



Tauranga Moana Iwi Leaders Respond to Mauao Crisis

Media statement

26 January 2026

Tauranga Moana Iwi Chairs and CEOs have been meeting over the weekend to determine and prioritise a way forward that respects the recovery process that is currently underway at Mauao.

The group adopted a Recovery, Response and Review framework to drive its approach to the events at Mauao.

The leadership group all agreed the current focus needs to be directed at recovering the loved ones who have perished at Mauao as a matter of urgency. Our collective thoughts remain with the whanau who are grieving for their whanau members.

We also want to recognise the loss of lives at Papamoa and cannot imagine the impact that this has had on another grieving whanau.

The aftermath of last week's storm has affected our entire region and we are still assessing the impact on our Iwi members. As part of the "response" phase Taiao and Health and Well-being teams have deployed across the region to assess damaged areas and work with whanau members needing assistance.

We have also met and will continue to meet with local and central government agencies to ensure visibility of the issues affecting our people.

Tauranga Mayor Mahe Drysdale has indicated there will be an independent review which we support and we look forward to populating the terms of reference.

Charlie Tawhiao

Charlie Rahiri

Kylie Smallman

Chair Ngai Te Rangī

Chair Ngāti Ranginui

Chair Ngāti Pukenga

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