



WAKATU

INCORPORATION

Kerensa Johnston appointed CEO of Wakatū Incorporation

Announcement to stakeholders

Tēnā koutou katoa,

Tangata ako ana i te whare, te turanga ki te marae, tau ana

It is my great pleasure to announce that our current General Counsel and Company Secretary, Kerensa Johnston, has been appointed CEO of Wakatū Incorporation, a role which has been vacant since our last CEO, Keith Palmer, retired in 2013.

Over the last year the Wakatū Board of Directors has been reviewing all aspects of our organisation in order to strengthen its infrastructure and capability requirements and take advantage of future opportunities, both locally and in international markets. The decision to fill the Wakatū CEO position was made as part of this review to ensure accountability and alignment across our subsidiaries and associated entities – Kono NZ LP, Whenua and AMO (Corporate Services, which includes Legal and Manaaki) and Innovation.

Kerensa will continue in her current role as Wakatū Incorporation's General Counsel with overall responsibility for legal and regulatory matters. In that role she has managed a complex and ground-breaking legal challenge against the Crown in which our whānau asked the courts to recognise that the Crown breached its trustee and fiduciary duties to the customary Māori land owners of Nelson, Motueka and Golden Bay. The Supreme Court has yet to deliver its decision in this case.

We are very proud of the fact that Kerensa is a graduate of the Wakatū Associate Director programme, which is focussed on developing governance and leadership skills in our upcoming leaders. Her success demonstrates the effectiveness of this programme and the importance we place on supporting people to develop their talents and achieve goals.

Kerensa is a lawyer with a background in commercial private practice and public law roles. She has worked in corporate law, environmental law and property law as well as the law relating to public law and constitutional issues, including the Treaty of Waitangi and international law.

Kerensa worked for the Court of Appeal in Wellington and Wellington law firm, Buddle Findlay, before moving to London where she was in-house counsel for Westminster City, the largest local authority in the United Kingdom. On her return to New Zealand, Kerensa joined the Faculty of Law at the University of Auckland before establishing a private legal practice in the Bay of Plenty and Nelson. She joined Wakatū Incorporation as its General Counsel and Company Secretary in 2012.

Kerensa has held various voluntary and community-based roles, and has a strong interest in issues of social justice and equality. She is looking forward to working alongside owners, staff and stakeholders to further develop the full potential of Wakatū.

The Board congratulates, and is delighted to welcome Ms Johnston to this vital role.

Ngā mihi nui,

Paul Morgan

Chair, Wakatū Incorporation

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