

Chair
Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee

SUPPORTING A BID TO HOST THE WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF CONGRESS 2023

Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks agreement to support a bid by Deaf Aotearoa to host the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) Congress (the Congress) in New Zealand in 2023.

Executive summary

- 2 On 31 October 2018 the WFD called for bids to host the Congress in 2023. Deaf Aotearoa has proposed that they lead a bid for New Zealand to host the event. Deaf Aotearoa are the largest national organisation representing the voice of Deaf¹ people in New Zealand and are the Government's only recognised Disabled Peoples Organisation (DPO) for the Deaf community. As such, they are also New Zealand's representative member of the WFD.
- 3 The WFD Congress is the largest international event specifically for the Deaf community. Hosting bids for the WFD Congress are due by 20 January 2019. The Congress would have a number of positive impacts for New Zealand including: reinforcing our reputation as an international leader in disability rights, becoming more Deaf-friendly, and raising awareness of Deaf culture and New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL). It would contribute to us meeting our national and international human rights obligations, and align with this Government's priority to improve the wellbeing of New Zealanders. It may also contribute to New Zealand tourism, particularly in the area of access tourism and support this Government's commitment to increase the pace of improvements in accessibility.
- 4 Deaf Aotearoa has communicated that it will require financial support from the Government in order to organise the hosting of the bid without knowledge of this support. They seek funding support from the Government but expect of this using revenue from the event. s 9(2)(b)(ii) [REDACTED] nnot portion
- 5 A letter of support from the Government is required by the WFD as part of the bid. I therefore seek your agreement to support the bid and provide a letter on behalf of Government reflecting our support.
- 6 The winning bid to host the WFD Congress will be announced at the next WFD Congress, 22-23 July 2019. If the bid is successful I will work with relevant Ministers to consider the next steps for progressing Government support.

The WFD Congress is the largest international event specifically for the Deaf community

- 7 The WFD is an international non-governmental organisation that acts as a peak body for national associations of Deaf people, with a focus on Deaf people who use sign language, and their family and friends. The WFD includes 135 national

¹ When writing about deafness, many writers use a capital D when referring to aspects of [deaf culture](#). They will use a lower-case "d" when speaking solely about the hearing loss.

associations, representing 72 million Deaf people worldwide, collectively using over 300 sign languages.

- 8 WFD Congresses have occurred every four years since 1951 and are significant milestones for the international Deaf community. The Congress involves 4-5 days of presentations, panels, a large expo and an extensive social programme, including a showcase of Deaf theatre groups and performers from around the world. The Congresses have historically attracted upwards of 2,000 delegates from more than 150 countries. In addition, they have also attracted over 1,000 additional members of the Deaf community who attend the associated Congress events.

There is an opportunity for New Zealand to host the Congress in 2023, and Deaf Aotearoa has proposed that they lead a bid to do so

- 9 On 31 October 2018 the WFD issued a call for bids to host the 2023 Congress, with proposals due by 20 January 2019.

Deaf Aotearoa is a suitable organisation to lead the production of a bid and host the Congress

- 10 Deaf Aotearoa has proposed that it organise and host the Congress in Auckland in 2023. Deaf Aotearoa is a DPO, meaning it is membership-led and has an advocacy role, as well as being a service provider. As the only recognised DPO for Deaf people, Deaf Aotearoa has a formal role with Government in relation to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
- 11 Deaf Aotearoa is a credible organisation and has the experience and capability to lead the organisation and hosting of the Congress. They are the largest organisation directly supporting Deaf people in New Zealand, including Māori Deaf, and the only one large enough to absorb a significant proportion of the costs (and financial risks) associated with hosting the Congress.
- 12 There are also a number of other groups that support Deaf people. The Congress is an opportunity to bring these groups together, as well as the broader Deaf community in New Zealand. Appendix One provides more detail on Deaf Aotearoa, other groups and the Deaf community more generally.

Hosting the Congress would provide a number of benefits for the Deaf community and New Zealand's international reputation

- 13 The New Zealand Deaf community is relatively small. There are approximately 20,000 NZSL users in New Zealand (Census 2013), of whom it is estimated 4,000 are Deaf. Most Deaf people were born deaf or become deaf early in life. Those who identify with the Deaf community have a strong sense of identity as Deaf people and a shared common language in NZSL. Deaf culture has its own language, values, behavioural norms, and traditions.
- 14 Hosting the Congress would be an opportunity for the New Zealand Deaf community to come together to reflect on their progress, current issues, challenges, and future direction to ensure they remain a strong community in the future. In particular, the Congress would:
 - raise awareness of the opportunities, issues and needs of Deaf people in New Zealand, including Māori Deaf and the ethnic Deaf community²

² The ethnic Deaf community faces communication and cultural barriers, challenges accessing resources, and challenges in achieving successful integration and settlement outcomes in addition to the challenges presented by a hearing impairment.

