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Reference: Letter of Endorsement for the Whakatupato Programme

To whom this may concern,

This is to establish why we are supporting and endorsing the Whakatupato Programme. This programme enables a Maori based firearms license training programme to be delivered in a Marae setting. We think this concept is absolutely awesome and Maori friendly.

On the 30 April plans were in place to have the Whakatupato Programme delivered at Parikino Marae, located on the Whanganui River, Whanganui. Through no fault of anyone's, the administration build-up was relatively short, however the word got around fairly quickly within Maori circles and we did managed to exceed the minimum numbers to deliver the course. This obviously established in our minds, there was a need. The course had 24 in attendance, 18 managed to sit and complete the firearms licensing process and pass the firearms test.

Heemi Te Peeti, originally from Whanganui and a number of other Maori and other trainers were available to deliver the course for Firearms Safety Specialists (FSS). Having a Maori face in a Maori setting made all the difference for those students that participated. This process alone breaks down a lot of the perceived barriers for our people. The pass rate and feedback would provide strong evidence to show support for more of FSS courses to be delivered in the future within the Whanganui region, on Marae.

The feedback from students, Kaumatua, Kuia present and for those sitting around the fringes, observing the course, was that they were happy to support Police onto the Marae that would facilitate change in how our people were managed in terms of getting their firearms license. Sometimes going to Mountain Safety and or the Police Station isn't as comfortable, compare to conducting licensing processes on the Marae.

The conclusion and completion of the firearms course was a period to celebrate and acknowledge that efforts of all parties. We were ecstatic for the students and our people for hosting a successful event that would in effect enable our people to be licensing to hunt for their whanau, hapu and Iwi, more important getting back onto the whenua.

I am 100% behind endorsing FSS in the future and our people are very excited with the prospect of having more of the same in our iwi, Ati Hau Nui a Paparangi. As an Iwi board member of Nga Tangata Tiaki o Whanganui, I will be supporting this initiative in the future not only in our iwi, but think there is significant value for this across the motu (country).



Kind regards

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