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English

**United Nations Group of Experts On
Geographical Names
2019 session**

New York, 29 April – 3 May 2019

Item 5 (a) of the agenda *

**Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the
standardization of geographical names**

Report of New Zealand

Submitted by New Zealand**

Summary:

The report of New Zealand is submitted in accordance with resolution V/7 of the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. It builds on the previous reports submitted by New Zealand for the Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Conferences, held in 2007, 2012 and 2017. Outlined in the report are the roles, functions and strategic goals of the national naming authority, the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa. The core tasks and current projects that make up the fundamental standardization work of the Geographic Board are summarized. Challenges that help shape the Geographic Board's direction, focus and priorities are also identified.

*GEGN.2/2019/1

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Background information or a historical sketch

Refer to New Zealand's 2007 and 2012 National Reports to the 9th and 10th UNCSGN conferences ([E/CONF.98/CRP.17](#) and [E/CONF.101/49](#)), which cover background and history.

Refer to New Zealand's 2017 National Report to the 11th UNCSGN conference ([E/CONF.105/37/CRP.37](#)), for a historical timeline of geographical naming in New Zealand.

Goals and national programmes

Goals

In 2018 the NZGB updated its Strategic Plan 2018-2023 to include its purpose, vision and values. It also added a saying and a proverb, and defined what success would look like, including developing operational plans to achieve its strategy:

Te Kaupapa/Purpose

Our purpose is to claim, secure and celebrate New Zealand's unique identity through place names

Te Whakakitenga/Vision

We enable meaningful connections between people, place and language by applying these strategic focus areas:

Claim	Secure	Celebrate
Naming features We name features so people can find where they are	Good relationships We have good relationships with people at local, national and international levels to make it easier to get the right information	Improving capability We continually improve our capability to make consistent and rigorous decisions
	Easy access to information People have easy access to trusted and useful information about geographic names so they can understand the history and culture of these names	Using official names We encourage people to use official names in everyday life

Ngā Whanonga Pono/Values

Three vital principles shape and drive how we work:

*Kaitiakitanga*¹

- we are dedicated to preserve and protect New Zealand's heritage, while building understanding to shape its future

¹ Kaitiakitanga means guardianship, stewardship

Mana²

- we acknowledge the mana of places and tangata whenua³
- we make a meaningful impact by valuing our independence, expertise and leadership role

Manaakitanga⁴

- we are open, we share, we listen and we engage positively in all relationships

Pepeha/Saying

“Time will not dim the memory of the special class of rangatira of the past who braved the wide expanse of ocean and land. Their sacred footprints are scattered over the surface of the land, treasured and sacred.”

Quoted from the late Sir James Hēnare, as published in the NZGB’s foreword in [He Korero Pūrākau Mo Ngā Taunahanahatanga a Ngā Tūpuna, Place Names of the Ancestors, A Māori Oral History Atlas](#)

Whakataukī/Proverb

‘Ko tōku tūrangawaewae ko tōku mana’ – knowing my place in the world is my source of strength

What our success looks like in 2023:

- Our identity, role and independence are understood and appreciated by New Zealanders
- We are making a difference by promoting place names that reflect New Zealand’s heritage
- We have built our brand and asserting our identity
- We have a strategic approach, with a 10 year plan
- We have strong, fit for purpose governance arrangements
- Ensuring that every place name has a story that is recognisable or relevant to people
- The [Gazetteer](#) is easily accessible and accepted as the authoritative single source of truth
- We fully honour our Treaty partnership obligations, and have an active strategy and clear principles for including te reo in how we name places and communicate our work
- We have drastically reduced our backlog of work, by setting clear priorities and making trade-offs
- We have a planned approach resulting in stronger, productive relationships with key stakeholders (i.e. Minister, LINZ, MCH⁵, OTS⁶, TPK⁷, DoC⁸, TTWh⁹, iwi, TLAs¹⁰, LGNZ¹¹, MFAT¹² (for Antarctica), emergency services, international bodies)
- We have increased funding and resources (from existing and new sources) to do our work in the manner New Zealanders would expect, enabled by a Secretariat with clear plans, and necessary technology sufficient capacity
- Place-naming principles meet international best practice

