

# INFRASTRUCTURE WOMEN IN FOCUS



WIN NZ is open to women of all levels working in infrastructure and has been established to grow the visibility of women in the infrastructure sector. Every month we will be profiling a different woman working in a different part of the sector. If you would like to be involved, please answer the questions and send your picture through to [Natasha](#).

**We'd like to introduce Parekawhia as our next Woman of Focus. Parekawhia also sits on the WIN Advisory Board.**



**PAREKAWHIA MCLEAN**

CENTRAL  
NORTH ISLAND  
DIRECTOR  
REGIONAL  
RELATIONSHIPS



**1. What company or organisation do you work for and what is your role there?**

Currently, I am a member of the senior leadership team as the Central North Island Director of Regional Relationships and have been with the NZ Transport Agency since September 2016, after five and a half years as the Chief Executive Officer of Waikato-Tainui.

**2. Tell us about your career background and how you got to this position/role?**

My career has been diverse - starting with the Public Service, including being an advisor to three Prime Ministers during her time at the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Afterwards, stepping to successfully run my own business, CEO of a major tribal entity – Waikato-Tainui. I also have over 15 years of governance experience on a range of boards. I'm motivated by making a difference and a set of values which my parents and grandparents instilled in me – these include hard work, compassion, persistence, and humility.

**3. Tell us about a project are you currently working on and why it interests you?**

Over my career I've been involved in a range of projects that I'm proud of like the establishment of Maori TV; recognising the value of unpaid work; overseeing the implementation of social, cultural and environmental initiatives across Waikato-Tainui, stakeholder engagement and so on. However, I am very passionate about the investment and commitment I make to building leaders of the future. I have two daughters and a number of nieces and nephews who I take a strong interest in by providing advice, guidance and financial support. Likewise, I do the same in my professional career. I have always mentored and supported others particularly Maaori women to achieve.

**4. What's the hardest job you've ever done and why?**

Each role I've had has its own unique challenges and therefore there has not been one role that I can say has been my 'hardest'.

**5. Can you think of one example where your "diversity" has materially affected the outcome of a work situation or project, either positively or negatively?**

I've been in roles where often I've been the only women and Maaori around the table. Because of this, I look to provide perspectives that are different and at times has challenged the status quo.

To learn about opportunities for a career with NZTA [click here](#).

Or, you can contact Parekawhia [here](#).

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