more resilient, sustainable and inclusive economies.

Many of the creative industries rely on digital technology (e.g. gaming, screen, etc.). This makes the rationale for digital inclusion more compelling, as addressing this barrier would open up pathways across many other sectors.



Photo: Chris Williams

Kaupapa

Review the outcomes on raising learner achievement with a continuous focus for Māori and all learners outlined in the Education Work Programme; identify which actions are most relevant for our region, what are priorities, and what is missing.

Champion education with industry/business interests to further better education pathways for our region’s people.

Support barrier-free access to training opportunities regardless of where students live.

Hiko

RSLG secretariat has collaborated with industry, employers and industry bodies to better understand the education needs for the region and has provided this detailed advice to the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). The aim of the advice is to increase funding for education and improve outcomes, particularly for taitamariki and the Māori workforce.

RSLG secretariat hold regular hui with the sector to better understand the context for learning with an emphasis on secondary schools and maintaining enrolment in STEAM subjects, especially for taitamariki, and Māori workforce, given the need for these skills within the region.

Education to Employment (E2E)³ (a cross sector collaboration) hold regular events with the RSLG secretariat to better understand the education and employment challenges faced in the region.

Over 120 teachers were booked into a Teacher Only Day hosted by Bay of Islands College at Kawakawa with the support of industry to inform and increase teachers’ knowledge of industry and emerging careers.

RSLG secretariat hosted a tertiary provider hui with a quarterly hui planned. This is an opportunity for pathways to be mapped across providers so that more ākonga can be served across the rohe.

Kaihoe

Te Pūkenga

Local iwi and hapū

Industry

Tertiary Education Commission

Private Training Establishments

Workforce Development Councils

Ministry of Education

3. <https://www.e2ewhangarei.com>

Hauora and hapori whānau health and communities



The health of our people continues to remain a strategic focus for Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG. Encouraging participation and ensuring completion of health training programmes, including tailored pastoral care/awhi is key to ensuring our people can pursue a rewarding career in health. Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG has observed that through increased members' facilitation, collaboration and sharing insights, there is already a broader provision of health programmes including a Māori Bachelor of Nursing, podiatry, and occupational therapy programmes. Apprenticeships that enable ākonga to 'earn and learn' are expanding. A core success factor is that delivery extends beyond Whangārei; it now stretches across Kerikeri, Ngāwhā and Kaitaia campuses.

Why does health remain compelling for the region to address?

- **Hauora/health inequities** – there are hauora/health inequities across the regions particularly for Māori and Pasifika whose difference in life expectancy and experience of illness is stark compared to Pākehā.⁴
- **An increasing population presents a challenge for a sector already experiencing critical skills shortages** – our population is growing, particularly Pākehā over 65 years of age and Māori under 14 years of age, adding pressure to the already overburdened health system. Many also live rurally and in remote communities and attracting workers to these remote communities can be a further challenge. Infometrics estimate that by 2028 Taitokerau will need over 900 new health care workers to meet demand from those leaving or retiring from the sector, and for the expansion of services. The demand for registered nurses, kaiāwhina/health care assistants and general practitioners is critical, alongside a wider workforce demand in this sector.

What is the way forward?

- **Encouraging participation and ensuring completion of health training programmes, including tailored pastoral care/awhi** – encouraging uptake of the wider range of health courses now available will position us to meet demand. More apprenticeship and work-based learning interventions are needed to encourage participation and completion. Programmes such as the Apprenticeship Boost make it easier for employees to earn as they learn and can help increase the diversity of the workforce. Other good practice also includes providing culturally responsive pastoral care, particularly for our second-chance students who have not previously excelled in school, and for those who are seeking a career change.

