

Māori and the Treaty of Waitangi

Aotearoa, the Māori name for New Zealand meaning ‘land of the long white cloud’, has a unique history and indigenous context that operators should be aware of prior to engaging with Māori.

Māori are the indigenous people of Aotearoa, and have distinct tribal groups known as iwi (main tribe), hapū (sub-tribe) and whānau (extended families within a hapū). The Māori people are generally understood to have migrated from eastern Polynesia. They have strong cultural, spiritual and economic ties to their traditional land (rohe) – referring to themselves as tangata whenua, literally ‘people of the land’.

The settlement of Europeans in Aotearoa from approximately 1800 brought enormous change to traditional Māori life. Māori were asked to adopt many aspects of Western society and culture, in some cases resulting in periods of conflict for many years – resulting in a period in which Māori struggled to retain their culture and traditions.

Since the late 20th century there has been a significant revival of Māori culture. Today about 15% of people living in Aotearoa are of Māori descent, and Māori culture, language and customs are an integral part of New Zealand life. Approximately 25% of Māori speak Te Reo (their traditional) language with at least seven regional variances.

The Treaty of Waitangi [<http://mbie17.cwp.govt.nz/doing-business/maori-waitangi/treaty-waitangi/>]

The Treaty of Waitangi – a key founding document of New Zealand – was signed by over 500 Māori chiefs and representatives of the British Crown on 6th February 1840.

Crown consultation with Māori [<http://mbie17.cwp.govt.nz/doing-business/maori-waitangi/crown-consultation/>]

New Zealand Petroleum & Minerals (NZP&M) has a statutory responsibility to consult with iwi and hapū whose rohe (traditional area of occupation) may be directly affected by new permits.

Permit holder engagement with Māori [<http://mbie17.cwp.govt.nz/doing-business/maori-waitangi/permit-holder-engagement/>]

New Zealand Petroleum and Minerals (NZP&M) encourages permit holders to engage with iwi and hapū in a positive and constructive manner.

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