



Interserve

HONOURING OUR  
BI-CULTURAL HERITAGE





## Our New Look

**A few years ago, and following a much longer journey of exploration, Interserve NZ was gifted the name 'Nga Ringa Ringa Atawhai' which means 'Hands serving with grace'.**

We believe as Kiwis we have in our cultural context Taonga, treasure, which aligns us more with the cultures and peoples we seek to reach out to. Therefore it was only fitting that this Taonga be represented in our public presentation.

When Interserve International launched a new logo and 'look' two years ago, we were happy to take the symbolic weave of the new logo and use it creatively to honour our bi-cultural identity in Aotearoa NZ. Thus you will notice in the background of our designs a stylised weave, embracing our own unique heritage.

## Raranga (the art of weaving)

The weave in Maori culture is a symbol of togetherness and unity. The traditional song of the weavers emphasise the importance of each and every one, the stories of the ones of the past, bringing them into the present, and carrying them into the future. It ensures the people remain strong and memories are kept alive. These memories hold strands of information, knowledge and insight, and when woven together create wholeness.

Janet points to the weave on the wall in the Interserve office. Woven together by Council and staff at a recent Hui, and representing our individual stories, the weave shows how we all fit into the greater story of Interserve. These stories include remembrance of partners and those who have gone before; the ragged edges symbolise that we are part of a story that continues.





## Interserve NZ Kaupapa Māori Hui

### BEGINNING WITH THE WOMEN

**During our recent day hosted by the people of Nga Hau e Wha Marae in Papatoetoe and Matua Fred Astle, so much resonance was offered to enrich our understanding, our learning, and our story. And it began with the women...**

When as manuhiri (visitors) we approach a marae, the sacred ground of local tangata whenua, the first role in the pōwhiri, the welcoming ceremony, lies with the kaikaranga. The kaikaranga, a woman of tangata whenua, calls manuhiri onto the marae. If she chooses not to do this, no one can approach. The feminine voice, so I am told, breaks open the spiritual realm to provide a pathway for encounter.

The women of the manuhiri then lead their group on in response to the invitation – the oldest women in front. They too have a kaikaranga, a woman calling her response to the hosts on behalf of the group.

These older women who are past childbearing age, as well as those who have been unable to have children of their own, are known as ‘wharengaro’ (barren house). They have respected status within the tribe, however, because they carry its whakapapa (genealogy) in their memory.

With Interserve having such a long history grounded in the vision, authority and courage of women (mana wahine), who led our community into its future – women who in our first one hundred years were single and thus physically ‘childless’ – there is a wonderful affirmation echoing here of the spiritual heritage they opened and nurtured for us. Without their leadership no man could now stand to speak.

This is not a note for exclusion but a reminder to firstly value our foremothers, to hear their voices and to honour the space they have opened for us. We have such a rich feminine history! It is important to know this history and DNA and to keep telling their stories so that they remain alive in our collective memory and keep shaping our journey forward. And then we must underestimate no one, for we all have a role to play in this wonderful unfolding story of ours.

**Rosemary Dewerse** | Chair, NZ Council

*With acknowledgement to Jim Couch who observed the kaikaranga resonance.*



**For the past few years we as Interserve NZ have been on a bi-cultural journey.**

We seek to grow our understanding of Te Ao Maori so that we become genuinely people of Aotearoa NZ who can point to Rangatiratanga o te Atua – the Kingdom of God – via the taonga (treasures) of this land which we carry within us and our community. We also seek to create an environment within our midst where tangata

whenua (our – as well as other – indigenous peoples) feel welcome and able to fully participate in God's mission – whether as individuals or in other, more communal expressions and ways. We believe this is a clear implication of the biblical imperative for all of God's people to be on the missional journey.



**Interserve**

To read more about our '*Bi-cultural Journey*', please contact the office and ask for the '*Bi-cultural Council discussion and proposal*' to be emailed to you.