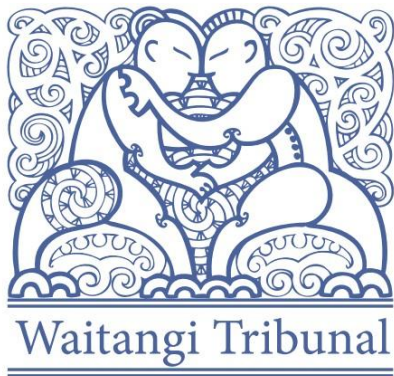


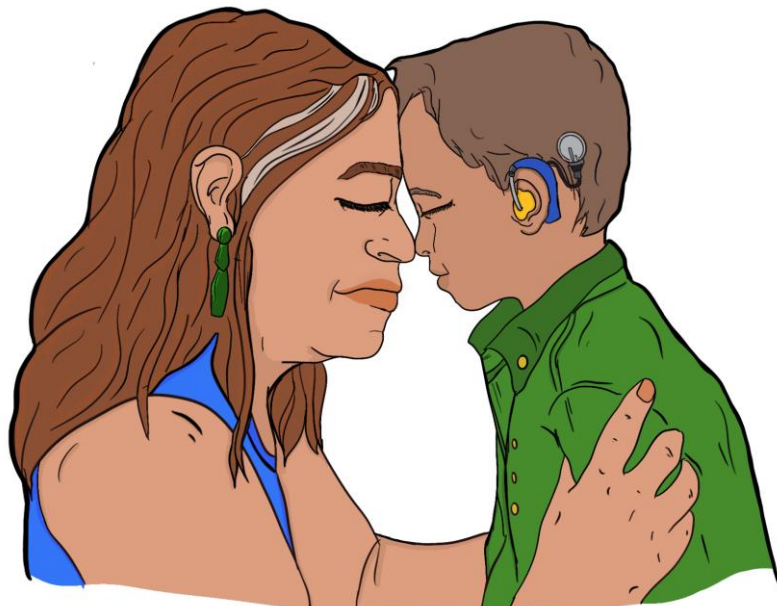


Waitangi Tribunal

Hauwhaikaha Report:

Chapter 14 – Taangata Turi

Part 1

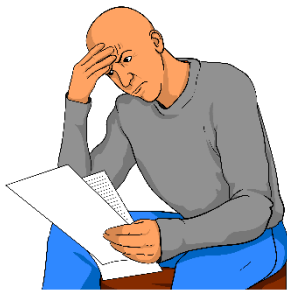


Published: September 2026

Before you begin



This is a long document.



It can be hard for some people to read a document this long.

Some things you can do to make it easier are:



- read it a few pages at a time
- set aside some quiet time to look at it
- have someone read it with you to support you to understand it.



What you will find in here

Page number:



About this Easy Read3



What is Te Tiriti o Waitangi /
The Treaty of Waitangi?.....10



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The history of Taangata Turi.....14



NZSL interpreters and accessible
health information24

About this Easy Read



This Easy Read is from the **Waitangi Tribunal**.



More information about the **Waitangi Tribunal** is on **pages 12 to 13**.



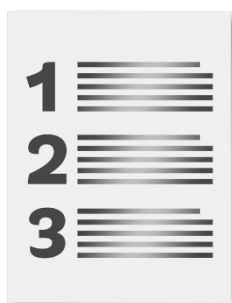
Where it says **we / us** this means the Waitangi Tribunal.



In this document where you see the words **taangata whaikaha Maaori** this means Maaori disabled people.



This Easy Read is part 1 of a **summary of Chapter 14: Taangata Turi** in the **Hauwhaikaha Report**.



A summary:

- is shorter than the main document
- tells you the important ideas.



Taangata Turi means Maaori who are:

- Deaf / deaf
- hearing impaired / hard of hearing.

Where it says **NZSL** in this document this means **New Zealand Sign Language**.



The **Hauwhaikaha Report** is:

- from the **Health Services and Outcomes Inquiry** by the Waitangi Tribunal
- about **claims** that have to do with the disability system.

The **Health Services and Outcomes Inquiry** is about claims made about Aotearoa New Zealand health:

- services
- **outcomes.**

Outcomes means how things turn out for people in life.

For example getting good healthcare can mean being healthier for longer.

