



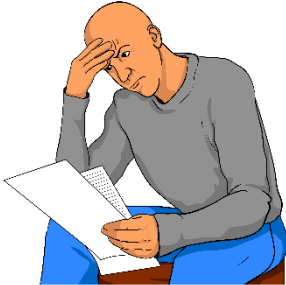
Abuse in Care public apology: New Zealand Police



Tania Kura
New Zealand Police Commissioner

Published: November 2024

Before you start



This Easy Read document talks about abuse.



This information may upset some people when they are reading it.

This information is not meant to scare anyone.



If you are upset after reading this Easy Read document you can talk to your:



- whānau / family
- friends.



You can contact the Survivor Experiences Service for support.

In New Zealand you can **phone**:

0800 456 090



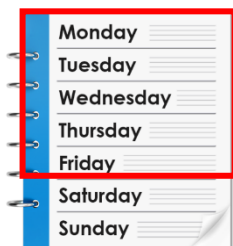
If you are calling from Australia you can **phone**:

1 800 456 032

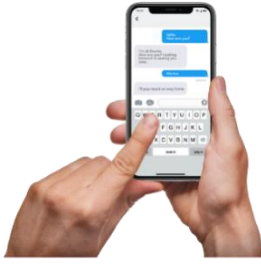


You can call this number:

- between **8:30 am** and **4:30 pm**
- from **Monday** to **Friday**.



These times are for the New Zealand time zones.



You can also send a **text** to the Survivor Experiences Service.



In New Zealand you can send a **text** to:

8328



If you are texting from Australia you can send a **text** to:

+61 438 384 957



It does not cost any money to call / text the Survivor Experiences Service.



You can also send the Survivor Experiences Service an **email** at:

contact@survivorexperiences.govt.nz

About this document



On 12 November 2024 different parts of the Government made a **public apology** to people who had been abused while in:

- state / government care
- faith-based care.

A **public apology** is when someone says sorry to a group of people in a way that means everyone can be a part of what is said.



This Easy Read is a **summary** of the public apology made by New Zealand Police.



A **summary**:

- is shorter than the original message
- tells you what you need to know.

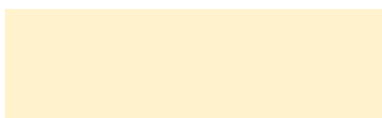


Tania Kura is the New Zealand Police Commissioner.

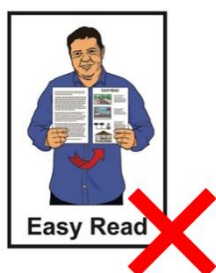
This document includes some **quotes** from Tania Kura.



A **quote** is an exact copy in writing of what someone has said.



The quotes are in yellow boxes like this.



The quotes are **not** in Easy Read.



You can read the full apology on the
New Zealand Police **website** at:

www.police.govt.nz

The apology from New Zealand Police

Commissioner Tania Kura said:



“I stand here today with a **heavy heart** to offer a **sincere apology** for past **organisational failures** in protecting and serving those who were most **vulnerable** in our society – children, young people, and adults in care.”



Having a **heavy heart** means being deeply sad about something.



A **sincere apology** is when someone who is saying sorry means everything they are saying.



Organisational failures are when a whole organisation like the Police does not do what it should have done.



Someone who is **vulnerable** might need extra care / protection because of things like their:

- age
- health.



“The Royal Commission's findings have shone a light on deeply troubling aspects of Police history.”

The Royal Commission found that there are some very bad things that New Zealand Police have done in the past.



Tania Kura said New Zealand Police failed to do enough to support the different needs of people in care like:

- Māori
- Pacific peoples
- disabled people
- tāngata whaikaha Māori
- Deaf people
- Turi Māori.





“Our at-times singular **focus** on **enforcement**, rather than exploring alternatives to criminal proceedings, has been found to be misguided.”



Focus means the way we:

- look at things
- think how we should do things.



Focus here means that the New Zealand Police did not have the right focus in how they did their jobs.



Enforcement means making sure that people follow the law.



“There were also times when we did not consistently follow our own policies and General Instructions which set out how we should manage and deal with children and young people.”



There were times when the New Zealand Police did not always follow its own rules that tell the Police how they should work with:

- children
- young people.



