

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern

Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage

cc **Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage**

**AIDE MEMOIRE: NATIONAL EREBUS MEMORIAL – CONSTRUCTION
DELAY UPDATE**

Date:	21 May 2021	Priority:	High
Security classification:	In Confidence	Reference:	AM 2021/224
Contact	Tamsin Evans, Deputy Chief Executive, Delivery, [REDACTED]		

Purpose

- 1 This Aide Memoire updates you on continued efforts to progress the National Erebus Memorial including the impact of the delays in construction, our ongoing engagement with Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, engagement with Erebus families, our general approach to communications including countering misinformation circulating about the memorial, and next steps.

Cause of delay

- 2 As you know, in early March iwi leader Dame Naida Glavish publicly raised concerns regarding the National Erebus memorial and has been present from time to time at a small, peaceful protest at the Memorial site. In light of the opposition, the site setup and construction scheduled for the first week of March were put on hold. The construction programme remains paused whilst consultation with key stakeholders occurs.
- 3 Both you and the Ministry have received a number of communications from Dame Naida Glavish raising concerns regarding the memorial. While she has received detailed responses to her concerns, including that the memorial design has been amended to avoid any potential contact with the pōhutukawa tree, it appears that this has had no impact on her opposition to the project. We remain open to continue discussions with Dame Naida [REDACTED]

- 4 9(2)(j) [REDACTED]

Current activity at Dove Myer-Robinson Park

- 5 About a dozen tents and two marquees are situated in the area of the construction site. The Ministry does not know how many people are on site either during the day or overnight, but it would appear numbers may vary from day to day. There is a group of 6-10 protestors that patrol the park entrances each morning in anticipation of construction commencing.
- 6 On Thursday 20 May, a petition calling for the memorial to be halted was presented at Parliament. The claims in the petition are misleading – particularly that the pōhutukawa tree is at risk and that the families do not support this project. The petition containing approximately 11,500 signatures was received by MPs Rāwiri Waititi, Shanan Halbert and Hon Paul Goldsmith. [REDACTED]

Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei

- 7 Officials have been actively engaging with Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei since 2018. We continue to provide assurances that Manatū Taonga sees Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei as a critical partner in this project and that they are critical to its success. The hapū has given a public statement of support for the Erebus families, for the site and for the design of the memorial.
- 8 Manatū Taonga officials have recently met with a number of senior Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei members: Chief Executive of Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei Trust, Jamie Sinclair; Chair of Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei Trust, Marama Royal; and, most recently, the four members of the Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei Taumata Executive (senior kaumatua). [REDACTED]

9(2)(j) 9(2)(g)(i)

- 9 The key points from these engagements are:

9(2)(j)

9(2)(g)(i)

9(2)(j)



- e) There is interest in how Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei history at the site and support for the project can be reflected at the memorial. Since August 2019 we have been working with a Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei-nominated artist ([REDACTED]) on aspects of the detailed design of the memorial, particularly the design of the whakanoa. Anything in addition to that, such as a physical marker of Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei connection to the site, would be dealt with as a separate project so that it does not trigger a change to the consents already received and delay the main project.

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9(2)(j)




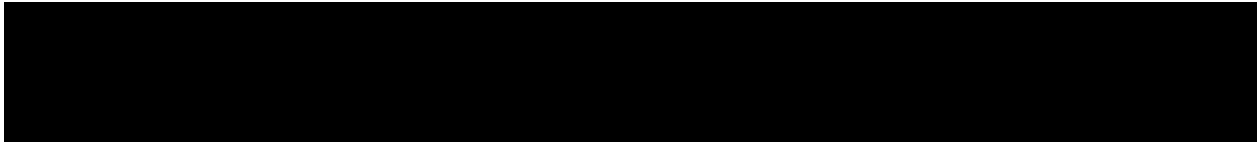
Engagement with Erebus families

- 11 Some family members have been in contact with Manatū Taonga to express their anger, concern and frustration at the delay. Only one has asked to be removed from the regular mailing list – they found the updates too upsetting. Other family members have sent messages of support and encouragement to proceed with construction. Many are seeking information from Manatū Taonga to help them understand how the protest can delay construction when all the regulatory and contractual requirements have been met.