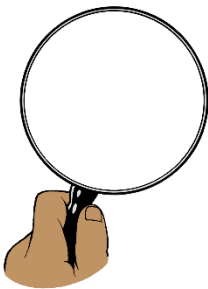


In this document the **Health Services and Outcomes Inquiry** will be called **the inquiry**.



Here a **claim** means someone:

- has told the Waitangi Tribunal that the Government has done something against **Te Tiriti o Waitangi / The Treaty of Waitangi**
- wants the Waitangi Tribunal to look into it.



In this document the word **claimants** means people who have made claims to the Waitangi Tribunal about the disability system.



More information about **Te Tiriti o Waitangi / The Treaty of Waitangi** is on **pages 10 to 11**.



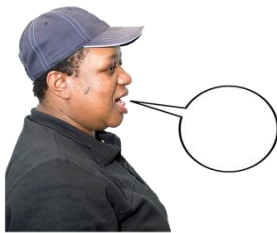
In this document where you see the words **taangata whaikaha Maaori** this means Maaori disabled people.



Te reo Maaori / the Maaori language usually uses **macrons**.

ā ē ī ō ū

Macrons are lines above letters that show you how to say that word.



In te reo Maaori / the Maaori language a macron means to say that letter longer.

Aa ee ii oo uu

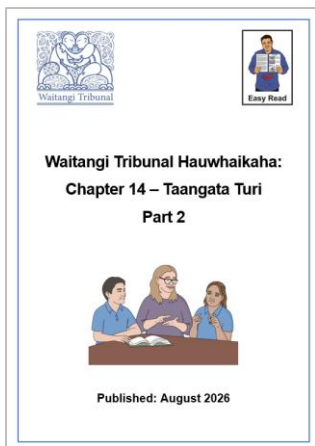
The Hauwhaikaha Report uses double letters instead of macrons.

Maaori / Māori

For example Maaori is the same as Māori.

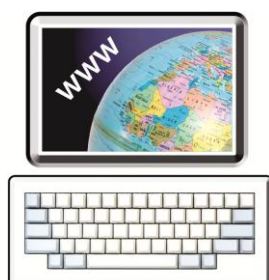


This is so some people can read the words more easily.



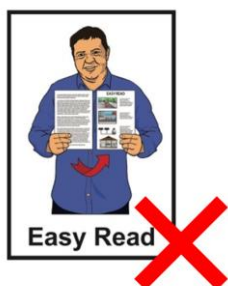
You can read Part 2 of
Chapter 14: Taangata Turi here:

www.bit.ly/Hauwhaikaha-easy

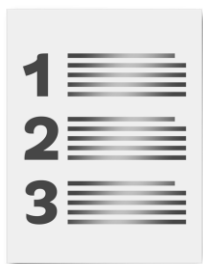


You can read the full Hauwhaikaha
Report at this **website**:

www.bit.ly/Hauwhaikaha



The full report is **not** in Easy Read.



There are summaries of each chapter
if you do not want to read the full
Hauwhaikaha Report.



The summaries of each chapter are
available in Easy Read at this
website:

www.bit.ly/Hauwhaikaha-easy



The summary of each chapter gives an outline of:

- important issues
- things that were found out.



The summaries do not include all the:

- **analysis**
- **evidence.**



Here **analysis** means discussion / thinking about what was found out.



Here **evidence** is information about something like:

- what people said
- what happened to people
- records / files.



What is Te Tiriti o Waitangi / The Treaty of Waitangi?



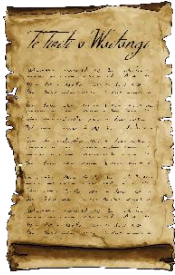
Te Tiriti o Waitangi / The Treaty of Waitangi:

- is an agreement signed between:
 - the Crown
 - and
 - Māori
- was signed in 1840
- is about the:
 - promises made
 - **obligations** for everyone.





Obligations are important things that have to be done.



In this document Te Tiriti o Waitangi / The Treaty of Waitangi will be called **Te Tiriti / The Treaty**.



Where it says the **Crown** in this document this means the **Government**.

What is the Waitangi Tribunal?



The Waitangi Tribunal:

- is a **commission of inquiry**
- listens to claims
- decides if the Government broke a promise made in Te Tiriti / The Treaty
- makes **recommendations** about claims Maaori have made about the Crown.

