

Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi

Te Kura Whakawhānui

School of Indigenous Graduate Studies

**Discussion Document: Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand's Response to Royal  
Commission Recommendations:**

**The Value of Translating the Royal Commission Recommendations into Te Reo Māori**

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**1. Cultural Integrity and Partnership**

The translation of the recommendations, findings, and response into te reo Māori exemplifies the Church's commitment to upholding the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. By embracing the language of the tangata whenua, the Church reaffirms its partnership with Māori and ensures the accessibility of vital information in a culturally, spiritual resonant manner. This act is more than procedural; it embodies manaakitanga, whanaungatanga and acknowledges te reo Māori as a taonga integral to justice, healing and spirituality.

**2. Language as a Medium of Restoration**

Te reo Māori serves as a medium of restoration and healing for Māori survivors and their whānau. Presenting the recommendations in te reo fosters a deeper connection to the recommendations, affirming the Church's intent to engage Māori perspectives in meaningful ways. This translation aligns with the vision of Puretumu Torowhānui, emphasising inclusivity, cultural and intellectual empowerment in redress processes.

**3. Ensuring Accessibility and Equity**

The translation ensures that information is accessible to Māori-speaking whānau, hapū, iwi, marae, Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori, mainstream tertiary and Wānanga ā-iwi Te Wānanga o Raukawa, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi institutions communities, including those whose primary connection to their heritage is through language. Providing content in te reo Māori eliminates linguistic barriers and aligns with the Church's survivor-centric approach, demonstrating equity in how survivors and their whānau are treated.

**4. Embedding Te Tiriti Principles**

Incorporating te reo Māori within the Church's response reflects an active

commitment to Te Tiriti principles, particularly the protection of taonga (language and culture) and Māori participation in decision-making processes. This step further establishes a bicultural framework for safeguarding and redress.

**5. Spiritual Resonance in Justice**

Te reo Māori carries biblical, metaphorical, words of revelation, spiritual depth that resonates uniquely with reo knowledge Māori communities. Translating sacred and justice-oriented texts into te reo Māori fosters a profound spiritual connection, allowing the Church's actions to reflect not only procedural justice but also wairua-led reconciliation and renewal.

**6. Addressing Historical Disparities**

By prioritising te reo Māori, the Church directly addresses historical inequities where Māori voices were marginalised in faith-based and state care. This ensures that Māori cultural narratives and values are interwoven into the response, amplifying their significance in institutional accountability.

**7. Empowering and Growing Māori Leadership**

A te reo Māori translation promotes Māori leadership in implementing safeguarding frameworks and practices. It empowers whānau, hapū, iwi, marae wānanga to actively engage, critique, support and guide the Church's commitments, ensuring that safeguarding is contextually relevant and transformative.

**8. Supporting Survivors' Healing Journey**

Survivors of Māori descent find affirmation in seeing their culture and language respected within institutional frameworks. Translation into te reo Māori reflects compassion, respect, humility, and accountability, nurturing a space for survivors' healing and reconciliation.

**9. Educational Value for Future Generations**

The translation of such vital documents ensures that future generations have access to pivotal moments in the intersection of faith and justice, enabling continuous learning and reflection on Māori perspectives in institutional responses.

**10. Strengthening National Bicultural Identity**

The act of translating these recommendations into te reo Māori sets a precedent for faith-based institutions across Aotearoa to honour biculturalism in all forms of governance. It highlights the Presbyterian Church's role as a leader in weaving together the dual threads of Aotearoa's national identity: te ao Māori and te ao Pākehā.