



Ministry
for Culture
& Heritage

MANATŪ TAONGA SITUATION REPORT

EVENT NAME: Tuia 250 Voyage Trainee Privacy Breach

Report Number: #10 (updated information in red)

From: 9(2)(a) Ministry
for Culture and Heritage (on behalf of) Bernadette
Cavanagh, Chief Executive, Ministry for Culture
and Heritage

Date issued: 02/09/2019

Time issued: 5.00 pm

Event details

Tuia - Encounters 250 (Tuia 250) is the national commemoration being held in 2019, led by Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage (MCH), recognising the voyaging traditions and cultures of Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa (the Pacific), the feats of European explorers, and the first encounters when James Cook, Tupaia and the crew of the *Endeavour* arrived in New Zealand in October 1769.

As part of these commemorations, MCH sought registrations from people interested in joining the Tuia 250 Voyage Trainee programme to participate in various voyaging events to be held October – December 2019 on traditional waka and other vessels. Registration for this programme required personal details to be uploaded via a website, such as names, email addresses, passports and driver's licences, including images of these documents. This was collected for age confirmation and citizen or immigration status reasons. The website was specific to the Tuia 250 commemoration and was procured from a web developer.

On Thursday 22 August 2019 MCH became aware there had been a digital privacy breach involving this personal information. The breach affects 302 applicants and images of applicants' identification documents were available online. Most of the documents were New Zealand documents but there were also 20 foreign passports. An added challenge is that 68 of the applicants are aged under 18, which means dealing with the young people and their parents. There has been one known incident of attempted fraud in relation to the breach.

MCH is leading the coordinated response to this incident.

Response structure

- A Cross-Government Response Team has been assembled, operating in accordance with National Security System procedures
- MCH has received advice from a range of government agencies including Government Chief Privacy Officer, Office of the Privacy Commissioner, State Services Commission, Department of Internal Affairs, MBIE, MFAT, NZTA, GCSB and NZ Police.

Response objectives

- Build a comprehensive understanding of the situation and the information that has been compromised
- Minimise harm to affected individuals
- Communicate openly and transparently with affected individuals and the public
- Maintain confidence of Ministers in the capabilities of MCH.

Information security

- All copies of personal information were removed from the Tuia 250 website on Thursday 22 August, and the site was made unavailable to the public
- MCH have asked search engine companies to remove images from their caches
- Content uploaded by users was widely accessible due to insufficient controls on the Tuia 250 site
- Forensic testing indicates that all 302 applicants' information had been accessed, in some instances multiple times
- MCH will agree protocols with partner agencies to ensure all sensitive information shared during the response is appropriately managed
- MCH has initiated testing of its other websites to be assured that there are no further vulnerabilities in our digital presence
- At present, the Tuia 250 website remains unavailable to the public. Some Tuia 250 information has been added to the MCH corporate website
- Each applicant that contacts MCH through web or phone is being asked for their consent to pass their information on to the New Zealand Police so that they can be flagged in the Police system should their details be used illegally in future.

MCH Business Processes

- MCH will be undertaking a full review of the Tuia 250 risks and identifying improvements. Cyber security risks will remain a primary consideration for the Tuia 250 programme
- Given the reduction in number of inbound calls, the Support Team have reduced to normal business hours which are 8.15am-5.00pm Monday to Friday.
- The MCH Risk Register now incorporates this issue, and mitigations are being monitored.
- 46 breach related Parliamentary Questions are currently being answered by MCH.

Communications

With affected individuals

- MCH (with the assistance of MSD, DIA and MBIE) has contacted all 302 affected individuals to explain the situation, apologise and offer remediation, such as replacing compromised identification documents.
- Of the 302 affected applicants, MCH have transferred 184 cases to other agencies to process. There are 117 active cases that MCH is still working with. However, some of these have not yet meaningfully engaged with MCH, so we are looking at a process for resolving these. Our first step is to email those who have not responded.
[Note 38 applicants, not included in the 302, were unaffected, but were contacted for their information].
- Of the 134 active, eight are more concerning due to the nature of the information uploaded to the website (their full application form). They are being treated as a priority.
- MCH has established an 0800 number that affected individuals can call to discuss any concerns and a dedicated page on its corporate website to keep people informed
- DIA has established a special operations team to oversee all passport enquiries and renewals for affected New Zealanders. DIA agreed an approach with NZTA to align processes for renewing driver licences with the passport renewal process. MCH will be meeting the costs of replacement documents
- The majority of affected individuals have indicated a general understanding of the situation, and they are cooperating with the Government's process for replacement of identity documentation. A small number are concerned and have expressed their desire to have their replacement documents

issued soon to protect their privacy. MCH is not aware of any travel being affected; DIA have been very efficient in their response with regard to passports

- A next wave of concern from applicants is expected if applicants have not heard from agencies, or when they hear from agencies for the first time. A process for dealing with this is being established and documented
- There may be some challenges for some applicants on foreign passports to get replacements, and we are liaising with MFAT on this issue (see below).
- We have received our first claim for the cost of the replacement of a foreign passport and reimbursement has been processed today.

