



21 August 2025

Dr Claire Achmad  
Children's Commissioner  
Mana Mokopuna | Children and Young People's Commission  
Sent via email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe Dr Achmad

### **Draft OPCAT Report – Toe Afua Le Taeao Remand Home**

In May 2025, your monitoring team undertook a follow-up visit to the Toe Afua Le Taeao fale remand home (the fale) to monitor the safety and wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi. This followed your monitoring visit to the fale in September 2023 and was completed as part of your role as a National Preventive Mechanism under the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

On 11 July 2025, you provided your draft OPCAT report for the fale to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) and to our partner agency Ka Puta Ka Ora Emerge Aotearoa (Emerge Aotearoa) for joint review and comment. Our joint response to the factual accuracy was shared with your office on 6 August 2025.

Both Oranga Tamariki and Emerge Aotearoa are heartened by your positive findings in the report regarding kaimahi having created a safe and homely feel for the rangatahi. It is especially pleasing to read the monitoring team's observation that the relationship between rangatahi and kaimahi created a feeling of tau, or calmness, in the fale. Further statements from rangatahi expressing that they "trusted kaimahi" and that they were "fun", and that the rangatahi "feel good" living in the fale as a result, are also very encouraging to read.

It is pleasing that the report notes kaimahi found their induction into the fale to be comprehensive, as with the on-going e-learn training modules provided by Emerge Aotearoa. It is also encouraging that the report noted the Oranga Tamariki Tāmaki Makaurau Placements team has planned up-coming training for all remand homes in the region, looking to further upskill all kaimahi and create a stable foundation for consistent practice across all the remand homes.

We acknowledge your finding of documentation for All About Me Plans (AAMPs) being incomplete and note that you also identified some concerns regarding the quality of documentation during your September 2023 visit. We remain committed to resolving these concerns. It is important that any provider-run service receives a current AAMP

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in a timely manner when Oranga Tamariki makes a referral to place a rangatahi in their service.

Clearly communicating to the provider with information about a rangatahi is crucial for helping them to understand and meet the individual needs of a rangatahi while they are in the fale.

All teams within the Youth Justice Services and Residence Care (YJSRC) group are working together to improve the consistency and quality of information provided to partners at the time of admission, which includes the fale and the other remand homes. This involves continuing to work closely with our partners to strengthen the process around information sharing at the point of a referral being made to any community home and participation from the National Homes team at a monthly hui, Te Ropū Katiuia, chaired by remand and bail home providers. This forum is used to provide Oranga Tamariki with feedback and support providers to raise any concerns they have.

It is important to note, however, that there are some instances when referrals are made at short notice after a rangatahi is arrested by the Police, and some information may not be available until the next day or after the weekend. This can also occur when a rangatahi is not previously known to Oranga Tamariki and new information needs to be obtained before this can be given to a provider.

It is positive to see the significant improvement relating to education, as the need to enhance the education programme was noted following the September 2023 visit. We note Mana Mokopuna observed the enthusiasm of rangatahi when working with the kaiako running the Tuilaepa Youth Mentoring Service (TYMS) programme and that the kaiako has built a strong rapport with them.

Another observation made by Mana Mokopuna is that the rangatahi in the fale are supported to speak with whānau and advocates. We note rangatahi can take their calls in an almost soundproof room, and those spoken to by the monitoring team had no concerns around the privacy of their conversations. We also confirm that VOYCE Whakarongo Mai (VOYCE) kaimahi visit the fale fortnightly, and it was good to note that the monitoring team established that rangatahi were aware of VOYCE and how to access advocacy and make complaints generally. This is something kaimahi at the fale strongly support.

We acknowledge the areas in your report that require further work to progress. Of particular importance, this includes Oranga Tamariki supporting all community run remand homes to develop an independent complaints system.

Emerge Aotearoa will undertake to re-establish longer offsite outings with the rangatahi including collaborative planning and food to take to prevent the need to return to the fale. Emerge Aotearoa leadership also acknowledge the requests made by rangatahi for beanbags and will explore alternative seating options. In the past, rangatahi have thrown beanbags and used these to conceal unauthorised and harmful items and therefore are not considered safe.

Emerge Aotearoa and Oranga Tamariki will continue to work to resolve these matters and are proud to partner together to ensure that rangatahi experience significant high quality service provision in the fale.

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I trust you find this information useful. If you have any questions or would like further information, please feel free to contact me, or the Ka Puta Ka Ora Emerge Aotearoa National Director of Services, Gemma Bateman, on [REDACTED]

Nāku noa, nā



Julie Miller  
**General Manager**  
**External Monitoring and Reviews**  
**Oranga Tamariki**



Gemma Bateman  
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**Ka puta Ka Ora Emerge Aotearoa**