A **commission of inquiry** is a group of people put together by the Government who learn about things that happened.



Here **recommendations** are advice that would:

- fix a problem
- make things better.

Why are there claims?



Governments of Aotearoa New Zealand have not always kept the promises made in Te Tiriti / The Treaty.



Māori can go to the Waitangi Tribunal to talk about the Government not keeping the promises made in Te Tiriti / The Treaty.

The history of Taangata Turi



Schools

The **oralist method** of deaf education was used for a long time in Aotearoa New Zealand.



The **oralist method**:

- banned sign language
- taught deaf people to:
 - use their voices
 - lip read.



The first school for deaf people was:

- the Sumner School in Christchurch
- started in 1880.



Another school for deaf people was:

- the Kelston School in Auckland
- started in 1940.



Both schools used the oralist method to teach deaf people.



Whaanau / families from all over Aotearoa New Zealand sent their tamariki turi / deaf children to these schools.



This meant many children were separated from their whaanau / families.

Witnesses said the separation:

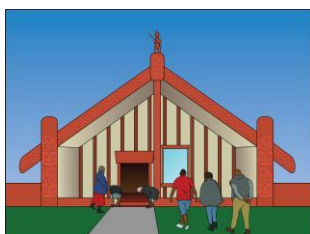


- sometimes happened when children were young
- made the children very upset.



Some whaanau / families moved to be near a deaf school.

This meant whaanau / families moved away from their **hau kaainga**.



Hau kaainga means:

- the place you call home
- local people of a marae.



Moving away from their hau kaainga meant people were separated from their:

- wider whaanau / family
- **culture**
- whenua / land.



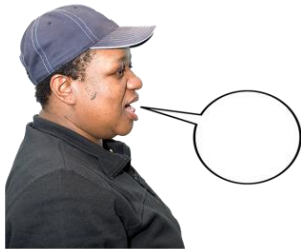
Culture is a way of:

- thinking that a group shares
- doing things as a group.



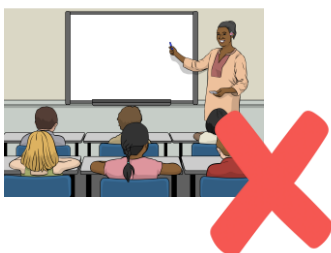
Taangata Turi told us:

- what it was like to go to these deaf schools
- how it made them feel:
 - to learn to speak
 - to learn to lipread
 - about their identity.



Taangata Turi said it was:

- difficult
- confusing.



Some witnesses said they were not taught other things at school because they were taught the oralist method.



This meant that when they left school they did not have good skills like:

- reading
- writing
- sign language.



Witnesses said that being punished for using sign language at school was like their grandparents not being allowed to speak te reo Maaori / the Maaori language.



Taangata Turi said going to the deaf schools meant they lost connection to:

- their Maaori identity / who they are as Maaori
- **te ao Maaori.**





Te ao Maaori is about how Maaori view / think about:

- the world
- their place in the world / how they connect to it.



NZSL

People saw the oralist method was not working.



Training of NZSL **interpreters** began in 1985.



An **interpreter** is someone who supports people who do not use the same language to understand each other.

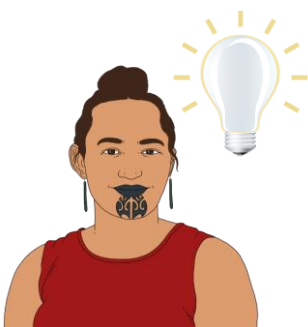


NZSL started being used in schools in 1990.



Witnesses said NZSL:

- was made using signs from:
 - British sign language
 - Australian sign language
- used signs that were not right in te ao Maaori.



Witnesses talked about how important it was that NZSL:

- included Maaori concepts / ideas
- was created with the support of Taangata Turi.





The first Maaori Deaf hui / meeting was held:

- at Ooraakei Marae in Taamaki Makaurau Auckland
- in 1993.



Witnesses said it was a good experience.



The Maaori Deaf hui / meeting supported them to understand what it was like being:

- Maaori

and

- Deaf.

