



**The  
Aotearoa  
Circle**

Mā te Kaitiakitanga  
ko te Tōnuitanga  
Prosperity Through  
Guardianship

**Visitor Economy  
Adaptation Roadmap  
Leadership Group 2022**



## Penny Nelson | Co-Chair

**Director-General, Department of Conservation**

Penny Nelson started the role of Director-General on 1 November 2021. Before starting at DOC Penny was Deputy Director-General for Biosecurity NZ. Penny joined the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) in 2018 as Deputy Director-General Policy and Trade, where she led work shaping the future of the primary sector – enhancing the sector’s sustainability and growth. Penny has worked across a range of areas of government, including the environment, economic development, and social development. Prior to joining MPI, Penny was Deputy Secretary at Ministry for the Environment where she was responsible for climate change, the marine environment, environmental reporting, and the science system. She has also worked within the private and science sectors including roles at DairyNZ, the Sustainable Business Council, and Landcare Research.



## Laurissa Cooney | Co-Chair

**Board Member, Air New Zealand**

Laurissa is a director of Air New Zealand and also an independent director of Goodman NZ, the Chair of Tourism Bay of Plenty, an Independent Non-Executive Director for AWF Madison Group, a Steering Committee Member of Chapter Zero New Zealand and a Trustee on the Charitable Investment Trust for Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki. Ms Cooney is of Te Āti Hau Nui a Pāpā Rangī (Whanganui) descent.

Her work in the regenerative space is inspired by the Whakatauki (proverb) from her iwi:

“Ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au.” Translation: “I am the river and the river is me”.



## Takurua Mutu | Co-Chair

**Director, MDA Experiences**

Tak is the co-owner and director of the MDA Group operating in the tourism and events sector as well as business consultancy. Parent company, MDA Experiences, is an industry leader for both luxury and adventure tourism, which has a strong focus on Māori Business Development. It employs almost 60 staff over three subsidiary companies.

In 2019, Tak won the University of Auckland Aotearoa Young Māori Business Lead-ers Award and the New Zealand Māori Tourism Award. Having been in tourism for almost 20 years, Tak has spent his working life in the industry undertaking a wide range of roles from front line hosting and tour guiding to business development and marketing management.



## Claire Walker

**Chief People & Culture Officer, SkyCity Entertainment Group**

Claire was appointed General Manager Human Resources in August 2016 and Chief People and Culture Officer in April 2019. She is responsible for leading the development and implementation of best practice human resource strategy across SkyCity. She also has executive responsibility for sustainability at SkyCity.

Prior to joining SkyCity in 2016, Claire was Chief People Officer at Sanford Limited where she established the human resources function and led the sustainability and integrated reporting activities for the organisation and, prior to that, Claire led the human resources and employee relations function for the SkyCity Auckland business. Claire has also held senior human resource roles with Carter Holt Harvey and Downer after several years working in the education sector.

## Grant Webster

**CEO, Tourism Holdings Ltd**

Grant was appointed to the position of Chief Executive Officer in December 2008. Grant is currently the Deputy Chair of the TIA (Tourism Industry Aotearoa) Board, on the Government working group on responsible camping, and was a co-Chair for the New Zealand Government’s Tourism Futures Taskforce in 2020.

Grant’s background includes senior executive roles across the tourism, hospitality, gaming and retail industries, where he held Director and general management roles within the retail sector before moving into tourism. Grant holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from Victoria University and has completed executive studies at the Insead Advanced Management Programme in Fontainebleau and Monash University, Melbourne Australia.



## Heather Kirkham

**General Manager, Tourism, MBIE**

Heather Kirkham has recently been appointed as the General Manager, Tourism. She previously worked in a range of senior roles in both the public and private sectors, including the UK and New Zealand Treasuries.

She has been an economic advisor to the then-Minister of Finance, Hon Dr Michael Cullen, and held senior roles at Contact Energy and NZX. Immediately prior to this role she was a Director at MBIE responsible for the establishment of Regional Skills Leadership Groups.







## Jo Allison

### General Manager Corporate Services at Ngāi Tahu Holdings

Jo was appointed General Manager Corporate Services in September 2020. She leads corporate services delivery for Ngāi Tahu Holdings and the Office of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and has executive responsibility for Ngāi Tahu Tourism. Prior to joining Ngāi Tahu Holdings Jo was Chief Operating Officer at Tourism Holdings (thl), and Chief Operating Officer at Spark Digital. Jo is a Board Member on several tourism entities, and a member of the Regional Skills Leadership Group for Otago. reputation.



## John Morgan

### CEO, NIWA

John has extensive senior executive and governance experience in public and private sector organisations covering a range of markets and activities including business, science, education and sport. His science sector roles have included Chief Executive of AgriQuality Ltd, Executive Director of Orica New Zealand Ltd, Chairman of New Zealand Pharmaceuticals Ltd and he is currently Chairman of Science New Zealand. John is passionate about the role science can play in transforming New Zealand's economy, environment, society and global reputation.



## John Crocker

### National Secretary, UNITE

John is the National Secretary of Unite Union, a hospitality union, and is an enrolled barrister and solicitor of the High Court. He has extensive experience advocating for hospitality workers individually and collectively.

He has worked at Unite since 2013 and also took a sabbatical to work for the NZ Council of Trade Unions as the Policy Analyst - Health and Safety. He worked on the Holidays Act Taskforce and previously worked in hospitality himself.



