



Scan for
NZSL name



Visual description: A purple Whaikaha logo with a QR scan for the NZSL name.

Briefing

Date:	10 February 2025
For:	Hon Louise Upston, Minister for Disability Issues
File reference:	REP/WHK/25/2/003
Security level:	In confidence

Refresh of the NZSL Strategy: Cabinet paper for feedback

Purpose

This briefing seeks your feedback on a draft Cabinet paper, seeking approval for the New Zealand Sign Language Board (the Board) to consult on the draft New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) Strategy.

Providing your feedback by 17 February will enable your feedback to be incorporated into the version sent to you on 18 February for Ministerial consultation.

Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- a) **Provide** feedback on the attached Cabinet paper, seeking Cabinet approval for the Board to consult publicly on the draft NZSL Strategy
- b) **Note** that providing feedback by 17 February will enable us to incorporate your feedback in the version to be sent to you on 18 February for Ministerial consultation
- c) **Note** that officials are currently undertaking agency consultation on the draft NZSL Strategy and Cabinet paper

Yes / No

Noted

Noted

- d) **Note** that we will provide you with an updated version of the Cabinet paper and NZSL Strategy for Ministerial consultation on 18 February
- e) **Note** that the intended date for the Cabinet paper to be considered by the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee is Wednesday 26 March 2025

Noted

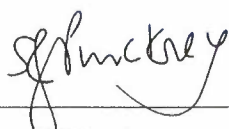
Noted



Hon Louise Upston

Minister for Disability Issues

Date 20250216



Sheryl Pinckney

Group Manager, Policy, Strategy and Partnerships

10 February 2025

Actions for private secretaries:

Refresh of the NZSL Strategy: Cabinet paper for feedback

Background

- 1 The current NZSL strategy expired at the end of 2023. The Board has been working to refresh the NZSL Strategy, s9(2)(f)(iv)
- 2 We recently provided you with the draft Strategy for your feedback (see REP/WHK/25/1/001]. We now provide you with a draft Cabinet paper that seeks approval for the Board to consult on the draft NZSL Strategy.

The Cabinet paper also seeks to rescind amendments to the NZSL Act proposed by the previous government

- 3 The Cabinet paper also seeks to formally rescind proposed amendments to the NZSL Act, that were proposed by the previous government. These changes intended to turn the Board into a statutory Ministerial advisory group, and to formally include the Board's functions in the Act.
- 4 However, the Amendment Bill had not been introduced prior to the election, and in January 2024, the previous Minister for Disability Issues, Hon Penny Simmonds, decided not to progress with these amendments [see Ministry of Social Development report, REP/23/12/927].
- 5 As part of the transfer of the administrative responsibility for the NZSL Act to Whaikaha, MSD advised that the formal step of rescinding the relevant Cabinet decisions had not occurred. This Cabinet paper therefore seeks to take this step by rescinding the relevant Cabinet minute [SWC-23-MIN-0022].
- 6 Officials continue to look for ways to improve the operation and profile of the NZSL Board. This includes additional governance training for the Board, establishing a Turi Māori advisory group to support the Board with Turi Māori expertise, and work around the strategy consultation process.

Next steps

- 7 We are currently consulting government agencies on the draft NZSL Strategy and Cabinet paper and will provide you with an updated version of the documents for Ministerial Consultation on 18 February 2025.
- 8 Providing your feedback by 17 February will enable us to incorporate your changes into the Cabinet paper prior to us providing you with an updated version for Ministerial consultation.

9 The following table provides the ambitious timeframe for the NZSL Strategy:

Key action or event	Possible timeframe
Cabinet paper one: Approval to consult	
Feedback on draft Cabinet paper from Minister (for changes to be included in Ministerial consultation version)	17 February
Cabinet paper to Minister – Ministerial consultation version	18 February
Ministerial consultation (two weeks)	21 February – 7 March
Cabinet paper and draft Strategy lodged	20 March
Cabinet Social Outcomes (SOU) Committee considers draft strategy / approval to consult	Wednesday, 26 March
Public Consultation process	
Public and stakeholder consultation (approximately 6 weeks)	22 April – 2 June
Analysis of submissions and updating strategy	3 June – 17 June
Board meeting – approval updated strategy	Week beginning 23 June

s9(2)(f)(iv)

10 Closer to the date, we will provide you with talking points to support you at the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee. We will also work with your office to develop a press release relating to the public consultation on the strategy.

End

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Appendices

- Draft Cabinet paper: *Public consultation – Draft New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) Strategy* [attached as separate document]