



Scan for  
NZSL name



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

## Briefing

<b>Date:</b>	19 March 2025
<b>For:</b>	Hon Louise Upston, Minister for Disability Issues
<b>File reference:</b>	REP/WHK/25/3/015
<b>Security level:</b>	In confidence

## NZSL Strategy Refresh: Approval to lodge

### Purpose

This briefing provides you with the final drafts of the New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) Strategy and Cabinet paper and seeks your approval to lodge these documents.

To be considered by Cabinet Social Outcomes (SOU) Committee on Wednesday 2 April, the attached Cabinet paper and Strategy need to be lodged by 10am on Thursday 27 March.

### Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- Approve** the attached Cabinet paper and draft NZSL Strategy for lodging.
- Note** that the Cabinet paper and Strategy need to be lodged by 10am Thursday 27 March to be considered by SOU Committee on Wednesday 2 April.

**Yes / No**

**Noted**

- c) **Note** that you will shortly receive an aide-mémoire to support you at Cabinet SOU Committee.

**Noted**



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Hon Louise Upston

Minister for Disability Issues

Date **22/03/23**



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Sheryl Pinckney

Group Manager, Partnerships and Stewardship  
(pp Jasmine Lindsay, Acting Group Manager)

Date 19 March 2025

*Actions for private secretaries:*

# NZSL Strategy Refresh: Approval to lodge

## Background

- 1 The New Zealand Sign Language Act 2006 (the NZSL Act) declared New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) to be an official language of New Zealand.
- 2 However, the Deaf community still struggle to be able to access and use NZSL in everyday interactions. These challenges impact on the ability of Deaf children, young people, and adults to fully participate in society.
- 3 The longstanding nature of these issues indicate that something different is needed if the situation for Deaf people is going to change.

## The refreshed NZSL Strategy and Cabinet paper

- 4 The NZSL Board has refreshed the NZSL Strategy to address these longstanding issues. The draft Strategy aims to set in motion the change needed across government agencies and the public to enable Deaf people to fully participate in society using NZSL.
- 5 s9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED]
- 6 Before it finalises the Strategy, the Board would like to conduct a six-week public consultation period on the draft strategy.
- 7 The attached paper seeks Cabinet's permission for this consultation process to occur, commencing 22 April 2025, and ending 2 June 2025.

## Timings and next steps

- 8 To be considered at by Cabinet Social Outcomes (SOU) Committee on Wednesday 2 April, the attached Cabinet paper and Strategy need to be lodged by 10am on Thursday 27 March at the latest.
- 9 We will shortly provide you with an aide-mémoire to support your attendance at Cabinet SOU Committee.
- 10 Closer to the time, we will also work with your office on communications relating to the public consultation process, including a press release (and / or video).

11 The following table provides the ambitious timeframe for the strategy:

Key action or event	Possible timeframe
<b>Cabinet paper one: Approval to consult</b>	
Cabinet paper and draft Strategy provided seeking approval to lodge	Wednesday 19 March
Cabinet paper and draft Strategy lodged	Thursday 27 March
SOU Committee considers draft Strategy / approval to consult	Wednesday 2 April
Cabinet confirmation of Cabinet SOU Committee decision	Monday 7 April
<b>Public Consultation process</b>	
Public and stakeholder consultation (6 weeks)	22 April – 2 June
Analysis of submissions and updating Strategy	3 June – 17 June
Board meeting – approval updated Strategy	Week 23 June

s9(2)(f)(iv)

## End

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## Appendices

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