- promote NZSL (which is a minority and threatened language) as a valued taonga, and New Zealand’s reputation as a leader in disability rights, being one of the few countries to give its sign language official status (refer NZSL Act 2006)
- enhance attendees’ appreciation and pride in Deaf culture, strengthen understanding of language rights, and provide them with the impetus to drive social change in New Zealand and overseas
- be easier for Deaf people in the Pacific and South East Asia to attend (previous Congresses have historically been out of reach geographically³ and financially, particularly for Deaf people from the Pacific) and engaging with these groups would align well with our Pacific Reset
- create opportunities for Māori Deaf to play a key role in leading and hosting as part of the Congress
- contribute to us meeting our national and international obligations, for example Article 9 of the CRPD (regarding accessibility)
- align with key Government priorities and commitments, such as improving the wellbeing of New Zealanders, increasing accessibility, the New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026, and the NZSL Strategy 2018-2023
- give key Government agencies an opportunity to highlight their interest in the wellbeing of people who are Deaf, and in reducing the incidence and impacts of deafness and hearing impairments
- have a positive tourism impact (delegates and families or friends accompanying them, plus other visitors such as interpreters, teachers, researchers etc.) and provide an opportunity to further accessible tourism.

The time is right for New Zealand to host the Congress

- 15 In 2016 the WFD Board visited New Zealand during NZSL Week. The WFD Board reported that it was extremely impressed by what it saw here and felt honoured to be involved. They then invited a New Zealand Deaf community leader, Victoria Manning, to be the keynote speaker at their WFD Conference⁴ in 2017.
- 16 In June 2018 at the United Nations Conference of State Parties held in New York Colin Allen, President of the WFD, raised the opportunity with me for New Zealand to host the Congress.
- 17 Mark Berry (a New Zealander) is currently the President of the WFD Youth Council, so the Congress offers a unique opportunity to profile our Deaf leadership, and put a spotlight on key issues impacting disabled youth, such as employment.
- 18 The international Deaf community has recently shown significant interest in New Zealand, particularly due to the NZSL Act 2006, annual NZSL Week celebration, world renowned “First Signs” service for families and whānau, and establishment of the NZSL Board.

There are some risks in hosting the Congress, but they can be mitigated

- 19 The table below outlines the high level risks and mitigation strategies for hosting the Congress.

Potential risks	Likelihood	Significance of impact	Mitigation strategy
Deaf Aotearoa does not have the capability to organise and host the Congress	Unlikely	High	Deaf Aotearoa is a credible organisation and has experience in organising and hosting large events (e.g. NZSL Week). Tourism NZ has been helpful in supporting Deaf Aotearoa to undertake

³ Congresses are rarely held in the Pacific region (there has been one other in the South Pacific, in Brisbane in 1999).

⁴ WFD Conferences are held every two years lasting around a week with 600-700 delegates, compared to Congresses which are held every four years, lasting two to three weeks, with around 2,000 delegates.

			the feasibility planning and have agreed with the Auckland Convention Bureau to fund and facilitate the WFD's visit to New Zealand to assess New Zealand's capability to run the Congress.
High ticket cost (\$1699) is a barrier to attendance, particularly for low income or those from the Pacific	Likely	High	If the hosting bid is successful, the Ministry of Social Development will undertake further work with Deaf Aotearoa to support low-income groups to attend the Congress. I will work with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade on ways to support Pacific people to attend the Congress.
No significant representation of Deaf New Zealanders	Unlikely	High	Deaf Aotearoa will implement a marketing strategy and use its networks to ensure maximum participation.
The biennial Conferences are seen as sufficient	Possible	Medium	Publicity will outline the benefits / added value of the Congress over the Conferences (for example, the exposure and profile gained would be far higher, lasting over two to three weeks)
Public criticism that the Congress would be just a 'talkfest' with no value	Possible	Medium	Publicity will outline the benefits of the Congress. The Congress includes an evaluation survey of participants. Deaf Aotearoa will lead the bid and take full ownership of hosting Congress 2023, with agencies only having a funding and supporting role.
The public may perceive the Government as funding 'limited value' pre and post-Congress activities (such as the Youth Camp, and social functions)	Possible	Medium	Publicity material will make it clear that Government is not associated with this part of the event and is only underwriting the cost of the five day Congress and the two-day General Assembly. The Youth Camp and the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI) Conference will be largely, if not entirely, user-pays.