“As you told the Royal Commission, sometimes we failed to understand or properly investigate instances of abuse by our own officers when you were in our **custody** or care.”



Survivors told the Royal Commission that sometimes the New Zealand Police failed to:

- understand survivors
- look into times when people in police **custody** / care were abused by police officers.



Being in police **custody** is when you have to stay at the police station under the watch of police.



“Evidence presented to the Royal Commission showed some of our people harboured **negative biases** against you as victims of abuse and neglect, sometimes not believing your accounts or failing to thoroughly investigate your allegations.”



Negative biases happen when people think badly about a group of people without knowing them because of things like:

- their race like being Māori
- their disability
- their sexuality like being gay.



“We didn’t ask questions if you ran away, and we trusted the explanations of the people we took you back to.”



Sometimes the New Zealand Police did not:

- believe what you told them
- check if what you were saying was true
- ask you questions if you ran away from somewhere.



The New Zealand Police often trusted what was told to them by the people they took you back to instead.

These failures have happened over many years under many different leaders of the New Zealand Police.

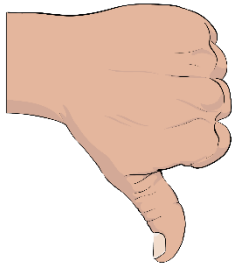




“As the current Commissioner, I take full responsibility for our organisation's past **shortcomings**.

We have listened **intently** to your experiences.

Your **courage** in coming forward has been **profoundly moving**.”



Shortcomings means things we have not done well / done wrong.



To listen **intently** means to listen very closely.



Courage means someone is:

- very brave
- mentally strong which means being strong in your mind.



Profoundly moving is when something is felt very deeply by someone.



“This is not the first time we’ve **acknowledged** our faults.



We’ve previously recognised issues around our handling of sexual assault cases and our **interactions** with Māori and Pacific peoples.”



Acknowledged means saying that something happened.



Interactions means talking / working through things with people.



“Today's apology builds on those past acknowledgements but **goes further** in **recognising** the **full scope** of Police's failings over the **more-than-half-a-century** covered by the Royal Commission.”



Goes further means does more.

Recognising means to be accepting.



Full scope means all the times Police failed people.

More-than-half-a-century means more than 50 years.



“While we cannot undo the harm caused, we are **committed** to learning and changing.”



Committed means they are going to make sure they do what they have said.



In the past few years Police have made big changes to:

- their ways of doing things
- their rules
- how they think.



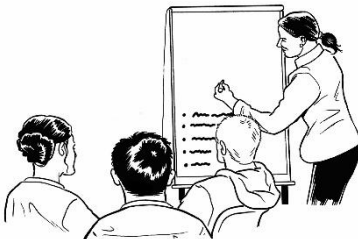


“Today, I **reaffirm** our **unwavering** commitment to continue this journey of **improvement**.”



To **reaffirm** something means to say something again.

Unwavering means they will not stop trying to do what they have said.



Improvement means learning to do better.



“We are **dedicated** to building a police service that protects and serves all members of society, especially the most vulnerable.

We aspire to regain the trust of anyone we have failed by ensuring such failures are not repeated.”



Dedicated means making sure something will happen.



We are going to create a police service that will protect / serve everyone.



We will work even harder to protect / serve the most vulnerable people.

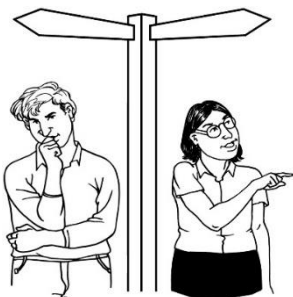


To all who **suffered** due to our past failings – we hear you, we believe you, and we are truly sorry.

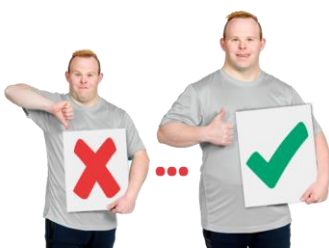
Your experiences will not be forgotten, and they will continue to **shape our path** forward as we **strive** to be the police service that New Zealanders expect and deserve.



Suffered means someone has had a very hard time.



Here **shape our path** means that the experiences of survivors will guide the Police in what they do next.



Strive means to try to do your very best at something.



This information has been written by the New Zealand Police.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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