

**Under** the Inquiries Act 2013  
**In the matter** of the Royal Commission into Historical Abuse in State Care and in  
the Care of Faith-based Institutions

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## **Oranga Tamariki: Brief of Evidence of Aiolupotea Sina Aiolupotea-Aiono for Institutional Response Hearing**

**8 August 2022**

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# Brief of evidence of Aiolupotea Sina Aiolupotea-Aiono

I, **Aiolupotea Sina Aiolupotea-Aiono** of Wellington, Public Servant, state:

## Introduction

- 1 My full name is Aiolupotea Sina Aiolupotea-Aiono. I am from the villages of Falelima, Paia, Siufaga, Fa'ala Palauli in Savaii, Samoa and I hold two chiefly Ali'i titles of Aiolupotea and Toleafoa, bestowed from my Aiga Sā Nāmualii in Falelima.
- 2 I am the Chief Advisor Pacific at Oranga Tamariki-Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki). I was appointed to this newly established role in June 2021. My term of appointment is for 18 months.
- 3 The Chief Advisor Pacific role is responsible for the visibility and championing of Pacific culture and values across Oranga Tamariki and Pacific communities within Aotearoa. The role is a cultural leader and is responsible for supporting the organisation to bring to life its cultural competence and confidence in engaging with Pacific communities. This also includes building our Pacific staff network, harnessing of the Pacific cultural capability and their valued contributions to the organisation's delivery of its core purpose and roles.
- 4 The role supports and advises the Chief Executive by providing direct and high level strategic, organisational and operational advice in relation to our Pacific strategy for children, young people and families. The role works across the organisation to support best practise in our delivery of services to, and engagement with Pacific peoples. The Chief Advisor provides insights and advice on a range of Pacific matters and maintains effective working relationships with Pacific community leaders and stakeholders, Oranga Tamariki, Minister's Offices and other relevant government and non-government organisations.
- 5 I hold a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Sociology from University of Auckland, and a Masters in Education Leadership through AUT University.
- 6 Before joining Oranga Tamariki, I was, from 2017 to 2021, the Deputy Chief Executive, Regional Partnerships at the Ministry for Pacific Peoples where I was responsible for that Ministry's Community Relationships portfolio and its key National Programmes providers delivery through regionally based teams and providers across the country. I also played a crucial role in the development of the Ministry for Pacific Peoples' Lalanga Fou vision and successful implementation of the vision's key goals.
- 7 I have also served at the governance level as a member and chair of several boards in local and central government, as well as in the NGO and local community sectors. These included: Member, Pacific Island Advisory Council, Manukau City Council (2002-2005); Trustee, COMET Auckland (2007-2015); Member, ASB Community Trust Pacific Reference Group Maori Pacific Education Initiative (2007-2008); Member, Tertiary Education Commission Pacific Reference Group (2012); Member, Ako Aotearoa Pacific Caucus (2009-2016); Member, Ministry of Education Auckland Regional Pacific Advisory (2009-2013); Deputy Chair, Association of Pacific Staff in Tertiary Education (2009-2010);

Member first term and Chair in second term of the Auckland Council Pacific Peoples Advisory Panel (2011-2016; Trustee); Pacific Education Centre Board (2017-2021); Member, Police Commissioner's National Pacific Advisory Group (2019-2021); Member, South Auckland Social Wellbeing Board (2017-2021); and Member, Tofa Mamao Pacific Disability Group (2020-2021).

- 8 I was the inaugural Pacific Development Manager, a senior leadership appointment at Manukau Institute of Technology from 2008-2015. In this role I was responsible for lifting Pacific cultural responsiveness and capability across the organisation to lift tertiary students participation, retention and success at the institution. The role involved intense Pacific community engagement programme with key stakeholders across the region, churches, community leaders, and working closely with young people. The role also extended to developing and maintaining relationships with tertiary institutions across Aotearoa, and in the Pacific region including Tonga, Samoa, Cook Islands and Niue.
- 9 I am currently a Trustee on the Ko Taku Reo: Deaf Education NZ Board and have held this role since 2014.
- 10 My current role and previous experience mean that I am well-placed to give evidence about issues affecting Pacific peoples in the context of the care system. My hope is that my extensive experience will help to lift the cultural competence of Oranga Tamariki and support best practice in the delivery of services to, and engagement with, Pacific people.

#### **Scope of evidence**

- 11 I understand that the Commission is interested in the following issues:
- (a) Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the guarantee of tino rangatiratanga over kāinga (te Tiriti);
  - (b) Priority groups: tāngata whenua, Pacific peoples, disabled people (Priority Groups);
  - (c) System and organisational monitoring, oversight and safeguarding (Monitoring, Oversight, Safeguarding);
  - (d) The relationship between the state and faith in the care system (State and Faith);
  - (e) Entry into care;
  - (f) Staff and caregivers;
  - (g) Provision of care;
  - (h) Complaints, Referrals and Criminal Justice;
  - (i) Funding and resources; and
  - (j) Lessons learned.

12 I have read, and am familiar with, the brief of evidence filed by our Chief Executive, Chappie Te Kani. I am appearing in the Commission with Mr Te Kani to give evidence as needed to supplement his evidence.

13 In particular, I am able to answer questions in relation to the following aspects of Mr Te Kani's brief of evidence:

(a) Priority groups, specifically Pacific peoples.

Signed:   
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Aiolupotea Sina Aiolupotea-Aiono

Date:   
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