We will need specific operational plans to develop:

- Outreach programme to build our profile, relationships with stakeholders and brand

² Mana in this context means authority, power, influence

³ Tangata whenua means the local indigenous people of a place

⁴ Manaakitanga means hospitality, kindness, generosity, support

⁵ MCH – Ministry of Culture and Heritage

⁶ OTS – Office of Treaty Settlements, now Te Arawhiti – The Office of Māori Crown Relations

⁷ TPK – Te Puni Kokiri – The Ministry of Māori Development

⁸ DoC – Department of Conservation

⁹ TTWh – Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori – The Māori Language Commission

¹⁰ TLA – Territorial Local Authority

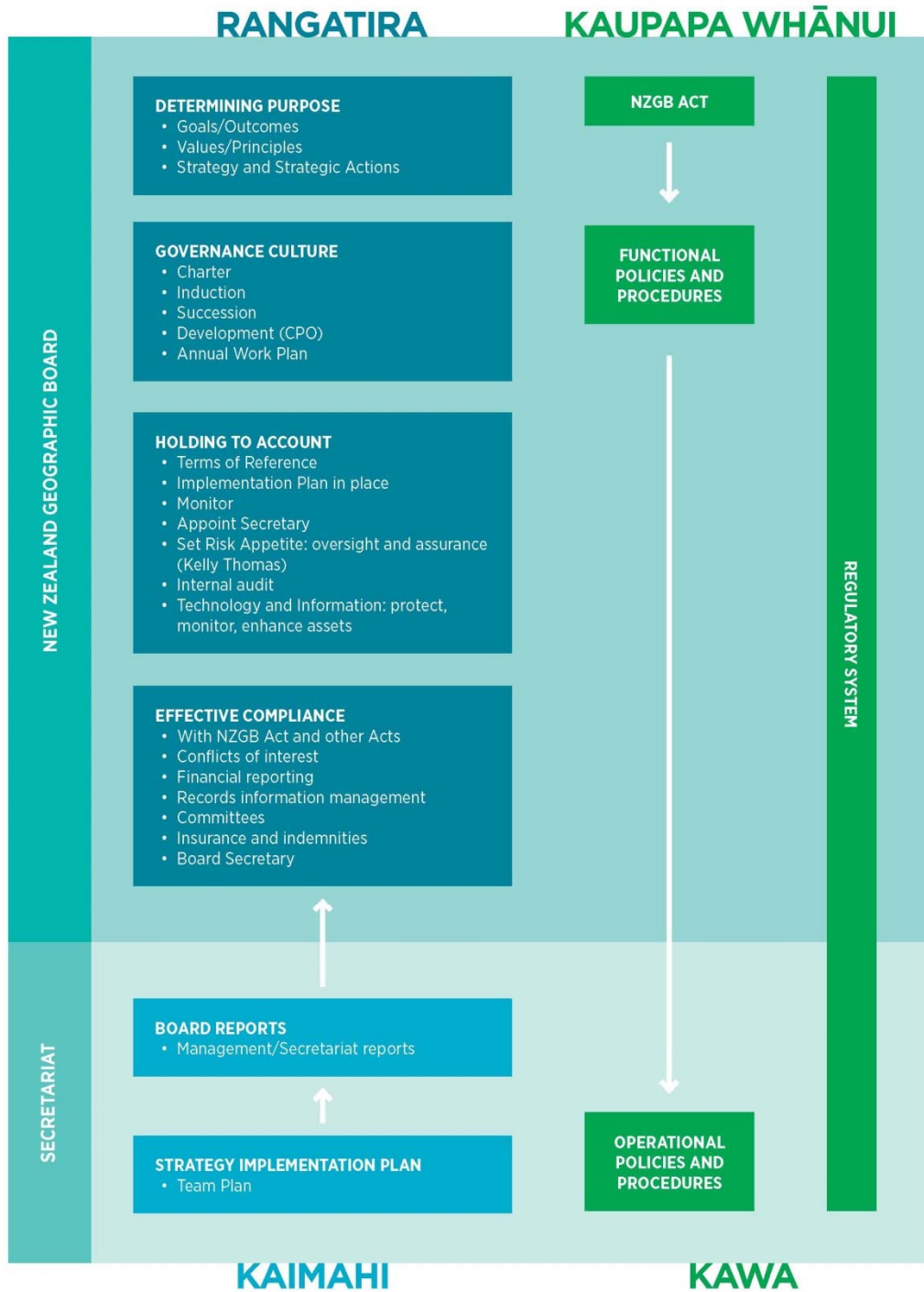
¹¹ LGNZ – Local Government New Zealand

¹² MFAT – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Communications promoting community understanding of the NZGB's role
- Te reo Māori language plan (eg develop 5 year reo strategy)
- Treaty partnerships
- GIS competence
- Gazetteer enhancements and data improvement

Governance

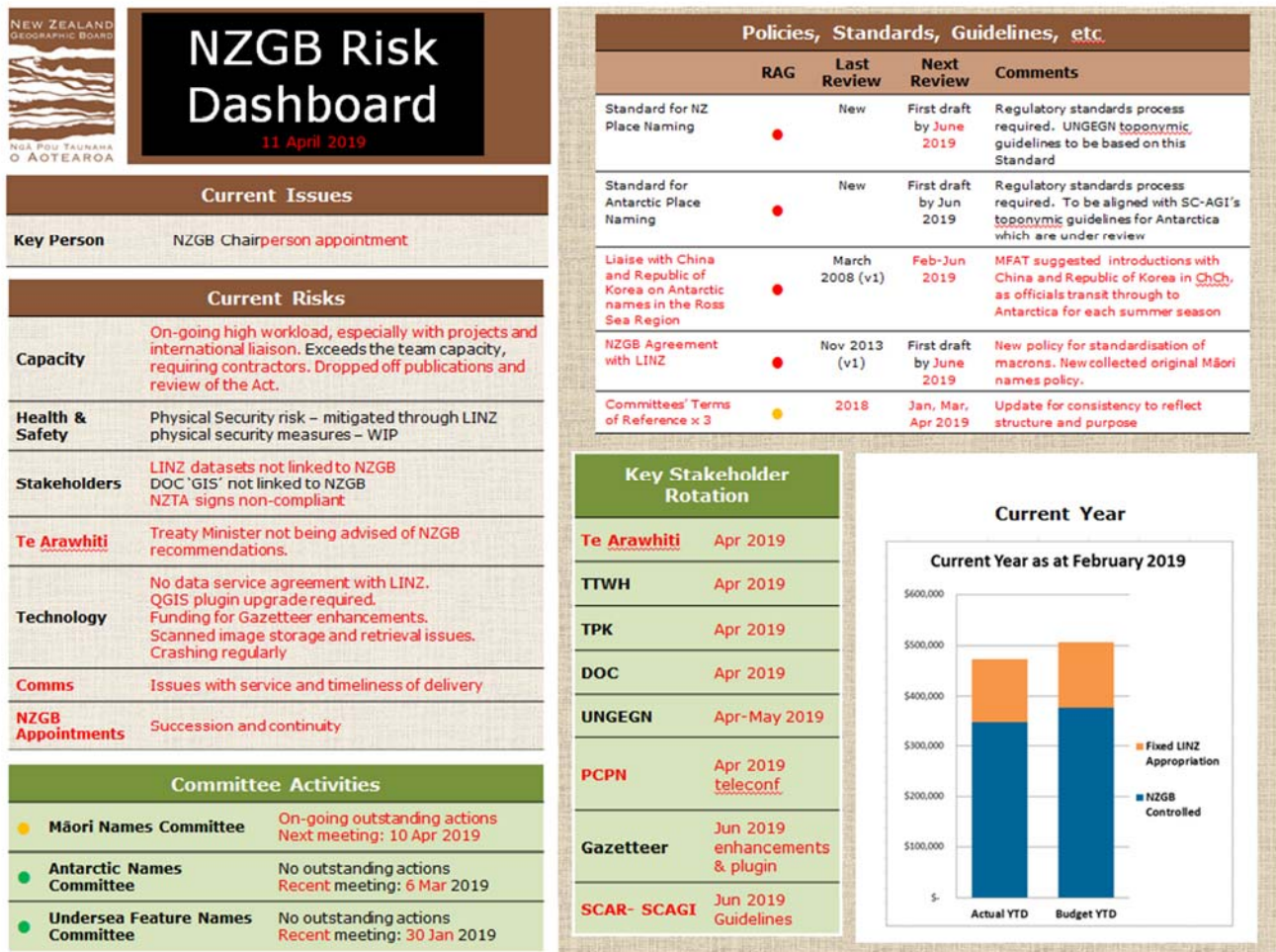
As part of the Strategic Plan review in 2018, the NZGB examined its governance obligations and developed this diagram to help better understand four pillars of good governance:



