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MEDIA RELEASE

“The hoo-ha is hōhā” leave the hīkoi ‘til this is over

It’s understood that a hīkoi dubbed the Sovereign Hīkoi of Truth (SHOT) intends to travel from Rotorua to Waitangi today against the recommendations of Iwi.

“Ngāti Whātua encourages all whānau to stay home during these lockdowns and only travel if essential with an exemption. We’re not against the hīkoi, only the timing,” says Dame Naida Glavish.

Ngāti Whātua support the Te Hana Checkpoints and keeping Covid-19 Delta in Tāmaki Makaurau. “If you do not have an exemption from the Ministry of Health or Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment then do not expect to cross the border,” says Antony Thompson, Chief of Operations for Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua.

The group behind the hīkoi claim to represent an organisation called the Mauri Nation. The group is unknown to Ngāti Whātua and appears to hold anti-vaccination views. “There is enough pressure on what Ngāti Whātua are doing at the checkpoints. This hīkoi is unhelpful, supported by people who are anti-vaccination,” says Glavish.

The Ngāti Whātua position is clear, there are now four confirmed cases in Te Taitokerau that are being managed and contained as best as possible. Ngāti Whātua sees the hikoi as unnecessary pressure on a region struggling to get to targeted vaccination levels amongst Māori. It could generate more cases, more completely avoidable cases.

“Any hikoi in this lockdown puts in jeopardy the mahi Ngāti Whātua are currently undertaking. Have your hoo-ha when this is done and dusted, right now the hoo-ha is hōhā, “ says Glavish.

At present there are four confirmed Covid-19 Delta cases in Te Taitokerau, Ngāti Whātua would like to keep it to that number and are working with Iwi and Māori Hauora providers to do so. The Te Hana Checkpoints have been in operation since August and maintained through a partnership between Ngāti Whātua, New Zealand Police and the New Zealand Defence Force.

ENDS

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