

MEDIA STATEMENT

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CELEBRATING A MONUMENTAL MILESTONE - 500,000 HOURS OF MĀORI LANGUAGE BROADCASTING

Te Māngai Pāho Board Chair, Jacqui Te Kani, CNZM, has hailed a celebration to mark more than half a million hours of Maori language broadcasting as a 'monumental milestone' that the entire country could be proud of.

Speaking at Parliament this evening, she said the achievement had occurred in less than 15 years and comprised 14,000 hours of television programming, whilst a staggering 500,000 hours had emanated from Māori radio programming.

"Despite our detractors, te reo Māori on the airways has triumphed and secured a future in which all New Zealanders can hear and use te reo Māori as an ordinary part of their daily lives."

She said that over the years, Māori radio had steadily grown its capacity and today, stations were funded by Te Māngai Pāho to be on air for a minimum of 18 hours every day with at least eight hours of Māori language broadcast a day, seven days a week.

"With the backing of Te Whakaruruhau o Ngā Reo Irirangi, the Māori radio industry group, the iwi radio network has matured to become the predominant deliverer of te reo Māori hours for broadcast."

Despite its short time on air, she said Māori Television had also won itself a reputation for its quality programming and innovative coverage of national events like ANZAC Day.

"The fact that viewers seek out television as an important source for programming that shows culture, history and language is evidence that Māori Television is well down the path to becoming a permanent fixture in New Zealand's broadcasting environment."

She added that the recent launch of Māori Television's second channel TE REO on the Freeview and SKY platforms had further expanded opportunities to beam cutting-edge te reo programming directly into every household.

"All these developments have radically transformed the face of broadcasting in this country and the very nature of how we are seen and perceived globally."

Looking to the future, she said the challenge for Te Māngai Pāho, broadcasters and programme makers was to build on and surpass what had been achieved.

“We must not be distracted from ensuring that we continue to maintain the language and cultural values unique to our country - and which stamp our sense of national identity in a global environment.”

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