

Speech notes

Mana Wahine Event
Joint function with Te Puni Kōkiri
11am, 15 August 2007
Ormlie Lodge, Napier

Ministry of Women's Affairs Kaihautū Sonya Rimene

Celebration of Māori women in governance and management roles

E te whare, tēnā koe.

E ngā kuia ma, ngā wahine toa, ngā kotiro ma, kei te mihi au ki te kaupapa o te ra – mana wahine, tēnei te mihi mahana ki a koutou katoa.

Ko wai ahau?

Kei te mahi au i te minitanga mo nga wahine.

He aha ngā mahi ka mahia e Te Minitanga mo nga wahine?

What is the work of the Ministry of Women's Affairs?

- We are the smallest government agency – all 37 of us
- We are a policy shop that try and pick the biggest things that will have an impact for women
- We have a nominations database where we put forward names of 'on-to-it-women' like yourselves, for board member positions on state sector boards.

I would like to talk about the nominations database to you today.

The Ministry's Nominations Service aims to increase the number of women leaders and decision makers on state sector governance boards and committees.

We maintain a database of women with relevant skills and experience which is used to identify potential candidates for director positions on state sector boards. These nominations are then considered by the government agency responsible for those appointments.

The appointments process is highly competitive. Appointing agencies request advice from a large number of sources, including Ministers and Members of Parliament, diversity and population agencies, professional groups and stakeholders. The nominations service is consulted on appointments to over 400 statutory bodies such as Te Papa, Meridan, Mighty River Power, Human Rights Review Tribunal, Professional Boards Nurses Council, Electrical Workers Registration Board, Community Trust Boards, Lottery Distribution Boards, Wananga, etc.

If you have the knowledge, skills and experience to be considered for appointment what we can do is to improve your chances of being nominated and appointed.

Being a member is a big responsibility. You need to:

- Have the time to devote yourself to the role – the Institute of Directors recommends two hours of preparation time for every one hour spent in a board meeting

- Play an active role in meetings – contribute, ask questions, request more information, challenge assumptions, provide solutions
- Maintain the highest personal and professional standards
- Understand the issues facing the organisation and the environment it works in.

Preparation

If you are interested in becoming a Director there are a number of things you can do to prepare:

- Research the governance role, the responsibilities and requirements
- Gain governance experience at a community level or professional association level
- Have a clear idea of your skills – what you would contribute and where that might be most relevant
- Concentrate on performing outstandingly well in your ‘day job’
- Build your networks
- Improve your finance skills.

We currently have 2,621 women on the database.

- **451 Māori women on the database (17%)**
- 92 Pacific women on the database (3%)
- 62 ethnic women on the database (2%)
- 27 self-identified women with disabilities (1%)

You have this information in your packs with details of our website. There is a self evaluation check list for you to go through. Those on-to-it-women who are already on boards, this is nothing new to you.

Now, Mana Wahine Week is a national event that the Ministry has celebrated annually since 1993. The event was introduced the same year as the International Year of Indigenous People. The theme is Māori women as Leaders – he kaiaarahi, as creators – he kaihanga pakihi, and as innovators – he kaiauaha.

In partnership with Te Puni Kōkiri, we wanted to promote and profile the achievements of Māori women, and celebrate Māori women who are leaders at an iwi governance and management level.

For those of us here today that are already Directors, who are leaders, the challenge for you is ‘who will take over from you tomorrow?’ who will you pass the rakau on to? It is about succession planning. It is about our youth, our rangatahi who will be our leaders of the future. Who have you got lined up next?

Māori women are the drivers in their whānau, homes, work, care of both young and old, and kaitiaki of their environment, papatūānuku. There is an array of Māori women in communities who are role models and leaders here with us today.

Ki a au, kei te ora te wahine, kei te ora hoki te whānau!
No reira, e hoa ma. Koina te whakatauaki:

’Whaia e koe te iti kahurangi, ki te tūohu koe, me maunga teitei!’