

# Justices'

QUARTERLY



FIAT JUSTITIA  
RUAT CAELUM

April 2026  
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**New President  
for Federation**

# A privilege to serve

Ngā mihi mahana ki a koutou katoa:  
Warm greetings to you all.

Congratulations and well done to the Otago association for hosting the 98th Royal Federation Annual General Meeting and Conference. My sincere thanks also go to the organising committee, whose hard work ensured that the three-day gathering was both successful and enjoyable for everyone who attended.

A particular highlight for me was the concurrent entertainment provided by the Royal New Zealand Pipe Bands Association Regional Competition taking place nearby, featuring 56 teams from across Otago and Southland. Both events were blessed with late summer sun, for which we were all grateful.

You'll find detailed information about the AGM and Conference elsewhere in this issue, but I want to reflect briefly on a couple of points that have stayed with me.

In her opening address, Associate Justice Minister Hon Nicole McKee acknowledged that 2026 marks the centenary of the appointment of the first female Justice of the Peace in Aotearoa New Zealand (see P3). It is sobering to recall that legislation allowing women to serve as Justices was first proposed in 1896, only to be voted down repeatedly by the all-male Parliament. Prime Minister Richard Seddon, who opposed women serving on juries or as Justices, famously declared: "I firmly believe women's emotions could warp their judgement."

That stance finally shifted in August 1926 with the passing of the Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, which affirmed women's rightful place within the JP community.

Today, our overall membership sits at 51.6% male and 48.3% female. More telling, however, is the trend of recent years: of those appointed in the past decade, 55.7% were women, and last year alone the proportion was 56% female to 44% male. This steady shift reflects the strength, capability, and commitment of women who serve as Justices of the Peace.

Across the motu, women are deeply engaged in leadership, co-ordination, and support roles within associations and communities. They bring clarity, empathy, integrity, and professionalism to their work - qualities that



**Federation President Carol Buckley**

enrich our service and strengthen the trust placed in us by the public.

Chief District Court Judge Heemi Taumaunu chose to "wing" his kōrero rather than present his prepared speech and slides. In doing so, he offered a warm and personal account of how the name for the District Court's Best Practice Framework, Te Ao Mārama - The World of Light, came to be. The inspiration emerged during a visit to his home in Ōmarama, near the Ahuriri River. Fittingly, Ōmarama means "place of light".

Chief Judge Taumaunu spoke about the best practice approaches that directly influence the work of Judicial Justices, while also shaping the wider responsibilities of all Justices (see P13).

These principles reflect the heart of Te Ao Mārama: a justice system that is more accessible, more humane, and more responsive to the communities it serves, and apply to the work done regularly by Justices of the Peace in general.

Secretary for Justice Andrew Kibblewhite was unable to attend the Conference in person and instead joined us through a recorded statement. He reaffirmed that the Ministry of Justice deeply values the service provided

by Justices of the Peace, describing it as an essential component of the justice system (see P14). In relation to the Best Practice Manual, Mr Kibblewhite stressed the importance of ensuring it reflects contemporary social, cultural, and community contexts. He reiterated the Ministry's openness to working with the Federation and the Minister's office to review and update the Best Practice Guidelines.

Since becoming a Justice of the Peace - more recently than many of you - I have often heard that we are working in a rapidly changing environment, and that we must plan and act thoughtfully to remain relevant to the communities we serve.

The workshop "Stargazing: Justices of the Peace in 2050" (see P15) at Conference provided an excellent starting point for conversations that will continue at future regional and national conferences. What aspects of our role will remain essential? Which tasks may fall away, and what new opportunities might emerge?

A consistent theme throughout the discussions was the belief that while technology will continue to advance at remarkable speed, its greatest value lies in supporting us to work more efficiently and freeing us to focus on what only humans can provide: genuine connection, personal interaction, empathy, support, and understanding. Our challenge will be to adapt to these changes - many of them arriving at pace - so that we are not left behind. After all, 2050 is only 24 years away, and we all know that time seems to accelerate as we get older.

