



Scan for  
NZSL name



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

OIA0515



26 August 2025

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 30 July 2025 to the Ministry of Disabled People - Whaikaha (Whaikaha), requesting information about decisions the New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) Board made on the implementation of NZSL interpreter standards using NAATI.

I have answered each part of your request in turn.

- **I have a question regarding the statement: "The Board made some decisions on the implementation of NZSL interpreter standards using NAATI." What exactly does this mean, and what will it look like in practice?**

The National Australian Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) framework was adopted by the New Zealand Government in 2018 for other language interpreters wishing to work in the public sector.

The NZSL Board has agreed to trial parts of the standards and certification framework developed by NAATI. The NZSL Board is working with Whaikaha to finalise details and will seek advice from sector stakeholders on implementation of these standards. More information will be released once it is available.

The decision to progress with NAATI is a small and beginner step to establishing standards for NZSL interpreters.

The NZSL Board intends to use the next three years to review progress and consider the next steps to further strengthen standards such as implementing testing or other tools.

- **Why was this route chosen instead of developing a local, New Zealand-led system, one that reflects your own cultural and linguistic realities,**



**including the significance of Te Reo Māori and the unique needs of NZSL interpreters?**

The NZSL Board opted to pursue this course of action due to the high costs associated with implementing a more bespoke solution. Whaikaha and the NZSL Board will have conversations with NAATI to explore options that are relevant to NZSL interpreters.

- **Where do the funds go after the NZSL interpreters have paid NAATI? Do they go to Australia or are they reinvested back into Aotearoa?**

This part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as this is not information Whaikaha holds. NAATI does publish its own annual reports and financial statements, which may be of interest to you. These can be found online here: [About Us - NAATI](#)

Please note, as part of its commitment towards increasing transparency, Whaikaha intends to make the information contained in this letter, and any attached documents, available to the wider public. Whaikaha will do this by publishing this letter on our website. Your personal details will be deleted, and no information that would identify you as the requestor will be released.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, or if you are seeking any further information, please contact [OIA\\_requests@whaikaha.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_requests@whaikaha.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui



Emma Williams  
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