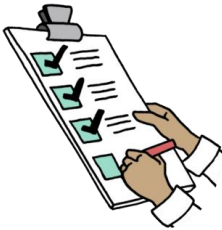




Reports

A lot of reports have been made in the past about Taangata Turi:

- challenges
- needs.



The Hauwhaikaha Report talks about the reports claimants said were important.



Taangata Turi say the Crown has not looked at the problems the reports found.

NZSL interpreters and accessible health information



Accessible means something can be used by everybody including disabled people.



Accessible health information means information that is put into alternate formats like NZSL.



This section looks at:

- NZSL
- Taangata Turi sign language interpretation.



Interpretation means putting the words of one language into another so they can be understood.



We wanted to find out if there are enough NZSL interpreters for what Taangata Turi need.



NZSL in Aotearoa New Zealand

NZSL was made an **official language** in 2006 with the New Zealand Sign Language **Act**.



An **official language** is a language that has special **rights** in a country.



Official languages are used in:

- Government
- courts of law
- schools.





Rights are important things that everyone should:

- have
- be able to do.



Here an **Act** is a law made by the Government.



The New Zealand Sign Language Act says:

- the Deaf community should be talked to about things to do with NZSL
- NZSL should be used in government services so they are accessible to Deaf people.





The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** says countries must do everything they can to make sure disabled people can get information in the way they choose.



The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** is a law lots of countries have agreed to.

It says what governments must do to make sure disabled people get the same rights as everybody else.



It is also called the **UNCRPD** for short.



The **Human Rights Commission** put out a report in 2013 called A New Era in the Right to Sign.



The **Human Rights Commission** protects the human rights of everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand.



This report said NZSL interpreters were used in the health service a long time before the New Zealand Sign Language Act 2006.



Other important documents that said Deaf people should be able to use NZSL were the:

- Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights
- Ngaa Paerewa Health and Disability Services Standard
- New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990
- Human Rights Act 1993.

Being able to use NZSL while getting health services means Deaf people:

- get the information they need
- can make informed choices
- have things necessary to their culture thought about.

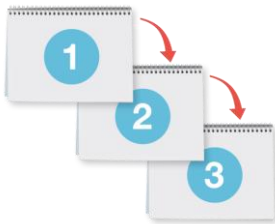


The Government created the NZSL Board in 2014.



The NZSL Board does work like:

- creating the NZSL **strategy**
- guiding government agencies on how to use NZSL
- watching how government agencies do in their work of using NZSL.



Here a **strategy** is set of long term plans that are made to reach a goal.



The NZSL Board set up **Te Roopuu Kaitiaki** in 2022.



Te Roopuu Kaitiaki is:

- led by Taangata Turi
- a group that gives advice to the NZSL Board.



Funding / money for NZSL interpreters

The Ministry of Social Development funds / gives money to Deaf Aotearoa to do NZSL interpretation services.



Deaf Aotearoa provides interpretation services through a service called iSign.



Deaf people can book an interpreter through iSign for things like when they go to the doctor.

Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand also has funding / money for interpreters in places like hospitals.



Ara Poutama Aotearoa – Department of Corrections provides interpreters for people in prison who need to visit the doctor.

Are there enough interpreters for Taangata Turi when they need healthcare?



Claimants said Taangata Turi having NZSL interpreters is very important because they need them to use the:

- health system
- disability system.



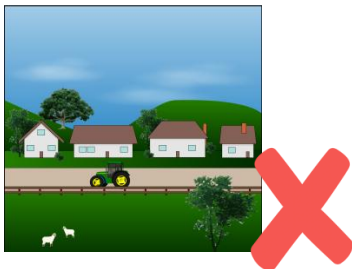


Witnesses said NZSL interpreters are not always available when Taangata Turi need them.

This means:



- it can take a long time to get healthcare
- health services providers sometimes do not understand what Taangata Turi need



- NZSL interpreters are not available in rural / out of town areas.



This also means Taangata Turi have to decide if they:

- wait for an NZSL interpreter

or



- carry on without an NZSL interpreter.



Witnesses said Taangata Turi like having Māori interpreters.



Not being able to choose the right interpreter means Taangata Turi might not have their culture supported in the right way.



Another important issue claimants talked about was **deaf relay interpreters**.



Here **deaf relay interpreters** mean deaf people who work with hearing interpreters to give more information to Taangata Turi in NZSL.