- **The role of early career advice cannot be overstated** – adequate and tailored career and pathway planning is needed to ensure our taitamariki are equipped to fulfil their potential. Good practice includes programmes such as Education to Employment (E2E) where local businesses are actively connected to school teaching staff and career advisors, and Te Mahere Whai Mahi, the Māori Employment Action Plan (an all of government approach) which focuses on tailored careers advice for ākonga. An improvement that can be made would be putting in place a mechanism for careers advisors at the secondary school, tertiary and workplace levels to communicate with and support one another.
- **Preparation is key** – ensuring ākonga are encouraged and supported to pursue a career in health is crucial. Lack of science study past year 9 often acts as a barrier for secondary school ākonga acceptance into a health course. Tailored programmes are needed, particularly ones that meet the needs of our Māori ākonga and whānau interested in a career change. Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG encourages coordinated and tailored programmes that meet this need. An example of good practice is the expansion of Pūhoro STEMM Academy into Taitokerau. It is a positive and welcomed initiative from Ngāti Whātua iwi, Ministry of Education, the Tindall Foundation and Foundation North.

4. By 2043, the Pasifika population in Taitokerau is expected to grow from 4 per cent to 7 per cent. (<https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/subnational-ethnic-population-projections-2018base2043>)



Kaupapa

Reimagine Health Care in Taitokerau and improve the future skills pipeline for health care and communities' workforce.

Broaden apprenticeship provision, participation and completion of Nursing (Registered and Enrolled) programmes.

Meet the skills needs of our region and employers, especially in Kaiāwhina roles.

Hīkoi

More options for training for a health career including Māori Registered Nursing degrees, podiatry, oral health, and occupational therapy. Health courses are now offered at the Kerikeri, Ngāwhā and Kaitaia Te Pūkenga campuses and clinical training is now offered at Kaitaia Hospital.

The Rural Health Interprofessional Programme (RHIP2023) run by the University of Auckland is now offered by Hokianga Hauora under the Takapu Wānanga Programme. This programme offers final year medical students' exposure to Māori and rural health provision and are part of attracting GPs to the region.

The Kaimahi/Kaiāwhina to Enrolled Nursing apprenticeship model is expanding and will be offered via Te Pūkenga Taitokerau as well as AUT.

Proposals to pilot and develop cultural competency training delivered by local hapū/iwi on local marae are being discussed amongst system partners including Te Pūkenga, Toitū te Waiora and Ngāti Rēhia and the Aged Care sector.

The Nursing Pipeline Project (Te Whatu Ora) started a new programme of work in alignment with recommendations from the Regional Workforce Plan. They are currently investigating the reasons students are not completing studies and how the sector might be more responsive to Māori and Pacific Nursing students. The wider adoption of the Nursing Pipeline Project structure for Midwifery; Allied Health; Medical Practitioners and Kaiāwhina, by Te Whatu Ora is supported by Te Purunga ki Te Raki.

Te Whatu Ora are seeking to grow the Enrolled Nursing workforce. This will allow those that exit the Bachelor of Nursing programme or who do not achieve professional registration to use their existing skills within the Health Sector.

Kaihoe

Te Pūkenga

Local iwi and hapū

Industry

Tertiary Education Commission

Private Training Establishments

Workforce Development Councils

Ministry of Education

Education to Employment (E2E)

Construction and Infrastructure

The construction and infrastructure sector continues to be a focus for the RSLG. Particularly the need to grow and build a skilled workforce in the region. A challenge that was identified in the RWP and continues to be a key issue for Taitokerau is the ongoing housing shortage which impacts the region's ability to house our skilled workforce. The RSLG welcomed news that Te Pouahi o Te Taitokerau (a collective of Northland based Māori housing service providers and supported by Northland iwi, hapū and Ahu Whenua Trusts) has been awarded \$55M that will see 80 to 100 affordable rental homes built by 2025.



Photo: Te Matarau



Why does construction and infrastructure remain compelling for the region to address?

While not a new issue for Taitokerau, Cyclone Gabrielle highlighted yet again the vulnerability of the region's infrastructure including roading, transport, accessibility to power and communications. The RSLG continues to collaborate with regional and central agencies, local iwi, hapū and industry to address our regional needs.