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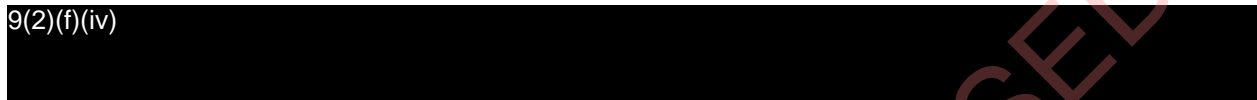
9(2)(j) 9(2)(ba)






13 A group of family representatives who have been willing to speak publicly about their support for the project has recently reached out to other family members to extend the network of those they are in regular contact with. These are mostly people already on the Ministry's database but who have not had their own channel for communicating directly with each other. We understand that those new to this families' network have expressed strong support for the project.

14 9(2)(f)(iv)



Impact of delayed construction

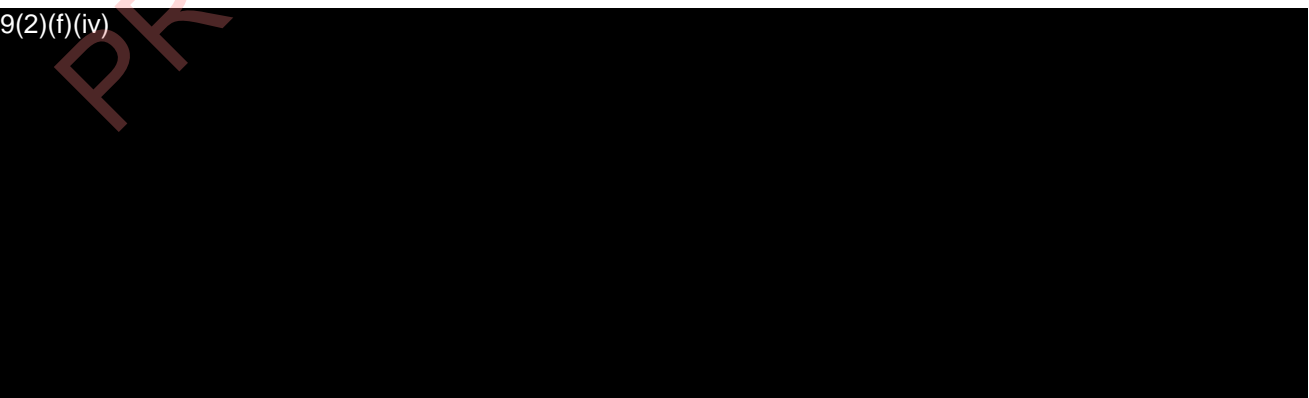
Main construction contract

15 Currently we have the main contractor on standby, 



16 The costs of managing the uncertainty and the rapidly changing situation of the last nine weeks, maintaining the construction contractor's availability to start work at short notice, minor changes to the design and increased project management have resulted in an unbudgeted capital expenditure of approximately \$250,000. On current forecasts, it is likely these costs can be met through the project contingency. We are meeting additional operational costs through reprioritisation and will keep you informed of the financial status of the project, particularly if the cost of the delay exceeds the available contingency.

9(2)(f)(iv)




Communications

- 18 The focus of recent communications has been to correct misinformation circulating across both mainstream and social media, and to continue stakeholder engagement with Erebus families, iwi/hapū and other stakeholders.
- 19 Key activity has included:
- a) A comprehensive update of the Ministry's website content on the design and the steps taken to protect the site and the tree.
 - b) MCH has provided media outlets with a pack of correct information including proper imagery and correct renders.
 - c) MCH has expressed concern to editors about inaccuracies in recent articles in the *Herald* and *NZ Local Government* magazine. *Local Government* magazine will be publishing our written response. Stuff is in the process of writing a long-form piece (publish date to be confirmed).

Next steps

20 9(2)(j) 9(2)(g)(i)



9(2)(a)



Tamsin Evans
Deputy Chief Executive, Delivery