Claimants said deaf relay interpreters are important because:

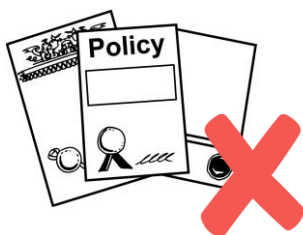
- Taangata Turi trust them
- they share lived experience of being Deaf.



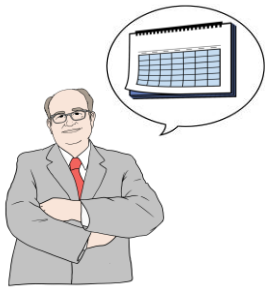
Claimants said there are different policies / rules for providing NZSL interpretation services in each government agency.



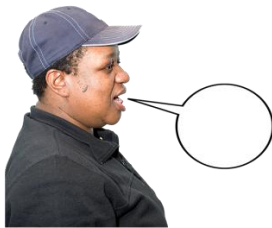
This means Taangata Turi get different access to NZSL interpreters at different government agencies.



The Crown did not give us information on each of these policies / rules.



The Crown said it was taking a long time to promote the use of sign language because of the effects of **oralism**.

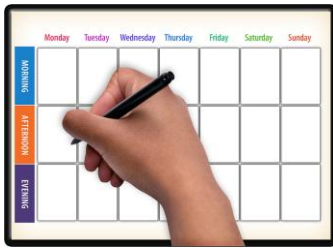


Here **oralism** means making deaf people use their voices to speak instead of sign language.



There are not enough NZSL interpreters even though the Government funds them.

Witnesses said they:



- can get an NZSL interpreter when they plan ahead

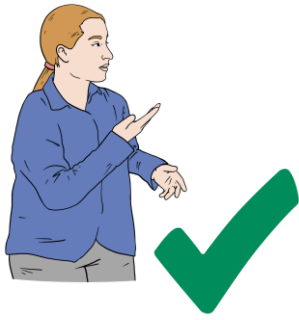
but

- it takes too long to get an NZSL interpreter:



- during an emergency like having to go to the hospital quickly
- in a rural / out of town area.





The Crown said:

- many good things have been done for NZSL

but

- there is still a lot more to be done:
 - by the NZSL Board
 - in government agencies.



Only the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights says Deaf people have a right to NZSL interpreters when getting healthcare.

Not having enough NZSL interpreters for Taangata Turi can lead to problems like:



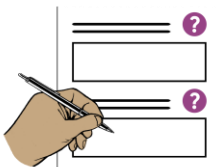
- they do not get all the information they need



- information gets mixed up
- they are told the wrong things about their health



- their wellbeing being affected as they may be put off from getting healthcare when they need it



- health information is not accessible like:

- forms are too long
- information shared with the public is not done in a way they can understand.



Do Taangata Turi have enough access to te ao Maaori?



Taangata Turi said it is very important they have access to their:

- culture
- language
- identity / knowledge of who they are.



Taangata Turi said it is very important to have **trilingual interpreters** to connect them to te ao Maaori.



Here **trilingual interpreters** means people who can:

- speak te reo Maaori / the Maaori language

- speak English

and

- use NZSL.



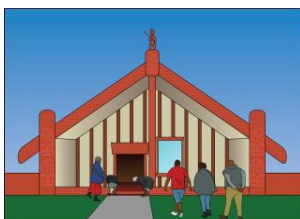
Witnesses said not having enough trilingual interpreters means they cannot:

- learn te reo Maaori / the Maaori language

- take part in hui Maaori / Maaori events like tangihanga / funerals

- take part on marae

- learn **maatauranga** Maaori as much as they would like.





Maatauranga is:

- Maaori ways of knowing things
- information Maaori have known for a very long time.

Claimants said there:



- was a goal of 1 hundred trilingual interpreters made at the National Maaori Deaf hui in 1993
- was a goal of 1 hundred trilingual interpreters by 2003

but



- right now there are only about 3 people who are trilingual interpreters.



Claimants said:

- there is a lot of demand / need for trilingual interpreters

and

- they must be booked early.



Claimants also said there is not enough support to train new trilingual interpreters.



There is only 1 course in Taamaki Makaurau Auckland where NZSL interpreters can become a registered / an official NZSL interpreter.