- **Infrastructure resilience** – the March 2023 assessment compiled by Northland Transportation Alliance on behalf of Whangārei District Council currently estimates \$250 million in repairs are needed to improve Northland's local roading network and to provide Northland with a safer, more resilient local road network. Northland planners, surveyors and architects have emphasised the need to develop infrastructure resilience planning skills and expertise on the management and diversion of storm water.
- **Future pipeline** – since the publication of the RWP over \$7 billion (further detail is available in Appendix 3 on the MBIE website) worth of infrastructure build has been identified across Taitokerau, including the large Whangārei Hospital rebuild. The builds are spread over the next five to ten years so can be utilised as a skills and training pipeline into higher-level skills. Growth in apprenticeships and the skills they produce will be required.
- **Vulnerable infrastructure** – Cyclone Gabrielle highlighted once again the vulnerability of the region's infrastructure with roading, transport, power and communications showing how Taitokerau has been poorly served over the years. Lack of quality housing remains a concern for hapori and agencies alike.

What is the way forward?

- **Whanaungatanga and Tautoko** – Collaborative work on progressive social procurement alongside the extensive list of projects is the catalyst for cooperation and collaboration between Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG, Northland Inc and stakeholders. It will be critical to the region to use this opportunity to build skills and better incomes for both the region's current and potential workforce.
- **Connection between ākongā and industry** – it has been highlighted many times that Taitokerau faces a labour shortage both in terms of numbers and skills. While work is being done in the construction and infrastructure sector to increase the number of training programmes available in Taitokerau, the RSLG has identified that greater work needs to be done to connect taitamariki and whānau (including those with transferable skills e.g. digital skills) to industry early with a focus to encourage transition into the sector, while acknowledging and encouraging alternative approaches to learning. The Māori Trades Training Funds (MTTF) and extension of the Apprenticeship Boost have been instrumental in the increasing number of apprentices taken on by local businesses. These signals from Government have been well received by the sector.

Kaupapa

Amplify initiatives to attract taitamariki into the industry including through subject choices that support these pathways; working with Te Pūkenga to ensure subjects are available to learners across the rohe.

Continue to tailor and grow vocational training to meet the construction and infrastructure needs of employers and communities.

Support iwi-hapū led workforce development in line with social procurement for government investment in housing and infrastructure e.g. Ngā PunaWai Ora.

Showcase successful examples where social procurement has increased supplier equity and upskilling, and provided more contracts for local businesses.

Hiko

The RSLG has engaged with Te Whatu Ora and Northland Inc to collaborate on the Whangārei Hospital Rebuild. We will be looking at how we can better support stakeholders, industry, iwi and hapū to meet the needs of the region.

The RSLG is working with Waihanga Ara Rau Workforce Development Council to ensure alignment of priorities for the Taitokerau region. This includes alignment of TEC advice with Taitokerau needs as outlined in the RWP.

The RSLG has met with Te Hiku Iwi Development Trust and discussed how the group can support a Trades Academy in construction for schools in the Kaitiāia area.

Kaihoe

Local iwi and hapū

Te Pūkenga

Waihanga Ara Rau Workforce Development Council

Te Puni Kōkiri

Te Whatu Ora

Northland Inc

Industry representatives

Tertiary Education Commission

Te Hiku Iwi Development Trust

MBIE

Amotai



Photo: Northland Inc

Workforce resilience and climate change

There is significant capacity to produce renewable energy in the region. Leaning into the green skill capacity and capability within Taitokerau will generate a range of social, economic and environmental outcomes leading to workforce resilience to climate change. Supporting a shift to renewable energy would reflect our region's commitments to Taitokerau Climate Adaptation Strategy – which has been adopted by local councils with support from tangata whenua representatives as well as from the Zero Carbon amendment to the Climate Change Response Act in 2019. The RSLG have begun exploring the opportunity of Renewable Energy Zones with regional stakeholders including Te Kahu o Taonui, Te Hiku Iwi Development Trust, North Power, MSD and Te Puni Kōkiri.



What is the opportunity for our region?