The NZGB explored the ‘Holding to Account’ pillar of good governance in more detail to help clearly understand risks, impacts and treatments. The NZGB completed a full Risk Register in early 2018 covering seven categories:

1. Health and Safety
2. Customers and Stakeholders
3. Financial Impacts
4. Operational (strategy, composition and governance)
5. Operations (political, legislative, operational and Gazetteer)
6. Customers and Stakeholders (including Treaty of Waitangi¹³ Negotiations and Ministerial support)
7. International

In its risk analysis, the NZGB agreed its Secretary would highlight risks, with priorities and actions, by reporting through a *Risk Dashboard* at each of the three NZGB meetings held each year (but not at the three Committee meetings held annually for Māori names, undersea feature names and Antarctic names). This example of the *Risk Dashboard*¹⁴ for the April 2019 NZGB meeting provides visibility and transparency:



¹³ The Treaty of Waitangi is New Zealand’s founding document. It is an agreement made in 1840 between representatives of the British Crown and more than 500 Māori chiefs

¹⁴ *Risk Dashboard* example is a draft as at 9 March 2019

Core work

The table below lists core work of the NZGB as described in the NZGB Secretariat's annual team plan. It is largely unchanged from New Zealand's 2017 National Report to the 11th UNCSGN conference ([E/CONF.105/37/CRP.37](#)):

NZGB meetings¹⁵/administration
Reports, research, recommendations, inductions for new NZGB members, decisions
Undersea Feature Names Committee meetings¹⁶/administration
Reports, research, recommendations, decisions, liaise with/proposals to SCUFN ¹⁷
Māori Names Committee meetings¹⁸/administration
Reports, research, recommendations, projects
Antarctic Names Committee meetings¹⁹/administration
Reports, research, recommendations, liaise with other international naming authorities
Review policies, guidelines, standards, processes, best practice, etc
Ongoing internal review of all policies, guidelines and standards lead by NZGB members
Deliver strategic priorities of the NZGB
Strategic Plan, Strategic Actions, Risk Dashboard
Public Notification/Consultation/Media/Webpages
Treaty of Waitangi advice and relationships
Advice, recommendations, review documents, implement post settlement obligations
Gazetteer maintenance and improvements
Cleanse data and maintain the Gazetteer for public searching and re-use
Compliance of official names
React to compliance issues and proactively inform through information
Annual Report to the Minister for Land Information – see 2017/18
Responding to enquiries (from the public, iwi²⁰, other agencies, Ministers, Official Information Act requests, Parliamentary Questions)
Fast track: approving recorded names as official
Increasing the pace: Region based, Kā Huru Manu project – see GEGN.2/2019/35/CRP.35
Liaise with LINZ Topographic & Hydrographic teams (in terms of <i>LINZ Agreement</i>)
LINZ corporate requirements
Team management/leadership

¹⁵ Regular NZGB meetings usually three per year

¹⁶ Undersea Feature Names Committee meetings once a year

¹⁷ SCUFN – (International) Sub Committee on Undersea Feature Names

¹⁸ Māori Names Committee meetings once a year

¹⁹ Antarctic Names Committee meetings once a year

²⁰ Iwi – tribal group usually descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory

National and international relationships and promotion

The NZGB attends and hosts conferences and meetings, reports, presents, follows up on actions, etc.

National programmes

The programmes and initiatives listed in New Zealand's 2017 National Report to the 11th UNCSGN conference ([E/CONF.105/37/CRP.37](#)) continue. Updates for some and new items refer:

Updates:

Generic Māori geographic terms – line drawings

All artwork was completed early 2019, and will be posted on the LINZ²¹ website with hyperlinks from the [generic geographic feature listing](#).