It can be difficult for some Maaori who want to be an NZSL interpreter to move to Taamaki Makaurau Auckland.



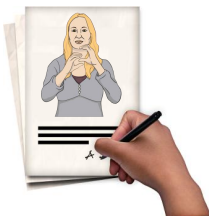
Some Maaori also want to learn:

- at waananga / Maaori university
- in te reo Maaori / the Maaori language.



There is:

- not enough support for Maaori interpreters
- no way to register as / become an official trilingual interpreter.



Claimants talked about challenges with funding NZSL interpreters for hui Maaori / Maaori events.



Claimants said funding only covers paying an NZSL interpreter for a few hours.



This means Taangata Turi do not get an NZSL interpreter for all the important parts of hui Maaori / Maaori events like tangihanga / funerals.



The Crown said it understands the important needs Taangata Turi have with:

- culture
- language
- identity / knowledge of who they are.





The Crown said the NZSL Board is doing things like promoting the use of te reo Maaori / the Maaori language in NZSL.



The Crown also said Whaikaha – the Ministry of Disabled People is working with Taangata Turi as it refreshes / redoes the NZSL Strategy.



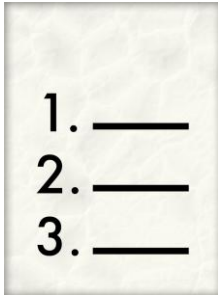
The Crown said Whaikaha – the Ministry of Disabled People is making a plan to get more trilingual interpreters in the NZSL interpreter **workforce**.



Here workforce means all the people who do the same kind of job.



The Crown said there is not 1 right way to get more trilingual interpreters.



We think the Crown has not given us:

- any proposals / ideas that will support getting more trilingual interpreters
- evidence they are working with Taangata Turi.



We think what the Crown is doing now will not change the number of trained trilingual interpreters.



The NZSL Act 2006

The Minister for Disability Issues said in March 2023 changes to the NZSL Act 2006 should be made because it:



- was out of date / old
- was not doing what it should
- did not do everything in the:
 - UNCRPD
 - NZSL Strategy
- did not use Te Tiriti / The Treaty.



Things in the NZSL Act 2006 the Crown thought about changing were:

- having more deaf people be leaders on things to do with NZSL
- using Te Tiriti / The Treaty to support Taangata Turi
- making good ways to do:
 - **monitoring**
 - **accountability.**

Monitoring means watching how something is going.



Accountability means doing things in a responsible way including:

- doing what was promised
- showing how decisions are made
- making sure people know what is going on.



The Minister for Disability Issues told us in January 2024 that work on these changes to the NZSL Act 2006 had stopped.



The Crown told us it would not be doing any changes to the NZSL Act 2006.

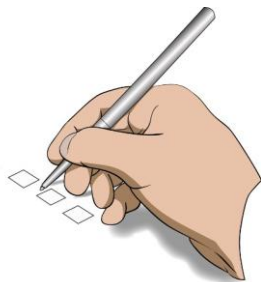


We think:

- Te Roopuu Kaitiaki is a good thing for Taangata Turi

but

- there are still many other things that need to be done for Taangata Turi.

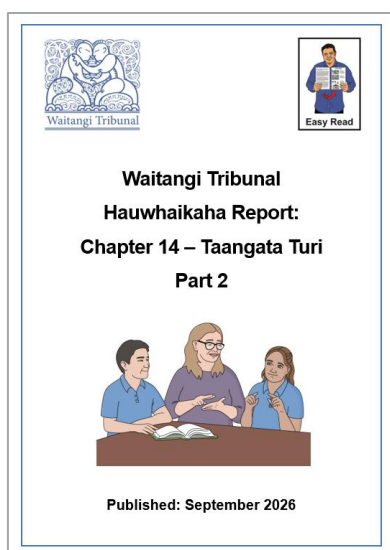


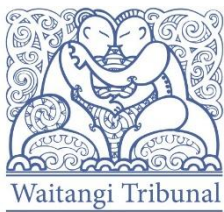
Changes to the NZSL Act 2006 would fix some of the problems.

The Tribunal findings are talked about in Part 2 of Chapter 14: Taangata Turi.

You can find part 2 at this website:

www.bit.ly/Hauwhaikaha-easy





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