

Department of Conservation *Te Papa Atawhai*

Role Description

Role Details

Title	Kaihautū Relationships and Engagement
Manager Title	Deputy Director-General, Iwi Strategy and Partnerships
Group	Iwi Strategy and Partnerships
Direct Reports	Manager Relationships and Engagement Principal Advisor Relationships and Engagement Personal Assistant
Security Clearance Required	TBC
Date	April 2026
Approved By	Director-General

Public Service

Ka mahitahi mātou o te ratonga tūmatanui hei painga mō ngā tāngata o Aotearoa

I āiane, ā, hei ngā rā ki tua hoki, he kawenga tino whaitake tā mātou hei tautoko i te Karauna i runga i āna hononga ki a Ngāi Māori i raro i te Tiriti o Waitangi. Ka tautoko mātou i te kāwanatanga manapori. Ka whakakotahingia mātou e te wairua whakarato ki ō mātou hapori, ā, e arahina ana mātou e ngā mātāpono me ngā tikanga matua o te ratonga tūmatanui i roto i ā mātou mahi.

In the public service we work collectively to make a meaningful difference for New Zealanders now and in the future. We have an important role in supporting the Crown in its relationships with Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi. We support democratic government. We are unified by a spirit of service to our communities and guided by the core principles and values of the public service in our work.

About DOC

The Department of Conservation *Te Papa Atawhai* (DOC) protects and sustains nature for current and future generations. Our purpose is to ensure that Papatūānuku thrives. We do this by:

- Protecting land, species, ecosystems, and cultural heritage for conservation purposes
- Managing threats and adverse impacts
- Being a voice for conservation
- Connecting people to nature

All New Zealanders have a role in keeping nature healthy. We partner with whānau, hapū and iwi and collaborate with commercial partners, NGOs, volunteers, and government agencies to improve conservation outcomes.

Role Purpose

Provide enterprise leadership for DOC's relationships and engagement function so that the Department operates as an honourable Treaty partner and engagement strategically coordinated, is supported by the right tools and guidance, and supports the Relationships System of the Treaty Operating Model. The Kaihautū:

- Leads DOC's strategic approach to Treaty relationships, agreements and partnerships, providing high-quality advice and direction.
- Leads the coordination, guidance, tools and frameworks development to support Treaty partner relationships and engagements at a national level.
- Leads the development of risk management, escalation, and tikanga-based engagement processes and systems for DOC.
- Leads reporting and guidance of accords, national-level commitments, and cross-agency Crown-Māori initiatives of relevance to DOC and its Treaty partners.
- Provides targeted support to the Director-General of DOC for engagement and relationships with Treaty partners.

As Kaihautū (Tier 3), the role sets direction, integrates engagement efforts across groups and regions, and leads system change through influence, partnerships and evidence-informed stewardship.

General

Employees required to respond to DOC's changing needs, performing other tasks as reasonably required.

DOC may make reasonable changes to the role in consultation with the role holder. This could include adjustment of the allocation of portfolios and responsibilities among members of the Group leadership from time to time.

As a leader within DOC, you are required to be visible, open, and engaging, proactive, and agile. You will move towards problems and challenges and will not create barriers or assume something is someone else's responsibility.

You are required to maintain a strict sense of personal ethics, maintain confidentiality and privacy, and abide by DOC's Code of Conduct.

Key Accountabilities

Accountability	This includes....
Enterprise Relationship & Engagement Leadership	<p>Provide strategic leadership of DOC's iwi relationship and engagement function—setting direction, standards and expectations for culturally grounded, mana-enhancing engagement.</p> <p>Lead multi-year planning for Treaty partnership advice and coordination that sets priorities, outcomes, measures and resourcing aligned to the Treaty Operating Model; maintain line-of-sight to DOC strategies and regional delivery.</p> <p>Ensure Section 4 and Treaty settlement commitments are embedded in planning and delivery practice across groups and regions.</p>

Accountability	This includes....
Network Stewardship & Capability	Build and sustain a strong network of Kaihautū and a cohesive Pou/Treaty Ranger community of practice; provide coaching, support and guidance to uplift capability and consistency.
Engagement Quality, Monitoring & Reporting	Oversee quality, risk and performance for Treaty partner engagement—set expectations for planning, conduct regular reviews, and ensure lessons are applied. Maintain enterprise monitoring and reporting on relationship and engagement impact; provide clear insights and improvement actions to governance.
Group Leadership & System Integration	Work with Chiefs/Directors to agree whole-of-group priorities, align engagement efforts and remove duplication; support DD-G with specialist Treaty partnership oversight. Provide governance-ready advice and reporting on progress, risks and decisions required; ensure engagement insights inform DOC strategies, policy and operations.
People, Practice & Culture	Lead and develop a high-performing directorate, setting clear expectations, coaching senior leaders, and modelling cultural safety and tikanga-aligned practice. Uphold DOC's health, safety and wellbeing leadership responsibilities.

