

28 June 2019

Bevan Woodward
Skypath Trust
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Dear Bevan

Skypath Trust–NZ Transport Agency

Thank you for attending the Skypath Trust–NZ Transport Agency relationship meeting on Monday the 24th June along with Christine Rose and Kirsten Shouler. I understand from Vanessa that the meeting went well and was productive.

Vanessa has shared the list of actions resulting from the meeting with me and this letter responds to two requests.

Further to my letter dated 22 May 2019 I would like to more fully acknowledge the findings of the Simpson Grierson report dated 17 May 2019. The report notes on page 12 that *there is clear room for improvement in NZTA's communication and relationship management practices (both at an individual and Agency-wide level).*

Page 11 of the report is more specific noting:

- *NZTA did not make the internal processes it needed to go through before it could confirm it would be delivering the consented SkyPath clear to the SkyPath Trust. As NZTA got further down the path with these internal processes this made the SkyPath Trust feel like there was work being done 'behind its back' and that it was being excluded. This contributed to the sentiments of mistrust and frustration and the deterioration of the relationship*
- *Our conclusion, therefore, is that while the SkyPath Trust may have had an expectation that it would be procured, this was based on a misapprehension about NZTA's intentions (because of a lack of clear communication from the beginning) rather than specific dealings with any NZTA employee or representative.*

As I noted in my 22 May letter, the Transport Agency has accepted this finding and acknowledges that we should have talked to you sooner and been clearer that our business case process requires us to thoroughly explore other options for a walking and cycling connection. I would like to apologise for this and to commit to more effective communications in the future. We will shortly provide you with a draft terms of reference for a special advisory group which we hope the Trust will consider joining to recognise your contribution to this project to date, to provide an appropriate avenue to keep you informed about project progress and seek your advice as required.

You have also requested that we change the headline of our media release dated 22 May 2019 currently worded *Independent review finds no wrongdoing by Transport Agency in dealings with*

Skypath Trust. I would like to advise that we considered this request and have changed this headline on our website to read *Independent review of Transport Agency and Skypath Trust complete*.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Skypath Trust for the work done to get the shared path to where it is today. My desire is that we re-set the relationship between both parties as the Transport Agency progresses the shared goal of a walking and cycling connection across the Auckland Harbour Bridge and I hope the relationship meeting and the follow up actions will go a significant way toward this.

Yours sincerely



Mark Ratcliffe
Interim Chief Executive