Support from the New Zealand Government is required as part of a bid

- 20 It is important that the Government of any host nation is supportive of the Congress and of Deaf rights. To this end, the bid guidelines for hosting the Congress require Deaf Aotearoa to provide an indication of relevant Government support, evidenced by a letter of support from both the national Government and the relevant city government (in this case, Auckland Council).
- 21 The winning bid to host the WFD Congress 2023 will be announced at the next WFD Congress, 22-23 July 2019.
- 22 The development of the hosting bid will use a collaborative process led by Deaf Aotearoa, supported by relevant agencies including Tourism New Zealand and the Office of Disability Issues, as well as the Ministries of Business, Innovation and Employment, Foreign Affairs and Trade, Culture and Heritage, and Social Development.
- 23 I would also like to support the attendance of Pacific peoples and propose working with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade on ways to achieve this.

Consultation

- 24 This paper was drafted by the Ministry of Social Development and reflects advice from the Office for Disability Issues. The following agencies have been consulted: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet; Treasury; Tourism New Zealand; the Office for Seniors; Te Puni Kōkiri; Office of Ethnic Communities; Accident Compensation Corporation; and the Ministries of Business, Innovation and Employment; Foreign Affairs and Trade; Culture and Heritage; Youth Development; Women; Pacific Peoples; Health; Transport; Education; Justice; and Housing and Urban Development.

Financial implications

- 25 As a relatively small organisation, Deaf Aotearoa will require financial support from Government to host the WFD Congress to the financial risks and up-front capital required. Hosting bids are due by 20 January 2019, meaning knowledge of Government support is needed prior to decisions being made for Budget 2019.
- 26 Deaf Aotearoa has completed preliminary work with Tourism New Zealand to submit the bid to host the WFD Congress 2023. Tourism New Zealand has funded the completion of a financial feasibility study through their Conference Assistance Programme, and will fund the production of the bid document and other materials, coordinated through the Auckland Convention Bureau.
- 27 Tourism New Zealand and the Auckland Convention Bureau have also jointly agreed to fund and facilitate the site inspection which is likely to occur in March – May 2019. This includes airfares for the inspection team, international and local sign interpreters for the meetings, accommodation, meals, and transportation. These requirements are outlined in the bid guideline document.
- 28 There are a number of avenues that have been explored as options for funding, but each has limitations. These funding options are:
- corporate sponsorship – which cannot be relied on at such an early stage
 - the Major Events Development Fund, administered by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment – which is not currently mandated to support business events, or smaller events such as the Congress
 - Auckland Tourism Events and Economic Development – which could provide some assistance but it is not likely to be more than \$100,000.
- 29 The indicative, up-front cost to Government of providing financial support to Deaf Aotearoa is **s 9(2)(b)(ii)**. Agreement is sought for relevant Ministers to receive further advice on the form and phasing of this commitment. A large proportion of the up-front cost will be recovered from Deaf Aotearoa from revenue from the event.
- 30 If the bid is successful, in the first instance, I have asked the Ministry of Social Development, in consultation with key agencies (Office of Disability Issues, Tourism New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Ministry of Culture and Heritage), to explore options for funding the congress preparation costs and report back.
- 31 I will then work with relevant Ministers to consider the next steps for how financial support from Government will be provided and report back to Cabinet.
- 32 Deaf Aotearoa's preliminary costing (including a comparison with previous Congresses) is provided in Appendix Two.

Human rights implications

- 33 New Zealand hosting the Congress aligns with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993, as well as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Legislative implications

- 34 There are no direct legislative implications.

Regulatory impact and compliance cost statement

- 35 A regulatory impact assessment is not required for this Cabinet paper as it does not contain regulatory proposals.

Gender implications

- 36 At this point, there are no direct gender implications. Further work will be undertaken with Deaf Aotearoa as part of the organisation of the event to encourage proportionate representation and involvement at the Congress.