Relationships

Internal	Nature of the Relationship
Directorate Leadership Team	To share information, coordinate business and work plans, participate in decision making, collaborate on initiatives and work activities
Direct Reports	To provide direction and guidance, individual development and management support

External	Nature of the Relationship
Ministers' Offices	To provide information proactively and in response to requests
Treaty Partner	To collaborate on opportunities to partner, represent interests of DOC, provide information as required
Peers in other government agencies, nationally and internationally	Represent interests of DOC, collaborate on All of Government (AOG) and sector wide goals and priorities, provide information as required
External entities and professional bodies	Gather information and provide guidance, lead or participate in networks, represent DOC's interests and collaborate in partnerships to support DOC's priorities

Capabilities Required	
Specialist Skills, Knowledge and Qualifications	<p>Deep knowledge of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Crown-Māori relationship, and how the Treaty informs DOC's responsibilities and obligations.</p> <p>Detailed understanding of kaupapa Māori methodologies and frameworks, with the ability to apply them holistically across DOC work programmes.</p> <p>Strong understanding of te ao Māori, te reo me ngā tikanga Māori and the ability to apply these appropriately in a leadership and advisory context.</p> <p>In-depth knowledge of Treaty settlement commitments and how these impact DOC's areas of responsibility, including operational and policy implications.</p> <p>Ability to anticipate how DOC's policies, practices and services will work for Māori, and to identify opportunities to improve outcomes for whānau, hapū and iwi.</p> <p>Skilled at interpreting and advising others on the use of data, evidence and insights to support Māori-Crown partnership outcomes and informed decision-making.</p>
Treaty Partnership	<p>Demonstrated success in building relationships and gaining the support and participation of key Treaty Partner individuals and groups</p> <p>Sound understanding of the impact DOC and the wider public sector/government has on the Māori Crown relationship, and the obligations of the Crown under the Treaty of Waitangi in own area of work</p> <p>Awareness of the differences between Māori and non-Māori world views and how to access more knowledge</p> <p>Broad understanding of how Treaty settlement commitments impact own area of responsibility</p> <p>Demonstrates a sound understanding of te ao Māori, te reo me nga tikanga Māori</p>
People Leadership	<p>Demonstrated ability to lead and manage managers using effective role modelling, delegation, and performance management skills</p> <p>Able to lead by example, guiding people to be disciplined and considered</p> <p>Understands the impact of own actions</p> <p>Able to set clear management team objectives and expectations</p> <p>Monitors and strengthens management team cohesion and performance</p> <p>Focuses direct reports on achieving shared objectives</p> <p>Demonstrated coaching and mentoring skills</p> <p>Able to motivate and inspire others</p>
Decision Making and Reasoning	<p>Able to integrate wide ranging information to support effective decision making</p> <p>Practiced at seeking different perspectives to check for and mitigate unconscious bias</p>
Collaboration	<p>Able to find common ground and solve problems</p>

Capabilities Required	
	Demonstrates and fosters collaboration internally across the organisation, and externally with partners
Organisation Leadership	<p>Demonstrated ability in, and experience of, leading change</p> <p>Influences political representatives, proactively informs, and provides frank advice on sensitive issues</p> <p>Has a broad and detailed knowledge of government systems and structures</p> <p>Has a broad understanding of government processes and politics and key interfaces with government and other public sector agencies</p>
Delivery of Results	<p>Demonstrated ability to plan and organise large and complex programmes of work</p> <p>Able to manage and deliver on diverse work priorities by effectively allocating time and resources</p> <p>Able to manage risk effectively through appropriate identification, categorisation, and evaluation and/or mitigation</p>
Relationship Building and Stakeholder Management	<p>Able to demonstrate integrity, curiosity, openness, a non-judgemental attitude, and consistency and reliability so colleagues and partners trust and rely on you</p> <p>Able to anticipate and show empathy for others' points of view while persevering with achievement of conservation outcomes.</p> <p>Able to deal with difficult issues and disagreements using honesty and joint problem solving rather than using positional power</p> <p>Able to build personal connections with and understand the perspective of senior Treaty Partner representatives and other stakeholder leaders</p>
Commercial and Financial Management	<p>Demonstrated commercial experience and expertise</p> <p>Demonstrated negotiation skills</p>
Interpersonal Skills and Communication	<p>Able to communicate clearly and sensitively with a very wide range of internal and external audiences</p> <p>Gains active participation and/or support for initiatives, from senior leaders, staff, and other relevant senior stakeholders</p>

You are required to comply with the standard operating requirements of DOC, i.e., you must comply with the financial, health and safety, legal, people and other delegations set out in Standard Operating Procedures, policies, and instructions (refer to the Intranet for further information)