## Kiri Goulter

### Director, Regional Tourism NZ

Kiri has 20+ years' experience in tourism and economic development and specialises in destination management. Kiri is currently the Director of Destination Management for Regional Tourism New Zealand (RTNZ) supporting the adoption of a destination management approach across NZ's regions. Prior to RTNZ, Kiri led the development of MBIE's Destination Management Guidelines. She was the CEO of Hamilton & Waikato Tourism and held tourism development roles with Tourism New Zealand and Enterprise Northland. Kiri is a board member of Waikato Institute of Technology, Trustee of Te Awa River Ride, and was previously deputy chair of Te Waka, the Waikato's Regional Economic Development Agency.



## Les Morgan

### Chief Operating Officer of Sudima Hotels/Hind Management

Les Morgan is the Chief Operating Officer of Sudima Hotels/Hind Management. The Group has an annual turnover in excess of \$60m NZD and is currently experiencing a significant expansion including several new Hotels under development. Sudima Hotels was awarded New Zealand's Supreme Tourism accolade in 2019.

His background includes experience in Hotels in both the UK and NZ with several of the world's leading Hotel brands. Les is a previous winner of the Westpac 'Excellence in Leadership', 'NZ Hotel -Senior Hotel Executive of the year' and the recipient of Tourism Industry Aoteroa's, 'Industry Champion'.



## Rebecca Ingram

### CEO, TIA

Rebecca Ingram was appointed to the role of Chief Executive at Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) in March 2022. Rebecca joined TIA from seven years at Tourism New Zealand (TNZ), where she held various roles including General Manager of New Zealand and Government Relations. She was previously responsible for TNZ's PR and Major Events, leading a global team across 10 markets in showcasing the best of what New Zealand has to offer to visitors.

Rebecca has 20 years of leadership, marketing and communications expertise, with proven experience delivering successful business strategies, engagement and advocacy programmes and leading complex transformation in her time at both Spark (then Telecom) and Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand.

Rebecca is excited to be joining TIA at a critical time in the tourism industry's history and is looking forward to playing an active role in the re-emergence of tourism for the benefit of Aotearoa.



## René De Monchy

**CEO, Tourism New Zealand**

René de Monchy joined Tourism New Zealand in August 2015 bringing 20 years' global experience in consumer-led businesses including local and international marketing roles for Fonterra and Heineken and Asia Pacific Breweries in Singapore.

René was appointed Chief Executive of Tourism New Zealand in April 2021. Before this, René was Tourism New Zealand's Director Commercial. In this role René led a team across 15 offices in 14 countries responsible for identifying key markets and audiences to target for travel to New Zealand. René also led the development of Tourism New Zealand's Aviation Strategy to guide partnerships with international airlines including establishing Memorandum of Understandings with major airlines including Air New Zealand.



## Stephen England-Hall

**CEO, RealNZ**

Stephen is CEO of RealNZ, a leading recreation, tourism and ski company which includes Cardrona Alpine Resort, Treble Cone and the International Antarctic Centre. With experiences spanning the TSS Earnslaw in Queenstown, Milford Sound, Doubtful Sound and Stewart Island, RealNZ's ambition is to do business for good, creating enduring value through conservation that is enabled by tourism.

Prior to joining RealNZ (formerly the Wayfare Group), Stephen was chief executive of Tourism New Zealand and has held a number of prominent roles in digital marketing, data and tech companies around the world including CEO of Loyalty NZ, Global CRO of Syncapse in Canada, and CEO of Razorfish in the UK.

Stephen also holds a number of board positions including: The Aotearoa Circle and FigureNZ, and has served on boards in New Zealand and the UK, including on the Cambridge University Advisory, Tourism Industry Aotearoa and NZ Story.

## Secretariat | PwC



## Annabell Chartres

**Partner, Sustainability & Climate Change Leader, PwC New Zealand**

As the Sustainability & Climate Change Leader at PwC New Zealand, Annabell is driven by finding innovative business solutions to address sustainability and climate change challenges. She is focused on supporting public and private sector organisations to incorporate a sustainability lens into their business strategies, and consider and respond to the implications of climate change.

Annabell brings more than 20 years' experience in corporate and business strategy development, operating model design and organisational transformation across a range of industries and geographies. She has a deep understanding of the interaction between the corporate, technical and functional units of an organisation, and has extensive experience in supporting clients to solve problems and deliver innovative outcomes during times of significant organisational changes and disruption.

Annabell's focus areas include: sustainability and zero carbon strategy; climate risk disclosure; sustainable supply chain; ESG materiality assessments and ESG due diligence.



## Dr Victoria Hatton

**Director, Sustainability & Climate Change, PwC New Zealand**

A passionate net zero strategist and systems thinker, Victoria has a deep desire to work alongside clients as they navigate their way through the complex climate change conversation and challenges.

Victoria brings over a decade of experience working in climate change adaptation and mitigation, both in New Zealand and internationally. She works with a range of clients including government departments, large and medium sized organisations, local councils, and charities. She has a PhD in geography, using community participation in local planning decision making.

Victoria also specialises in agri-food production and technology, drawing on her involvement working for the New Zealand Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Research Centre and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation in Rome.

Victoria is passionate about creating a better future through the work she does. She actively challenges others to do the best they can to limit their impact on the climate. Unfortunately the world is warming, and Victoria strives to be able to look her children in the eyes and know she has made a difference to the future world they will grow up in.