



This report presents case studies of how five local authorities are currently building mechanisms, processes and practices to meet their Treaty obligations to the tangata whenua within their rohe (area). The five councils are: Manukau City Council; Waipa District Council; Gisborne District Council - a unitary authority; Wellington Regional Council; and Marlborough District Council - a unitary authority

The report responds to the following questions:

- How and to what extent are the selected councils accepting and responding to statutory requirements in relation to iwi/Māori?
- What are the range and nature of the relationships that the selected councils have with iwi/Māori?
- What are the range of models and approaches used by each council?
- What models and approaches have worked or been successful, and why?
- What models and approaches have not worked, and why?
- What are the barriers to relationship development?
- What factors drive variation in council responses?
- How do iwi/Māori stakeholders see councils' responses?

The research found that there is considerable variation among councils in the processes and mechanisms through which the relationship with tangata whenua is developed and cemented. Even with a single council those relationships may consist of a multiplicity of formal and informal interactions both at the governance and operational levels. None of the councils and tangata whenua have found that developing relationships is easy. In some areas it has been a continual process of trial and error. Mechanisms have evolved, changed and been transformed as the relationship has developed. While some councils and tangata whenua indicate gradual evolution and progress in their relationships, other councils in the case studies are struggling with fundamental aspects of relationships with tangata whenua.

There is no one simple model or mechanism that will work for all councils and tangata whenua, all of the time. What works in one area may not work in another. Each of the tangata whenua and councils have a specific history and circumstances. Relationships change and grow.

Some of the councils in these case studies have developed relationships that go beyond the requirements of the RMA, and they are well placed for responding to any wider provisions for the involvement of iwi and Māori in local government activities that may be enacted through changes to local government legislation.

*Key initiatives among the councils include:*

*Manukau City Council:*

- Treaty of Waitangi Unit
- Treaty of Waitangi Working Party
- Treaty of Waitangi City Services Plan
- Relationship Agreement Development Funding



- Managing conflict
- Adequate resourcing
- Raising the capacity of tangata whenua to engage with councils
- Building councillor and staff understanding of tangata whenua issues, history, tikanga Maori and Maori social and political structures.

The case studies indicated that there are some approaches that do not work:

- A single council response, as expressed in one type of mechanism, or focussed on one aspect of council activity is not enough.
- Mechanisms such as committees, working parties and Treaty or Maori Units will not be effective if linkages, communication and feedback loops are not established between those mechanisms and the decision-making and managerial processes within councils and within iwi.
- Council and tangata whenua relationships cannot be sustained without resources including sufficient staffing and provision of information and advice to tangata whenua.
- Responses that rely, on specific individuals without structural and procedural support are unlikely to endure.
- Lack of review and evaluation, undertaken by both council and tangata whenua, will limit the growth of the relationship.
- A rigid approach and lack of ability to cope with change and tension may threaten relationships.

It must be emphasised that the successes demonstrated in the case **study areas** have been due to the commitment and willing engagement of all parties - both tangata whenua and council. Tangata whenua have not simply been reactive parties. They have shown considerable fortitude and patience as well as an ability to hold on to a 'fundamental optimism about continuing dialogue with councils. Councils who are seriously committed to forging successful relationships with tangata whenua demonstrate high levels of humility, respect, willingness to listen, eagerness to continue a relationship for the long term and willingness to share resources to build mutual understanding and improved environmental outcomes.