



Mark Solomon – personal statement

It is a unique privilege to be Kaiwhakahaere of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.

My kaupapa is simple – I believe in leading by example, integrity and making sure I stay connected with our people. I have held the position for more than 10 years and am proud to have seen and been a part of so many positive changes for the tribe.

Our membership is growing rapidly, with more than 47,500 whānau enrolled. I am dedicated to ensuring the best outcomes for individual whānau members, and the tribe as a whole. To this end, Te Rūnanga delivers cultural, environmental, social and education benefits to whānui.

Collectively we are gaining more success, with our Holdings Corporation steadily and responsibly growing the pūtea for our mokopuna and future generations.

Ngāi Tahu has developed strong working relationships with local and national government. I have been able to develop those political relationships to ensure that the voice of Ngāi Tahu is heard throughout Aotearoa.

As Kaiwhakahaere I have been able to play a leadership role in Iwi Maori kotahitanga, with the first Iwi Chairs Forum hui held at Takahanga Marae in Kaikoura. The forum meets regularly to discuss and enable Maori aspirations.

I sit on the Maori Economic Taskforce and chair the Tribal Asset Workstream which has developed guidelines I hope will inspire Iwi Maori to work together and become a pillar of the national economy.

I am invited to speak to many groups and at many conferences, which enables me to tell our story – that Ngāi Tahu are here, we will always be here and our ambitions for our country are honest and enduring.

Over the years the governors of Te Rūnanga have had their fair share of ups and downs, and in-fighting. The Table has come a long way and today is working together well. We will not always share the same views, but collectively we are charged with ensuring that the waka stays stable and steers us forward to future success and growth.

I am committed to that journey, particularly as we have suffered major tragedy with the earthquakes in Ōtautahi. It must be our goal that future Ngāi Tahu generations will look back and bless us for the way we have coped in these difficult times.

Mō tātou, ā, mō kā uri ā muri ake nei