

# Meka Whaitiri

Whakatu, Hawke's Bay  
T: 021 226 0634 E: Meka@Kahungunu.iwi.nz

## Biography

I am the current Chief Executive Officer for Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated, a position I have held since 2009. During my time serving the iwi, I have engaged in the commercial, social and cultural developments of iwi, both locally and nationally. Prior to my time with Ngāti Kahungunu, I held senior positions in the Public Service, including as a Senior Advisor in the Minister of Maori Affairs office and a Deputy Secretary in the Department of Labour.

I was raised in Manutuke (Rongowhakaata) and Whakatu by my marae Kohupatiki (Ngāti Kahungunu). My working career began in the shearing gangs on the East Coast and later at Whakatu Freezing Works. My whānau are hard-working manual laborers, and I owe my dedication and work ethic to the values instilled in me from a young age.

Through my life, I have been passionate about sport and health. In particular, I was selected as a national representative for Netball and Softball and I currently am on the governance board for the Waka Ama national board, the Hawke's Bay Netball Board, coach Tamatea Premier netball team and compete in the individual section of IronMaori.

I am committed to building future pathways for our rangatahi, and I have been honoured to have held a life of service to our people, nga iwi Maori.

## Experience

<b>Chief Executive Officer, Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated</b>	<b>2009 - current</b>
Established a Fisheries and Environment Unit; Established a Te Reo, Tikanga and Matauranga Unit; Recruited emerging Ngāti Kahungunu technical advisors; Introduced a 'manaaki ki te tangata' approach based on robust, transparent and accountable organizational processes.	
<b>Senior Adviser, Minister of Māori Affairs Office</b>	<b>2007 - 2009</b>
Facilitated access for many Iwi and National Maori Leaders to senior Ministers, their offices and their Ministries including Treaty Settlements, Education, Fisheries and Maori Development.	
<b>Senior Manager/ Deputy Secretary, Department of Labour</b>	<b>2003 - 2007</b>
Provided strategic advice to the Secretary and Senior Leadership Team; Developed the Maori strategy for the Department of Labour.	
<b>Executive Director, Akem &amp; Associates Management Consultants</b>	<b>2001 - 2003</b>
Developed strategic material and scoping reports for the public and private sector.	
<b>General Manager, Māori Womens' Welfare League (National Office)</b>	<b>1999 - 2001</b>
First appointed General Manager; Restructured the National Office and secured in excess of \$2 million worth of funding.	
<b>Policy Analyst - Senior Manager, Department of Labour</b>	<b>1989 - 1989</b>
Part of team that designed and established the Community Employment Group ("CEG's"); Developed and delivered the Mahi-A-Iwi Maori strategy for sustainable community development with Marae whānau throughout the country.	

## Education

<b>Master of Education, Victoria University of Wellington</b>	<b>1993</b>
<b>Bachelor of Arts (Education), Victoria University of Wellington</b>	<b>1988</b>

**Skills** Experience in understanding the difference of governance & management; Think and plan strategically; Develop and deliver 'fit for purpose' outcomes; Understand complex matters and offer practical solutions; 'Lobby' key government officials, Iwi & National Maori leaders, and other key stakeholders; Remain calm during trying times; Play a leadership role by influencing others; 'Call up' inappropriate behaviour when required; Say 'No' when warranted.

**Sports** **Netball** – played age-grade representative netball for Hawke's Bay and Wellington. Played for New Zealand under-21s and captained the New Zealand Young International team. I was also selected as a Silver Fern, non-travelling reserve. Current Coach of Tamatea Premier Womens' Netball team.

**Softball** – played age-grade representative softball for Hawke's Bay and Hutt Valley. Selected for New Zealand under-21s and trialed for New Zealand Womens' team as a pitcher.

**Waka Ama** – finalist in National Waka Ama championships; Champion of the Hauraki Hoe.

**IronMāori** – Individual competitor since 2011.

**Whānau** I have two teenage sons, and I am active in their education, sporting and cultural commitments. I live next door to my elderly but active parents. I also have a loving partner and a playful 11 month-old German Sheppard puppy.