

## Atamai Hangahanga: Engaging in Te Reo Māori

Te reo Māori became an official language in Aotearoa New Zealand in 1987. For over 30 years since then, engagement on transport projects and initiatives has occurred almost exclusively in English. Without the use of te reo Māori, it is challenging for Mātauranga and orer Māori perspectives to be integrated into consultation.

In 2021, Beca began using Atamai Hangahanga, conversational Artificial Intelligence (AI), to engage communities in a culturally appropriate way using te reo Māori. This included seeking to understand perspectives from Māori on transport and other community aspirations.

This presentation outlines the challenges of moving to bilingual consultation including the importance of the principles of te ao Māori, mātauranga, houtupu and kaitiakitanga. Te Whare Tapa Whā is important for the added depth of meaning in conversation that can occur when connecting a conversational agent (AI) to a person at a culturally relevant level.

He raraunga te kupu, he nui te korero – Many voices are needed for a complete story.