- **Abundance in resource** – Taitokerau has significant potential for renewable energy development, particularly in wind and solar power. We have the natural resources to generate 10 times the current regional energy requirements.
- **Regional appetite** – Local energy distributors have positioned renewables as a key focus. The 220kV lines that run south from Marsden Point provide an already constructed 'superhighway'.
- **Reshaping our energy sector creates strong career pathways for our people while allowing us to support Aotearoa transition to a green economy** – the impacts of climate change will continue to be felt in this region. Approximately 70 towns and localities will be impacted by coastal flooding, erosion, and permanent inundation through sea level rise over the next 100 years and beyond. Our whānau are facing incredibly high energy costs, a cost many households cannot afford. Transitioning to a green economy is the only sustainable way forward.
- **Proximity to Tāmaki Makaurau** – Taitokerau has the potential to generate 2GW of renewable energy, which is approximately energy for 375,000 households. This means we have the potential to supply our region, as well as support Tāmaki Makaurau, while generating high skilled careers and wellbeing outcomes for our people.

What is the way forward to take advantage of this opportunity?

- **A community led, regionally enabled, centrally supported approach is needed** – a clear and coordinated approach will ensure this opportunity is realised, including identifying any priorities that do not align at the national and local level. Currently the infrastructure will not carry the power where it is needed so Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) are under discussion. Kōrero with local stakeholders suggests that a barrier to getting the policy setting rights might be legislative constraints.
- **The pipeline of skills will need to be built at speed and scale** – the investment in generation, transmission and distribution lines is going to generate hundreds of jobs. Additionally, this is an area that RSLG has identified as a space where training can happen easily and is scalable. An example of the type of mahi we can lean into is the cadet partnership between North Power and MSD which sees 30 whānau being trained in 2023 and an additional 100 in 2024.
- **The 220kV line exists, but there needs to be local infrastructure to connect to it** – building the local infrastructure is crucial to ensuring we can leverage this opportunity. However, this infrastructure is controlled centrally and there are no current plans to expand north past Marsden Point.

Health workforce case study

Kerikeri Retirement Village



Helping people is what I'm all about

Photo: Kerikeri Retirement Village website



Cavalli working at the Kerikeri Retirement Village

For Cavalli, that pathway is likely to lead to studying medicine at university. *"I think the work I'm doing at the moment, helping the team of carers in the Aged Care facility at The Village, will be a really good start to that. Yep – a really good beginning."*

The Kerikeri High School student doesn't consider what she does at the Village as 'tough' work. She helps in the late afternoons and early evenings, setting meal trays and delivering trays of food to some of the residents in their rooms, sorting out laundry and other light duties. When Cavalli started she was buddied up with someone experienced who explained, step by step, what her role entailed.

Basically, I'm here to make life easier for the Health Care Assistants and nursing staff, so they can focus on the hands-on care the residents need."

She says one of the important things you need to work in care *"is to actually care"*.

"It's important to be able to tend to and bond with the residents – they need someone like that." Being a good listener is also important. *"I really enjoy listening to their stories and hearing about experiences – they've all had such interesting lives and done such cool things. I've never done anything like that!"* For Cavalli, her work in care is as much about job satisfaction as it is about the people she looks after.

I truly get as much out of it as they do.

And for Cavalli, her experience as a Care Support Assistant has confirmed she wants to work in hauora health and is planning on studying medicine. She considers her part time job at Kerikeri Retirement Village an excellent first step in her pathway into health.

We want to acknowledge Hilary Sumpter for opening this new pathway for taitamariki in Kerikeri.



Photo: Kerikeri Retirement Village website

Te Purunga ki Te Raki RSLG Membership

Below are the members of Te Purunga ki Te Taki RSLG. Members are acknowledged for their valuable insights, knowledge and contribution to this group as well as the sectors they represent.



Harry Burkhardt
Chair
Te Kahu o Taonui



Toa Faneva
Tumu Whenua ā-Rohe 1
Executive Director, Region 1
Te Pūkenga
MNZM



Carol Berghan
Chief Executive
Te Hiku Iwi Development Trust



Lindsay Faithfull
Managing Director
McKay



Eru Lyndon
Regional Public Service
Commissioner



Sheryl Mai
Whangārei Mayor
2013 - 2022



Stuart McDonald
General Manager
People and Culture
McKay



Edward Miller
Researcher and Policy Analyst
First Union



Steve Smith
Chief Executive
The Chamber of Commerce and
Industry Northland
2018 - 2022



Pita Tipene
Secretary General
Ngāti Hine Trust



Te Purunga ki Te Raki
**REGIONAL SKILLS
LEADERSHIP GROUP.**

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