

Introduction

1. I am the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki. I have previously given evidence in the contextual hearings, and will be appearing again before the Tribunal in December to address any further questions the Tribunal may have for me.
2. I appear today, however, to begin the Crown evidence by making a short statement on behalf of the Crown.
3. Before I do, I want to acknowledge the claimants in this Inquiry and the many stories they bring and represent of a care and protection system that has not been designed with the recognition of the place of tamariki within whanau, hapū and iwi, or the protection of Māori culture, at its heart.
4. I believe our evidence will show how we are laying the building blocks for a system that can enable, and has started to achieve, transformation. We also understand there is a long way to go to achieve the level of transformation that is required.
5. I know that to get to the point where the Tribunal, claimants, iwi, Māori and the public more generally can share confidence that the foundations for transformation are in place, we have to show we understand the extent of the challenge before us.
6. I believe certain concessions are necessary to enable us to move forward together. It is appropriate that as Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki I deliver those on behalf of the Crown.

Concessions

7. I wish therefore to make the following formal concessions on behalf of the Crown.

Pūao Te Ata Tū

8. On behalf of the Crown I acknowledge the Crown's failure to fully implement the recommendations of Pūao Te Ata Tū in a comprehensive and sustained manner. This failure has impacted outcomes for tamariki Māori, whānau, hapū

and iwi. It has undermined Māori trust and confidence in the Crown and undermined confidence in its willingness and ability to address disparities.

Structural racism

9. Structural racism is a feature of the care and protection system which has had adverse effects for tamariki Māori, whānau, hapū and iwi. This has resulted from a series of legislative, policy and systems settings over time and has detrimentally impacted the relationship between Māori and the Crown.
10. The structural racism that exists in the care and protection system reflects broader society and has also meant more tamariki Māori being reported to it.
11. The impact of structural racism on outcomes for and experiences of tamariki and their whānau, and on culture and trust more generally, means that the Crown should have identified the need to tackle structural racism head on in the establishment of Oranga Tamariki.
12. In addition to making this acknowledgement, I wish to stress my and my organisation's absolute commitment to addressing racism in the care and protection system at all levels.

Historic under-investment in the care and protection system

13. On behalf of the Crown, I also acknowledge that historically Māori perspectives and solutions have been ignored across the care and protection system. To address this, we need to partner and engage with Māori so together we can deliver better outcomes for tamariki Māori.

Conclusion

14. Finally, I want to tautoko not only the iwi and Oranga Tamariki witnesses you will hear from over the coming days who are bearing this heavy burden of Crown failings, but our many practitioners who deliver positive outcomes every day, and who face up to the many complex challenges professionally and with kindness. No one becomes a social worker without being deeply passionate and committed to improving lives for tamariki.
15. Over the next few days you are going to hear about the changes Oranga Tamariki has made is and is making across the system and in our practice, and some of

the results we are starting to see. I look forward to answering any questions today that arise from this statement and I will return on 14 December to answer any further questions then.

Gráinne M Moss

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Date: 24 November 2020