Finally, I want to express my sincere gratitude for your support as I step into the role of Federation President. It is a genuine privilege to follow in the footsteps of previous Presidents and Board members, whose dedication and leadership have brought us to where we are today. I am committed to carrying forward their work, values, and vision, alongside our new National Council, for the benefit of our organisation and its member associations as we move forward together.

Ehara tāku toa I te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini: My strength is not as an individual, but as a collective.

**Carol Buckley**

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Let justice be done, though the  
 heavens may fall

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# Mayor welcomes JPs

At the end of February, I was hon-  
 oured to represent Dunedin in wel-  
 coming delegates to the Federation's  
 AGM/Conference.

Dunedin's long-standing connection  
 to the law made our city a fitting  
 location for your national gathering.  
 As New Zealand's first city, Dunedin  
 has a proud legal heritage anchored  
 by the University of Otago's Facul-  
 ty of Law, which has been teaching  
 law since 1873 and is internationally  
 recognised for its research and gradu-  
 ates. Otago's founding law lecturer,  
 Sir Robert Stout, later served as both  
 Prime Minister and Chief Justice.

Many distinguished New Zealanders  
 studied law in Dunedin, including  
 Ethel Benjamin, the first woman  
 admitted to the Bar in New Zealand  
 and the Commonwealth, and former  
 Governor-General Dame Silvia Cart-  
 wright. Their achievements reflected  
 the city's progressive history and  
 enduring commitment to justice.

The Federation has strong historical  
 links with Dunedin, too. The organi-  
 sation was formed in 1924 under its  
 original name, with Dunedin-born  
 Richard Hanlon as its first President.  
 When it became the Royal Federation,  
 its inaugural Conference was held in  
 Dunedin in 1927, making this a mean-  
 ingful return nearly a century later.

If you travelled to attend the event, I  
 hope you took the time to explore the  
 city and experience Dunedin's wealth



**Dunedin Mayor Sophie Barker at  
 AGM/Conference with Victoria  
 Thatcher (South Canterbury)**

of heritage architecture, including  
 the historic courthouse, and that you  
 discovered the basis of our reputation  
 as New Zealand's wildlife capital by  
 exploring gems such as the Otago  
 Peninsula for its outstanding scenery  
 and unique wildlife.

It was a privilege for our city to host  
 you this year. You play such an impor-  
 tant role in upholding the rule of law  
 and supporting civic life. Thank you  
 all for your vital contribution as Jus-  
 tices of the Peace within communities  
 throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

**Sophie Barker**  
 Mayor of Dunedin

## New faces at Council table

New Northern Region Repre-  
 sentative Claire Steer, left, and  
 Central Region Representative  
 Fiona Parkinson took up their  
 positions at the closing of  
 AGM/Conference on March 1.



Articles appearing in the Quarterly may have been generated or enhanced, in part  
 or whole, using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools. Readers are encouraged to verify  
 statements to their own satisfaction. The use of AI cannot always be detected, but AI  
 has not been used in writing articles for the Education pages. - Editor

**ON THE COVER:** New Federation President Carol Buckley, seen with her predecessor Nigel Tate, was invested  
 with the Presidential Chain at AGM/Conference 2026 in Dunedin. Picture: EVAN MASON

# Focus on the future

**By Quarterly Editor  
GEOFF DAVIES**

**Conference Photographer:  
EVAN MASON**

The Federation's 98th Annual General Meeting and Conference was held at the Dunedin Centre over the weekend of February 27-March 1, hosted by the Otago association. The hosts can be proud of the great feedback from many attendees on the Conference programme, marked by a focus on the future and a wide-ranging and interesting selection of speakers, and on the event overall.

With the formalities of the mihi whakatau and Official Opening on Friday February 27 concluded, keynote speeches were given by Associate Justice Minister Nicole McKee, who holds the delegation for JPs, and Chief District Court Judge Heemi Taumaunu (see P3 and P13 respectively), and the AGM began after lunch.

Secretary for Justice Andrew Kibblewhite was unable to attend in person but delivered a video message during the weekend (see P14).