Disability perspective

- 37 Hosting the Congress is an opportunity to celebrate Deaf culture in New Zealand. It would strengthen people's understanding of the rights of Deaf people, and demonstrate New Zealand's commitment to meet our national and international obligations, in particular to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as to priorities including the New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026 and the NZSL Strategy 2018-2023. It also aligns with our recent commitments to explore options for enhancing accessibility.

Publicity

- 38 Publicity around the Congress will be co-ordinated by Deaf Aotearoa, with support from my office and other key agencies. It will be important to publicise the event as early as possible to ensure we get maximum attendance from overseas and New Zealand.

Proactive release

- 39 I propose to proactively release this paper alongside my announcement of the decisions.

Recommendations

40 It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1 **note** that Deaf Aotearoa has proposed that New Zealand host the WFD Congress in 2023
- 2 **note** that hosting the Congress would provide a number of benefits to the Deaf community and further improve New Zealand's international reputation in this area
- 3 **agree** to support a bid by Deaf Aotearoa to host the Congress in New Zealand
- 4 **note** that Deaf Aotearoa has indicated that, while they are able to absorb a significant proportion of the expenses to host the Congress, they cannot risk bidding without knowledge of financial support from Government for the full cost
- 5 **note** that a large proportion of the costs provided by the Government will be recoverable through Congress registrations
- 6 **note** that should the bid be successful, the Ministry of Social Development, in consultation with key agencies, will consider options for funding and provide advice to relevant Ministers who will report back to Cabinet with the final proposal.
- 7 **authorise** the Minister for Disability Issues to write to Deaf Aotearoa indicating Government support for a bid to host the Congress in 2023

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Carmel Sepuloni
Minister for Disability Issues

Appendix One: The Deaf community in New Zealand

The Deaf community in New Zealand

The New Zealand Deaf community is relatively small – there are approximately 20,000 NZSL users in New Zealand (Census 2013), of whom it is estimated 4,000 are Deaf. Deaf people see themselves as a distinct group within a country and in New Zealand their first language is usually NZSL.

Māori Deaf, those who identify as being Māori and identify with the Deaf community, have specific needs around access to their dual cultures.

Language is an essential part of developing individual and community identity and culture. It also provides a pathway that allows people to connect with others, and access all a society has to offer, including education and employment. As one of our country's official languages, NZSL is a valued taonga of New Zealand, and in particular of the Deaf community. NZSL is an integral part of the Deaf community's realisation of both mana and Deaf culture. Deaf people identify with other Deaf people because of shared experiences – such as communication barriers, issues, their needs and goals⁵. A key issue is equality and access to information in NZSL. A report⁶ commissioned by Deaf Aotearoa identified the failings of mainstream services in acknowledging Deaf people's language, culture and needs, as well as recording the general feelings of disempowerment and isolation which are common in the Deaf community. Despite a normal range of intellectual function, roughly 40 percent of Deaf people receiving service have high social needs, with low literacy and both minor and complex social problems. These people require social support, counselling and habilitation as a result.

Barriers to participation in key life areas can be found across all domains of accessibility – not only in the physical environment, but in transport, information and communications, and in services. Information and communications, for example, are not always easy for Deaf people to access in formats and languages that are right for them. For example, public transport can be inaccessible not in a physical sense, but because information about it is not provided in an accessible format. The Deaf community is working towards meeting these challenges; however there is still a large gap between the reality of life in New Zealand for a Deaf person and their constitutional rights under the NZSL Act 2006 and the CRPD.

Deaf Aotearoa

Deaf Aotearoa is New Zealand's representative member to the World Federation of the Deaf that has 135 country members, representing approximately 70 million Deaf people worldwide. Deaf Aotearoa is a DPO with the mandate to represent the voice of Deaf New Zealanders. Deaf Aotearoa has over 2,000 members who vote for its governing board, all of whom are Deaf. In carrying out its DPO role Deaf Aotearoa also works closely with Deaf communities, government agencies and other organisations to increase awareness, promote NZSL and strengthen the rights of Deaf people.

Deaf Aotearoa also provides services to Deaf people and their families from its 14 offices nationwide. Services include 'First Signs' that provides NZSL support to families of deaf children aged 0-5 years, youth, employment, hauora (health and wellbeing) and information services; and an interpreter booking service. Deaf Aotearoa has coordinated NZSL Week each May to celebrate their language and culture. Deaf Aotearoa's annual revenue is \$7 million, and as a registered charity and not-for-profit organisation all Deaf Aotearoa profits go back to the Deaf community by way of sponsorship, donations and new or improved services.

