



Library and Information Association
of New Zealand Aotearoa
Te Rau Herenga O Aotearoa

Hon Brooke Van Velden

Minister Internal Affairs

B.vanVelden@ministers.govt.nz

May 24, 2024

Tēnā koe Hon Brooke Van Velden,

Fakaalofa lahi atu, kia orana, ko na mauri, mālō e lelei, mālō ni, ni sa bula, tālofa, talofa lava, warm greetings to you,

On May 9, Te Rua Mahara o te Kawa Kāwanatanga Archives New Zealand announced that Te Maeatanga Digitisation programme will close on 30 June 2024.

The digitisation programme has been running since 2017 with almost two million images of significance to Aotearoa being digitised and made available online to the public. This commitment to digitising was acknowledged in [The Archives NZ Strategy to 2057](#).

This strategy acknowledges the importance of archives and records. They provide real value and insight to New Zealanders about our country, its people, places, and history.

The closure of the Te Maeatanga Digitisation programme will leave four million records undigitised. New Zealand's library association, LIANZA, is deeply concerned about this announcement, especially the reduced ability to provide New Zealanders with digital access to their history and records.

By ceasing the Te Maeatanga Digitisation programme, New Zealanders cannot easily access records held by Archives New Zealand unless they travel to Archive NZ's reading rooms to access physical documents.

Digitising the historic public record and modernising access to Archive records is a strategic focus that brings New Zealand's archival processes into the 21st century. Digitisation and digital access are methods for enabling public accountability for the executive powers of Government through access to the public record. New Zealand Citizenry in the 21st century depends on accessible archives, and closing Te Maeatanga Digitisation programme negatively impacts public accountability and diminishes civic engagement.

The need for the public to physically travel to four regional offices will continue to privilege those few with the physical and financial means to do so. LIANZA believe this is a step backward in the Archivist's statutory duty to facilitate public access to public archives.

LIANZA believe that future generations of New Zealanders should have the right of access to digital records and archival information.



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LIANZA strongly encourages the Minister to support the commitment to the Archives 2057 strategy and promote bringing archives to the people through enhanced online access and growth in digital holdings.

Ngā mihi nui kia koe Minister, ma le fa'aaloalo lava, nuku noa nga,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rich Misilei".

Richard Misilei

President

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