The official minutes will be available on the website in due course, but significant agenda items included the confirmation of the election of Board members (voting was not required as there was only one nomination for each position), the Board's Annual Report, and approval of the new Federation Constitution, which was a requirement for re-registration under the Incorporated Societies Act 2022. This had been considered at a Special General Meeting last November, and after minor amendments was distributed to associations for further feedback. The final document, which was included in the AGM/Conference papers, was passed without further debate.

There were no notices of motion this year, but one remit had been received, from the Marlborough association, relating to the status of Justices who are now JP (Rtd). The full remit can be found in the official documents, but the key elements are in its clause 4: "Subject to individual Justice of the Peace Association rules or protocols, a Justice of the Peace (retired) may continue to be a member of such an Association and partake in its activities and those of the Royal Federation of New Zealand Justices' Associations. This includes access to Royal Federation website, subject to any necessary appropriate

restriction." The motion was seconded by the West Coast association.

During discussion an amendment to the remit was moved and seconded (Wairarapa/Central Districts): "That the website access for retired Justices will be solely at the discretion of the Board [now Council] where special circumstances deem it appropriate and only for content appropriate to need." This was passed, and the remit as amended was also duly passed.

Future AGM/Conference venues were also considered – Hawke's Bay was already confirmed for 2027, but Gisborne withdrew its bid for the 2028 event, largely because of the difficulties and expense of access to the area, likely to mean financial pressure on associations and individuals causing low attendance.

Auckland immediately took up the opportunity to apply and was confirmed as the 2028 venue, with Waikato still lined up for 2029. The format of the current weekend is likely to change to some extent, as under the new Constitution the AGM will have to be held no more than six months after the Federation balance date, meaning before December 31 each year. The AGM will likely be held online, while Conference is expected to be a two-day event over a weekend.

The AGM having been completed on Friday, all of Saturday could be devoted to the Conference programme. Dunedin Mayor Sophie Barker welcomed delegates and opened Conference, followed by the first guest speaker, Cheung-Tak Hung, managing director and owner of the Zenith Technology Corporation. Dr Hung's main interests are drug targeting, pharmaceuticals, and pharmaceutical formulation and analysis.

His presentation was followed by the first "Stargazer – 2050" session (see P15), and then the first AI (Artificial Intelligence) and Change Conversations workshops, presented by Professor David Eysers of Otago University and change leadership coach Melanie Moorcroft respectively. After lunch the second Stargazer session took the programme through to afternoon tea, and the customary presidents and registrars separate meetings brought the working day to an end.

Dinner in the Dunedin Centre's Fullwood Room was very much enjoyed by everyone, with the highlight being the investiture of new President Carol Buckley with the chain of office, by outgoing President Nigel Tate. Carol was



**Otago association president Sally Mason welcomes delegates to Dunedin.**

supported by whānau who had travelled to Dunedin especially for the event and she was presented with a korowai during the handover.

Entertainment was provided by the Otago Southland Chinese Association lion dance troupe, a group that has been performing since 1985.

Sunday's programme began with guest speaker Judge Emma Smith, who is currently the Executive Judge for the Dunedin and Alexandra courts. After engagement in a wide range of legal fields, Judge Smith settled into family law and has served on the Taranaki Protection Panel, as president of the Taranaki District Law Society and has presented at many seminars, both as counsel and since her appointment as a judge in 2004.

Judge Smith was followed in the programme by round two of the AI and Change Conversations workshops, and by the final guest speaker, leadership coach, speaker and founder of Leading Change Partners Denis Gianoutsos, who has worked with leaders at all levels across a variety of industries around the world.

The Conference concluded at midday with valedictories to retiring Council members Peter Osborne, completing his term as Immediate Past President, and Laurie Gabites, who stepped down as Central Region Representative. New Council members Claire Steer (Northern) and Fiona Parkinson (Central) took their seats at the top table and the Hawke's Bay association presented the traditional invitation to next year's AGM/Conference.

Well done Otago!