Promotion plan

This includes updating webpages, brochures, teachers' pack, regular radio slots, directly engaging with local Councils, etc. A5 flyers have been printed for 'Restoring original Māori place names', 'Undersea feature naming' and 'Antarctic place naming' in English and Māori. See NZGB [A3 infographic](#) produced in April 2018.

Enhancements to the online [Gazetteer](#)

See UNGEGN Session #1 'Report of New Zealand – on the evolution of the [New Zealand Gazetteer](#)' (GEGN.2/2019/37/CRP.37)

Scanning NZGB archive records

All digital scanning was completed late 2018 and quality checks are ongoing. The resource has proved to be highly valuable to the NZGB Secretariat. The next step is to send the books to an offsite archive facility and consider how the NZGB's archives can be publicly accessed in the future.

Cook place names project

The 250 years national celebration of the first onshore meetings between Māori and Europeans, begins in October 2019. The 'place names' contribution requires research, reporting, decisions, and posting on the [LINZ website](#). So far 30 place names from Capt. Cook's voyage have been posted online and are also in [Google™ Tourbuilder](#) (still in draft). The NZGB has identified a total of 235 Cook place names, with their brief stories – these are likely to be entered into Google™'s new application 'Content Creation' before October 2019. See [Tuia 250 Encounters](#) and [NZHistory](#) for more information.

New:

Hosting international meetings ([SCUFN](#) and [PCPN](#)²²)

The NZGB hosted the annual PCPN meeting in September 2018.

The NZGB, LINZ, NIWA²³ and GNS²⁴ Science co-hosted SCUFN's annual meeting in Wellington from 23 to 27 October 2018. We received some very positive feedback on the meeting.

NZGB Standards for Antarctica and New Zealand

Drafts of these two standards are due in June 2019. They will align with the NZGB's existing [Standard for Crown protected area names](#) and [Standard for undersea feature names](#). The Antarctic naming standard will also align with [SC-AGI](#)'s²⁵ proposed Antarctic Toponymic Guidelines.

Proposed changes to the NZGB Act

²¹ Land Information New Zealand

²² PCPN – Permanent Committee on Place Naming

²³ National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research

²⁴ Geological and Nuclear Sciences

²⁵ SC-AGI – (international) Standing Committee on Antarctic Geographic Information

The scope of this work is yet to be determined. An approach may be to deal with minor updates and uncontroversial changes (mostly for consistency) over several years through the Statutes Amendment Bill. More significant changes will be made through an Amendment Bill, and the priority for this would be very low on the legislative schedule.

Capturing names on hydrographic charts for recording in the Gazetteer

This task will compare the NZGB Gazetteer and LINZ hydrographic's digital names data. The comparison will identify recorded names to be added to the NZGB Gazetteer, and will also identify whether the hydrographic names layer is correctly showing official geographic names. This action is expected to be completed by the end of 2019.

SCAR²⁶ Antarctic names rationalisation project and coordinate improvement

These two initiatives are progressing. The effort to improve coordinates is significant and continues as time permits.

***Kā Huru Manu* atlas place names to be added to the Gazetteer as recorded or collected**

See UNGEGN Session #1 'Report on New Zealand's Project to Combine Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu's Cultural Heritage Atlas, *Kā Huru Manu*, with the *New Zealand Geographic Board Gazetteer*' (GEGN.2/2019/35/CRP.35)

Other initiatives the NZGB will progress at a lesser pace include publishing new editions of:

- [He Korero Pūrākau mo Ngā Taunahanahatanga a Ngā Tūpuna / Place Names of the Ancestors : a Māori Oral History Atlas](#) (which will include new stories, maps and art work, and translation into te reo Māori), and
- [Ngā Tohu Pūmahara / The Survey Pegs of the Past: Understanding Māori Place Names](#).

(d) Problems, solutions and achievements

The NZGB has processed and decided on a significant number of geographic names in the past couple of years – many telling compelling stories that embed them into people's consciousness. This included higher numbers of geographic names as part of Treaty of Waitangi settlements than in past years, and the NZGB continues to rise to the challenge of honouring the past in balance with contemporary needs. This requires both bold decisions and compromises.

