



21 March 2020

MEDIA STATEMENT

On behalf of Tūwharetoa Maori Trust Board

Tūwharetoa Maori Trust Board has confirmed a staff member, Te Mahau Kingi, is the first person to test positive for Covid-19 in Taupo.

Mr Kingi recently returned from London, via Dubai and arrived in Auckland on 12 March. He then flew back to Taupo on 14 March.

As a precaution, Mr Kingi immediately self-isolated at home in Taupo, and contacted the Ministry of Health.

On Tuesday this week he was tested by the Taupo Health Centre, and his results returned positive last night.

Tūwharetoa Maori Trust Board, Chief Executive Officer, Shane Heremaia says the Trust is focused on supporting Mr Kingi, and wants to assure the iwi and community that he has been careful since returning home.

“It is a very difficult time for all, and we know our people will be concerned, and that’s why the Trust, with the support of Mr Kingi, are making this public.

“Our focus is on ensuring he is safe and well and providing him with all the support he needs. He did the right thing by asking to be tested earlier this week.

“Mr Kingi is an experienced traveler, and someone who has worked in challenging environments before, so he has done the best he could to self-isolate and avoid contact with others.

“I can confirm that he has not been to any of our iwi marae since returning home, or, been in our Trust’s office.

“We hope that the people of Taupo will support him with aroha as he recuperates.

“Our thoughts are also with our kaumatua and kuia, and all those over 70. We support the call by the Prime Minister to encourage our elders to stay home. It’s an important time for us all to show kotahitanga (unity) and manaakitanga (support) for each other, especially our kaumatua,” says Mr Heremaia.

Tūwharetoa Maori Trust Board will continue to update the iwi via its website www.tuwharetoa.co.nz and Facebook page.

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