# JPs ‘backbone of justice system’



Associate Justice Minister NICOLE McKEE, who has responsibility for JPs, addressed AGM/Conference after the Official Opening on Friday February 27. Here is an abridged version of her speech.

I always enjoy joining you each year as we celebrate the coming together of the associations of Justices of the Peace throughout New Zealand.

Thank you to the Federation once again for the invitation to come and address you all. I still recall my first speech to you in Wellington when I was sworn in as a Minister. Since then, I have always looked forward to this opportunity to connect with so many JPs from all over the country. You're a pretty cool lot.

I'd like to acknowledge Federation President Nigel Tate and Vice-President Carol Buckley. Thank you for your leadership of the Federation and for the work you do on behalf of JPs across New Zealand. I'd also like to acknowledge Chief District Court Judge Heemi Taumaunu, whose leadership of the District Court is something I have a great deal of respect for. And of course, I acknowledge all the JPs in the room today who continue to contribute so much to your communities.

You are quite literally the quiet backbone of our justice system, and I mean that as the highest of compliments. Quiet backbones are very under-appreciated. Loud backbones, as any physiotherapist will tell you, are generally a problem.

## An historic milestone: 100 years of women JPs

In preparing this speech, I decided to read a little more into the history of JPs. At previous events I've noted that in the 14th century, early JPs were called Keepers of the Peace and were, among other things, entitled to bear arms.

Now, despite having responsibility for firearms law reform, I confirmed last year that I did not intend to bring that back in. Nevertheless, I'm sure media would have a field day on that one – I can see the headline now, I bet you can too. Mine reads “Armed JPs increase Court timeliness achievements”.

Although, I will admit, with other parties promising to abolish prisons and defund the police, I'm starting to

wonder whether we would need to re-equip JPs just to keep the peace.

But the history I looked into this time was a little more recent. I was curious to know when women were first able to become JPs in New Zealand. After some research - which I had confirmed by the Parliamentary Library - I realised that this year we mark a significant anniversary that I suspect many in this room may not have known about. I certainly didn't until I went looking.

In August 1926, one hundred years ago this year, women in New Zealand were given the ability to serve as Justices of the Peace.

And December 20 this year will mark one hundred years since the first women were actually sworn in. On that date in 1926, Elizabeth McCombs was among an initial group of eighteen women appointed by the Minister of Justice, Frank Rolleston. She went on to make history again in 1933, becoming the first woman elected to the New Zealand Parliament.

That is a century of women witnessing documents, taking declarations, administering oaths, and serving their communities with integrity and dedication. A century of women stepping into roles that, frankly, the justice system would be considerably worse off without.

So to every woman in this room who serves as a JP, to the women in your associations and to all those who have gone before you, I say thank you. You are part of a proud and important tradition that has shaped our communities for one hundred years.

I would also note that this centenary is a quiet reminder that institutions must evolve. What seems like a modest change, allowing half the population to participate in public life, turned out to be rather consequential. As it always does.

## Congratulations to New Year Honours recipients

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the 18 Justices of the Peace who are members of associations who were named in this year's New Year Honours List. That is a wonderful recognition of the service you have given to your communities, and it is richly deserved. It gives me great pleasure to write to each recipient every King's Birthday and New Year to acknowledge them and congratulate them. And so this moment is to congratulate those recipients that are here with us today.

## Remembering those who have passed

I also want to take a moment to remember Justices of the Peace who have passed away since we last gathered. Their passing is a great loss to their associations and communities. Their service and dedication live on in the work that you all continue to do.

## Applications and appointments

Now, let me turn to some numbers from the past year that highlight the great New Zealanders who continue to put their hand up to serve the community.

There are more than 248 service desks, delivering 1042 hours of service around the country, including in courts every week.

In the 2024-25 financial year, 981,863 documents, close to a million, were handled by JPs at both court and com-

munity-based service desks – up 2% from the previous year.

These service desks provide thousands of New Zealanders with access to legal services at no cost to the individual.

There are 181 Judicial JPs nationally who provided over 9000 hours of service in the 2024-25 financial year and handled over 38,948 events. This equates to 5.4% of the case events by judicial officers, up 0.3 percentage points on the previous year.