5 See: <http://deaf.org.nz/about-us/community-goals>

6 See: <http://deaf.org.nz/resources/deaf-way-report>

Other Deaf community groups

Deaf Action

Deaf Action identifies themselves as a Disabled Persons Organisation that has been established to “advance the human rights of D/deaf/Hard of Hearing people in Aotearoa New Zealand.”

Deaf Action advocates and lobbies together with Deaf New Zealanders to uphold their human rights to government, public and private institutions, service providers, and disability service providers locally, nationally and internationally.

Deaf Action’s ‘objective’ is to ensure services that Deaf people use are accessible and accountable. Deaf Action is committed to the Treaty of Waitangi and to access and equality for all Deaf people in NZ.

Deaf Children New Zealand

The objective of Deaf Children NZ (DCNZ) is to promote, carry out and coordinate measures conducive to the welfare of deaf and hard of hearing children and their families. Much of DCNZ's recent work has focused on ensuring that deaf and hard of hearing children have appropriate access to the education curriculum and social experiences within the schooling environment.

Deaf Clubs

Deaf clubs are available across New Zealand to create connection and inclusion for Deaf communities, where they can socialise in New Zealand Sign Language.

Other organisations in the deaf community

There are other organisations working for, or supporting, deaf and hearing impaired people in New Zealand. These include:

- New Zealand Sign Language Tutors Association
- New Zealand Sign Language Interpreters Association (SLIANZ)
- Tu Tangata Turi o Aotearoa
- National Foundation for the Deaf
- Magnet Youth
- Hearing House
- Deaf Radio
- Deaf Sports New Zealand (DSNZ)
- Deaf Education Centres
- Kelston Deaf Education Centre
- Van Asch Deaf Education Centre
- Auckland University of Technology
- Victoria University of Wellington

Appendix Two: Costings from recent WFD Congresses, and Deaf Aotearoa cost estimates for New Zealand to host the WFD Congress in 2023

FINANCIAL STATEMENT COMPARISONS NZD 2018	Spain 2007	South Africa 2012	NZ 2023
TOTAL INCOME	s 6(b)	s 6(b)	s 9(2)(b)(ii)
TOTAL EXPENSES			
DEFICIT / SURPLUS			
EXPENSES:		EXPENSES:	EXPENSES:
Ifema Renting		Technical	Venue / Facilities
Room Set-Up At Ifema		Interpreting	Technical
Amplifiers And Audiovisual Materials		Hospitality	Professional Fees - Liaison Officers & Coordinators
Staff And Technical Advice		Social Event	Professional Fees - Interpreters
Interpreters Of Spoken Languages And Hostesses		Scientific	Social Events - Catered Functions - Variable
Catering & Gourmet Cheques		Organising Committee	Project Management
Other Expenses		Marketing	Complimentary Registrations
Congress Attendees Insurance		Exhibition	WFD Site Visit Including Airfares & Accommodation
Culture Activities		Volunteers	Materials And Delivery - Variable
Nursery		Finance & Registration	Conference Programme
Transport		WFD Youth Camp	Marketing
Security Guard			Payment To The WFD
Developing Countries And Accommodation			Miscellaneous
Congress Team And Guests: Travel, Hotel And Meals			Contingency
Materials And Delivery			
Merchandising			
Communication			
Translations			
Is And Lse Interpreters			
Volunteering			
Meetings Expenses (C.E., C.O., C.S., WFD And Others)			
Is Training For Workers			
Several Arrangement Expenses			
Payment To The WFD			
Bank Expenses			
INCOME		INCOME	INCOME
Grants And Public / Private Support		Sponsorship, Interest & Other	SPONSORSHIP
Support From The Federations		Congress Registrations	CONGRESS REGISTRATIONS
Merchandising 2007		WFD Youth Camp	GALA EVENT
Congress Registrations			COCKTAIL EVENT
Stands			EXHIBITION (arts focus)
Gala Dinner			THEATRE & SOCIAL ACTIVITIES
Ifema Exhibition (Entrance Tickets)			
Theatre (Entrance Tickets)			
Deaf Pub (Entrance Tickets + Drinks)			
ATTENDEES			
Income Per Attendee			
Expense Per Attendee			
DEFICIT / SURPLUS PER ATTENDEE			
Registration Cost Per Attendee - Base			
Registration Cost Per Attendee - Base+Events			