



Finding Taonga Tūturu

The last newsletter covered what you should do if you find taonga tūturu. This month's covers custody and ownership.

The Next Step

After the Ministry is notified of taonga tūturu being found, we look for an owner or custodian. We do this by publishing a Public Notice in the local daily paper and on our website seeking claims of ownership or custody. We also attempt to contact all parties by letter who might have an interest in the taonga.

If you think you would like to claim ownership or custody of the taonga, you must make your claim in writing to the Ministry. The more information you include, the better.

Any person who may have any right, title, estate, or interest in any such taonga tūturu may apply for ownership.

Ownership of Newly Found Taonga Tūturu

If the Ministry receives one claim for ownership and is satisfied of its validity, it will apply to the Maori Land Court for an order confirming ownership. This order can be made by the Registrar of the Court and therefore is a simpler process than previously when there had to be a full Court hearing. The Ministry pays any court fees for the order.

If two or more claims are lodged, the Chief Executive of the Ministry will consult with the claimants and try to resolve the competing claims. Once this has been done, it will apply to the Registrar for the order.

If the claims are unable to be resolved, the Chief Executive may, if requested, pass the matter to the Maori Land Court for a resolution.

Collective and joint ownership of taonga tūturu can be granted.

Custody

If no claims are made or the Maori Land Court does not make a ruling on ownership, custody is granted. After consulting with any interested parties, the Chief Executive of the Ministry decides who should have custody of the taonga, while ownership of it is retained by the Crown.

Please note Custody decisions can be altered at any time and ownership claims of taonga tūturu currently in someone else's custody can still be made.

Custodians must be registered collectors. To become a collector, please visit our website or contact the Ministry.

Lists of Taonga Tūturu. The Ministry can provide your organisation with a list of taonga tūturu found in your area/rohe still in Crown ownership. The list is generated using Territorial Local Authority boundaries. Please contact us if you would like more information

Claiming Ownership Claims of ownership should be lodged with the Ministry within 60 working days of a Public Notice being published. The Ministry will try to publish any notices on the first Wednesday of every month. However, the best place to look for a notice is on our website www.protected-objects.govt.nz.

Sections 11, 12 and 15 of the Protected Objects Act regulate the ownership of taonga tūturu.

Please contact the Ministry on (04) 499 4229 if you would like to talk to us about ownership or custody.