²⁶ SCAR – (international) Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research

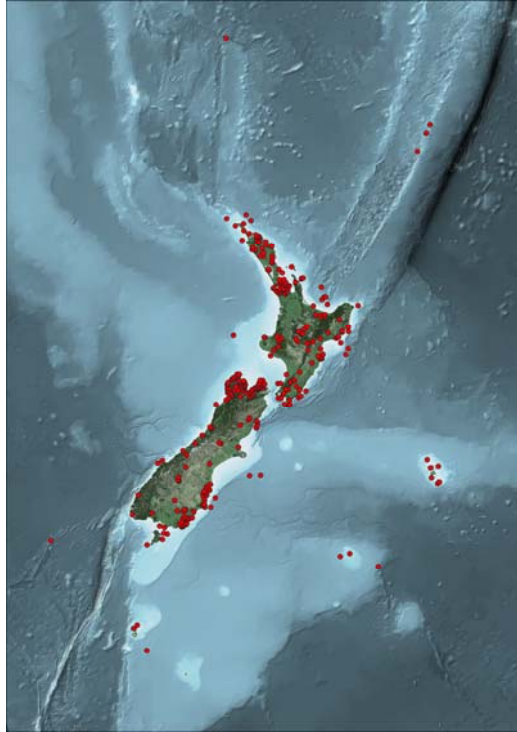


Image showing the distribution of 421 gazetted official geographic names made between September 2017 and March 2019 in New Zealand and offshore

NZGB committees

The NZGB's three committees (Māori Names, Undersea Feature Names, and Antarctic Names) meet annually. Their expert members continue to make a considerable contribution towards meeting the NZGB's purpose and goals by considering and making recommendations on subsets of geographic names.

Macrons

Two projects refer: improving the timeliness of approving recorded names as official, and updating the orthography of Māori geographic names with macrons through the Vodafone™ [Say it Tika](#) project. Both projects make significant contributions towards meeting public and government expectations that Māori geographic names are spelled correctly with macrons, so they can be pronounced properly and their meaning understood. Many local councils are joining the groundswell in recent years to use standardised orthography for Māori words and geographic names.

Liaising with other Crown agencies

The NZGB continues to work with Te Puni Kōkiri (the Ministry for Māori Development) to ensure consultation with appropriate mana whenua²⁷. Its work with Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (the Māori Language Commission) continues to grow, particularly in light of the expectations of the [Maihi Karauna](#) in *Te Ture mō Te Reo Māori Act 2016*. In December 2017 the NZGB formalised an agreement with the Department of Conservation and Te Arawhiti (the Office for Māori Crown Relations) on Crown protected area²⁸ names that are included in Treaty of Waitangi settlement redress. The NZGB also supported an Institute of Directors initiative to build diversity on New Zealand's boards by hosting a 'future director'.

Compliance

Sections [32](#) (compliance) and [33](#) (court action) of the NZGB Act 2008 state that official geographic names must be used in official documents. Section [5](#) of the NZGB Act 2008 binds the Crown. Section [4](#) defines an official document. Complying with official geographic names in official documents remains a challenge to collect, audit,

²⁷ Mana whenua means the people who have authority and jurisdiction over land

²⁸ Land administered by the Crown for conservation purposes

assess and react to if not complying. Usually members of the public advise the NZGB Secretariat of breaches under section 32, resulting in direct communication with the offender to remedy the non-compliance. The NZGB Secretariat also runs data comparison audits between official names in the NZGB *Gazetteer* and LINZ names' layers in its various products. This results in any non-compliance being advised to the relevant teams within LINZ, eg the Topo Products team. The remedy is usually immediate and does not require court action.

NZGB Secretariat capacity and capability

The NZGB Secretariat has four staff, who undertake the operational requirements of the NZGB's work. Their annual work programme is ambitious with activities and projects prioritized according to the NZGB's direction and/or statutory requirements. One challenge is the need to build technical GIS²⁹ expertise to create and maintain a modern gazetteer. Currently this is managed at a basic level but keeping pace with advances in technology and being skilled at manipulating, searching and reporting on the data, pose challenges, especially in how we present the information, eg 3D models, creating basemaps, interfacing with other 'names' databases that LINZ maintains, bulk data updates, etc.