With media

- The Chief Executive of MCH, Bernadette Cavanagh, fronted a media conference at 11.00am Sunday 25 August, supported by Paul James, Chief Executive of DIA and Government Chief Digital Officer
- Bernadette was interviewed the morning of Monday 26 August for RNZ Morning Report and TV1 Breakfast
- MCH is monitoring and responding to social media posts
- MCH has received no media enquiries over the weekend, and one OIA on Monday

With stakeholders

- MCH briefed the Tuia 250 National Coordinating Committee on the morning of Monday 26 August and will keep the Committee informed
- MFAT has sent diplomatic correspondence to the eight Foreign missions of the affected foreign nationals. It has had no calls from any of the eight foreign missions.

Independent review

- A comprehensive independent review has been announced today. Full details of the review are on the MCH website <https://mch.govt.nz/>

Next steps

- Ongoing incident management team
- Support team are communicating and responding to applicants to minimise harm and are monitoring the reissuing of new identity documents
- A further situation report will be provided by 5pm Tuesday 3 September 2019.

**MANATŪ TAONGA MINISTRY FOR CULTURE AND HERITAGE MEDIA RELEASE: EMBARGOED UNTIL
11AM 25 AUGUST 2019**

25 August 2019

Privacy breach identified with the *Tuia 250 Voyage Trainee* website

Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage is investigating a serious digital privacy breach involving the *Tuia 250 Voyage Trainee* programme.

The breach could potentially impact 302 people who applied for the programme and provided personal details as part of the process. The Ministry is undertaking specialist security investigations to identify the scope of the breach.

“I would like to apologise to all people affected by this breach,” says Ministry Tumu Whakarae Chief Executive Bernadette Cavanagh. “I acknowledge that this is completely unacceptable and am using every resource available to me to support them through this issue.”

“This breach has revealed a serious information management issue on an external site commissioned for the *Tuia - Encounters 250* national commemoration of which the *Tuia 250 Voyage Trainee* programme is a part. Our advice from our security investigators is that this wasn’t a targeted attack on the website, but rather an opportunistic finding of information that wasn’t as secure as it should have been.”

The breach involves the personal details of people who applied to the *Tuia 250 Voyage Trainee* programme and includes images of passports, driver’s licences, birth certificates and other forms of identification stored on the website. Information from investigators to date shows that at least 370 documents have been compromised.

The issue was identified after a parent of one of the applicants alerted the Ministry to a fraud attempt using a copy of a driver’s licence stored on the site. The matter has been referred to police, who are progressing with the complaint.

“We have let down applicants in the worst possible way. They trusted us with their sensitive information and documents and we recognise that for many people their personal information is taonga. The level of security required to keep that information confidential simply wasn’t good enough.

“I have asked for an external review to see what went wrong in this case and to ensure that the Ministry’s processes around gathering and storing information is robust. I would like to sincerely apologise to those impacted by this situation. My number one focus is ensuring that affected people have the level of support they need.”

The breach was discovered on Thursday 22 August, and all personal information was immediately removed from storage on the website. On Friday 23 August the website was shut down and a security investigation was undertaken to identify affected parties, allowing us to start calling those affected on Saturday 24 August.

“Our priority has been identifying and contacting affected parties and offering them support.

“We are currently working with Google and other search engines to remove any cached versions of this information. This is a process that could take some time to resolve, but we are committed to doing everything we can to have this information removed.”

A cross-government response team has been established to streamline assistance for affected parties and ensure they have access to the support they need – including replacing passports and driver’s licences where necessary. This includes a freephone call centre and dedicated email address.

“We have contacted all the people affected and are working with them on a case-by-case basis to minimise the impact of the breach and ensure they have access to the support and services they need.”

Contact: [REDACTED] 9(2)(a)

Note to editors

The *Tuia - Encounters 250* national commemoration is a programme of events, education and reflection that celebrates Aotearoa New Zealand’s Pacific voyaging heritage and acknowledges the first onshore encounters between Māori and Pākehā in 1769-70.

The Voyage Trainee programme gives New Zealanders the opportunity to sail aboard the vessels in the *Tuia 250 Voyage* during October to December of this year.

PROACTIVE RELEASE