

**MUSEUM OF NEW  
ZEALAND  
TE PAPA  
TONGAREWA**

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29 May 2020



Dear [REDACTED]

**Re: Official Information Act (OIA) Request – Repatriation**

I am writing in response to your email dated 13 May 2020 in which you requested the following information:

*I would please like to request documents relating to the international repatriation of koiwi and koimi tangata to Te Papa; in particular, any reports from museums in the United States of America, United Kingdom, or France, between 2004-2019.*

*I would also like to request any documents that set out the structure of the Programme, including the process for negotiating with museums and repatriating koiwi and koimi tangata to Te Papa, and any guidelines that dictate how the Programme manages negotiating with museums to have koiwi and koimi tangata returned.*

The following details a response provided by the Head of Repatriations which we believe will give you context of the program. If having reviewed this information you would like to request further information or provided details of specifics that you would like to receive, please advise.

The Karanga Aotearoa Repatriation Programme administered by Te Papa was established through the New Zealand Government's Cabinet Office on 18 June 2003. This was by the Cabinet Policy Committee, with the specific minute of decision identified as **POL Min (03) 14/1** with the heading *Repatriation of Kōiwi Tangata Māori: Programme for 2003/04, 2004/05, 2005/06*.

It is also important to note the kaupapa of repatriating Māori and Moriori ancestral remains is sensitive, including information and images pertaining to tūpuna and karāpuna. Ideally the decision regarding the release of this information into the public domain should remain the responsibility of iwi (Māori tribal groups) and imi (Moriori tribal groups) that are respective uri of these tūpuna and karāpuna.

Karanga Aotearoa has also negotiated the repatriation of Māori and Moriori ancestral remains with a range of decision making groups including: federal governments, state governments, regional councils and individual institutions and museums. For example the repatriation of Toi moko from France was negotiated through the French Government, and as this process is ongoing, requires further discretion and sensitivity in regards to releasing information.

Therefore, Karanga Aotearoa can provide general information about the repatriation process we follow, however, at this stage the programme may not be able to provide sensitive information with active and ongoing negotiations with institutions, museums, regional and state governments.

In respect to the broader request, much of this information can be found in the public domain on Te Papa's webpages dedicated to the Karanga Aotearoa Repatriation Programme with specific reference to the following webpage links, including:

- (1) Overview of Karanga Aotearoa - <https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/about/repatriation/karanga-aotearoa-repatriation-programme>

- (2) International work - <https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/international-repatriation>
- (3) Domestic work - <https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/about/repatriation/domestic-repatriation>

Please note the reports provided in this section relate to research and also provide an overview of the work of Karanga Aotearoa.

- (4) Repatriation Advisory Panel – <https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/about/repatriation/repatriation-advisory-panel>
- (5) Dedicated Kaimahi (workers) for Karanga Aotearoa - <https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/about/repatriation/repatriation-team>
- (6) Hui-a-rohe/ Local meetings: <https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/regional/local-meetings>

### **Negotiations with the British Museum in London**

For an overview of the work required to formally request the repatriation of Māori and Moriori ancestral remains please view the information available through the British Museum's website which contains all the correspondence between Te Papa and the British Museum from 2004 to 2008.

Webpage link: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/our-work/departments/human-remains/policy-and-governance/request-repatriation-human-remains-new-zealand>

Please also note the kōiwi tangata repatriated from the British Museum have been returned to Waimārama in September 2013. The webpage link for this is: <https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/sites/default/files/koiwi-tangata-report-waimarama-september-2013.pdf>

### **Online Papers and related materials**

There are a number of Karanga Aotearoa related papers and related materials online including:

- (1) Dr June Jones and Te Herekiele Herewini: <https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/learn/research/research-publications/tuhinga-our-research-journal/past-tuhinga-issues/tuhinga-27>

This paper is important as it provides an overview of the work of Karanga Aotearoa and how it works in partnership with international institutions.

- (2) Repatriation Ceremony at Birmingham University on Oct 22, 2013. Webpage link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7UobfYENpS8>
- (3) Paper: French Ambivalence Towards the Concept of 'Indigenous People': Museums and the Māori. Natacha Gagne & Melanie Roustan: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00664677.2019.1587591?scroll=top&needAccess=true&journalCode=canf20>

### **Media information online:**

Please note there is media information online about Te Papa's repatriation work and international institutions. Here are some examples of publicly available information which you may find useful:

- (1) Library of Congress Law: <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/repatriation-human-remains/new-zealand.php>
- (2) <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/german-museum-returns-preserved-maori-head-new-zealand-180969634/>
- (3) Background information re: European repatriation in April and May 2011: [https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/sites/default/files/european\\_repatriation\\_background\\_info\\_for\\_press\\_releases-29\\_april\\_to\\_12\\_may\\_2011.pdf](https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/sites/default/files/european_repatriation_background_info_for_press_releases-29_april_to_12_may_2011.pdf)

If you are not satisfied with this response you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us please contact either Frances Lawrence or Zoë Genet, at [OIA@tepapa.govt.nz](mailto:OIA@tepapa.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely



Frances Lawrence  
**Senior Advisor Planning and Performance**



Zoë Genet  
**Principal Legal Counsel**