Branding and independence

As an independent statutory body of government, the NZGB faces challenges in asserting its autonomy from its host department, LINZ. The relationship is interdependent. The NZGB Secretariat provides management support, research, and expert advice. Other LINZ teams provide infrastructural support, advice on communications including media and webpages, policy advice, legal advice, ministerial support, etc. While the arrangement works well in practice, there are challenges when people are not able to distinguish the NZGB from LINZ – and that perception could compromise the NZGB's independent decision making role. So the NZGB continues to send messages to elevate understanding of this independence, such as using the NZGB's logo and making statements that come from the NZGB not LINZ.

²⁹ GIS – Geographic Information System

Delivering on strategic goals

The NZGB has cemented its role as an enduring independent statutory entity. This included determining its purpose, having an effective governance culture, working on its accountability framework, and assuring effective compliance. The NZGB has also developed a risk profile to effectively manage its risks. The NZGB's challenge for the next five years is to deliver on its goals and to show their impact, benefit and relevance.

Reaching people

This year the NZGB has increased its efforts to reach more New Zealanders. When notifying geographic name proposals, it uses newspapers, media releases, government webpages, and the LINZ Facebook™ page. To increase awareness and raise its profile, the NZGB trialed social media using Facebook™ and Neighbourly³⁰ advertisements for three proposals notified in May 2018. The cost was significant, so the NZGB now uses booster ads on the LINZ Facebook™ page for controversial proposals, which is much more cost effective.

Engaging with Māori

The NZGB has specific functions relating to Māori geographic names and pays special attention to maintaining and growing mana whenua relationships. The NZGB is committed to meeting Treaty partnership and post settlement obligations. The NZGB honours the Minister for Land Information's Accord with Te Arawa River Iwi Trust by meeting regularly with the Trust and offering advice on geographic naming. The NZGB also has a strong working relationship with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu³¹. In June 2018 Ngāi Tahu indicated these work priorities to the NZGB:

- 25 Rāpaki³² name proposals on Banks Peninsula, which Ngāi Tahu will submit in 2019,
- researching approximately 3000 geographic names in the Otago Region to determine whether any have original Māori names, and confirming those names that may be approved as official under the NZGB's fast track process, and
- recognising [Kā Huru Manu](#) (their cultural mapping atlas) as an authoritative source for geographic names.

The NZGB is committed to engaging with other mana whenua and has updated its [Kaupapa for Māori Place Names](#), to reinforce this.

Global role

The NZGB works with other countries to give geographic names in areas of shared interest and to ensure consistency with international practices. This year the NZGB has engaged with:

- its Australian geographic naming counterparts,
- United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names,
- the Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names,
- the United States Board on Geographic Names for name proposals and matters in the Ross Sea region of Antarctica, and
- the Standing Committee on Antarctic Geographic Information.

(e) Conclusions and recommendations

Geographic names play a significant role in New Zealand's history, culture, economy, administration and language. They identify where we are as we go about our everyday business, are key components of our infrastructure, and are important for communicating with emergency services. The NZGB works hard to achieve practical location identification, and preserve culture and heritage through our geographic names. And it contributes to nation building through its geographic naming work. Many of our geographic names describe physical aspects of features and provide information about the natural and cultural conditions at the time they were given. A recommendation is that the NZGB becomes more conscious of the part geographic naming plays in the UN's sustainable development goals.

³⁰ A website connecting neighbours and the community

³¹ The principal Māori tribe of the southern region of New Zealand

³² The Māori community based at Banks Peninsula

The NZGB's key priorities in the immediate future are:

- processing geographic name proposals of high importance to New Zealand,
- processing Treaty name proposals to support the government's Treaty settlement process and meet post settlement commitments,
- approving more recorded names as official (using the fast track process),
- standardising the orthography of Māori geographic names by adding macrons,
- incorporating Māori geographic names in the [Kā Huru Manu](#) atlas into the NZGB [Gazetteer](#), and
- increasingly using social media to notify proposals.

Contact

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