



Ministry  
for Culture  
& Heritage

## MANATŪ TAONGA SITUATION REPORT

**EVENT NAME:** Tuia 250 Voyage Trainee Privacy Breach

**Report Number:** #4 (updated information in red)

**From:** Bernadette Cavanagh, Chief Executive, MCH

**Date issued:** 25/08/2019

**Time issued:** 8.00 pm

### Event details

There has been a digital privacy breach involving personal information collected by Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage (MCH). The breach affects 302 applicants to MCH's Tuia 250 Voyage Trainee programme. On Thursday 22 August, MCH became aware that images of applicants' identification documents such as passports, birth certificates and driver licences were available online. Applicants had submitted these documents to the Tuia 250 website as part of the online application process. The website is specific to the Tuia 250 commemoration and was procured from a web developer.

### Response structure

- A Cross-Government Response Team has been assembled
- MCH is the lead agency and is being supported by incident response specialists from MSD
- The team is operating according to 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
- Ensure the Ministry can deliver Tuia 250 securely and confidently.

### Information security

- All copies of personal information were removed from the Tuia 250 website on Thursday 22 August
- Some images are still appearing in online searches
- We have been working with Google and other search engine companies to remove images from their caches
- MCH contracted Aura Information Security on Friday 23 August to analyse the server logs from the Tuia 250 website to assess what level of breach occurred
- Aura Information Security advised that content uploaded by users was widely accessible due to insufficient access controls on the Tuia 250 site
- Forensic testing indicates that all 302 applicants' information had been accessed, in some instances multiple times
- The Chief Executive of MCH sent an email to all public service Chief Executives on Sunday morning advising them of this incident. Paul James, Chief Executive of DIA, also emailed Chief Executives

reminding them of Government Chief Digital Officer guidance on security and privacy policy good practice, and asking them to provide assurance that they have adequate security and privacy controls in place for any public facing websites

- 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.

## **Communications**

### **With affected individuals**

- MCH (with the assistance of MSD, DIA and MBIE) has been calling all affected individuals to explain the situation, apologise and offer remediation, such as replacing compromised identification documents
- All 302 people have now been contacted. Most have been spoken to and the balance have received an email
- MCH has established an 0800 number that affected individuals can call to discuss any concerns
- DIA is establishing a special operations team to oversee all passport enquiries and renewals for affected New Zealanders. DIA has 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
- MCH has a dedicated page on its corporate website to keep people informed
- Affected individuals have indicated a general understanding of the situation, and they are cooperating with the Government's process for replacement of identity documentation.

### **With media**

- The Chief Executive of MCH, Bernadette Cavanagh, fronted a media conference at 11.00 am this morning, supported by Paul James, Chief Executive of DIA and Government Chief Digital Officer, who answered questions related to government digital systems
- MCH is monitoring and responding to social media posts
- We have been contacted directly by media from five mainstream news outlets (NZME, TVNZ, Newstalk ZB, Fairfax Media and RNZ)
- The issue led the 6pm news on both TV1 and Newshub this evening. Both items linked to the Treasury breach. Newshub focused more on the political angle with responses from the Prime Minister and MP Nicky Wagner
- Reporting has generally been factual and we are comfortable with coverage
- Bernadette Cavanagh will talk to Breakfast (TVNZ) and Morning Report (RNZ) tomorrow morning
- We will continue to monitor media coverage and we will advise you of developments.

### **With stakeholders**

- MCH will brief the Tuia 250 National Coordinating Committee on the response at a scheduled teleconference meeting tomorrow morning
- There is a range of other stakeholders that we will be contacting over the coming days, for example the crew of the Tahitian vaka.

### Independent review

- Terms of Reference are being developed for a comprehensive independent review, to be commissioned by the Chief Executive of MCH, of the Ministry's decisions and processes relating to:
  - procurement and management of the website used to receive applications for the Tuia 250 trainee crew programme, and
  - the circumstances that led to the breach of applicants' personal information
- The scope of the review is likely to cover:
  - the governance and management of the Tuia 250 Voyage Trainee programme
  - the website procurement process and contract management
  - the security of the website itself
  - how decisions and processes differed from Government Chief Digital Officer guidance on security and privacy policy good practice.

### Next steps

- Finalise Terms of Reference for the independent review, and appoint a reviewer
- A further situation report will be provided during the afternoon of Monday 26 August.

PROACTIVE RELEASE