In 2025, my office received 331 JP applications. I made 301 decisions, which included the provisional approval of 248 JPs. 229 people were referred to the Governor-General for appointment. I also declined 53 applications.

That last figure, 53 declined applications, is worth dwelling on for a moment. I know some of you have been surprised that I don't just "sign off" the applications. I've let you know that I read all the applications and sometimes come to opposing conclusions from the recommendations. Declining an application is never done lightly. But it is done when it needs to be. I take the role of appointments very seriously because it goes to the heart of what it means to be a JP.

### The importance of credibility

I want to be direct about something. Over the past year, there have been a small number of high-profile cases involving Justices of the Peace that attracted public attention, and not for good reasons.

I won't dwell on the specifics, but the broader point these cases underscore is this: your single greatest asset is your credibility. The trust that people come to you with, often in moments of stress or vulnerability, is all-important.

When that trust is broken it affects perceptions of the entire service. That is the nature of positions of public trust.

If you have concerns about the conduct of a current JP, or about someone who is applying to become one, please get in touch. I take those concerns seriously. There is nothing disloyal about raising a concern.

The vast majority of JPs serve with absolute integrity and commitment. The best way to honour that is to ensure that the minority who do not, are not allowed to undermine the whole.

Overall, the pipeline of people who want to serve as JPs remains strong, and I am encouraged by that. It reflects well on the communities you represent, and on the reputation of the service.

### Oaths and declarations in the Digital Age

I'm also pleased to report a meaningful legislative development that directly affects your work. The recently passed Statutes Amendment Bill included changes to the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957, which make clear that oaths and declarations may be administered electronically via video call.

This is not a revolution, it is a formalisation of common sense. During COVID, the Government introduced a temporary provision allowing this. That provision worked well. Communities continued to be served. JPs adapted. And now we have made it permanent.

The fact this change took until 2025 to become permanent law is a good reason to be sceptical of giving government more control over people's lives, businesses and civil society.

Enabling electronic oaths and declarations gives you and the people you serve more flexibility. It reduces barriers.

It means someone in a rural community doesn't have to drive two hours to sign a document. In a country as geographically diverse as New Zealand, that matters.

### JP (Regulating Justices) Amendment Bill

My next comment is pre-empting potential questions before I am asked - my position has not changed on the proposed member's bill in the name of Jenny Salesa - the Justice of the Peace (Regulating Justices) Amendment Bill is still in the member's ballot box.

I have been progressing an ambitious legislative programme across both my portfolios. With a General Election approaching, this year will be particularly busy and I confirm that the member's bill will stay in the member's ballot box unless she can get majority support to have it pulled early.

### Judicial JPs and Community Magistrates

Now is a good time to address directly a concern I know a number of Judicial JPs have raised: that moves to expand the remit of Community Magistrates would limit the role of Judicial JPs.

I want to be clear: the jurisdiction of Judicial JPs is not affected by these changes. Judicial JPs continue to be vital in enabling timely access to justice across the country, and court scheduling and allocation remain judicial decisions. That has not changed.

The changes to the jurisdiction of Community Magistrates are about something different – reducing adjournments, freeing up judges for complex trials, and improving court timeliness so that victims, defendants, and families have their cases resolved sooner. These are complementary goals, not competing ones. There is room in this system for both, and the contribution of Judicial JPs remains as important as ever.

### Looking ahead

Ladies and gentlemen, the JP service faces the challenges that many volunteer organisations face: attracting the next generation, adapting to changing community expectations, embracing new technologies while preserving the values that make the service trusted.

None of these are insurmountable. But none of them will solve themselves, either. The conversations happening within the Federation are all signs of a service that is alive to its own future.

At last year's Conference, I let you know that I had directed the Ministry of Justice to increase the annual budget of the Federation. I am pleased to confirm that additional funding is ongoing and was given effect to in October 2025. It is a tangible expression of the Government's commitment to the JP service, and I hope it makes a practical difference to the Federation's work.

I look forward to continuing to work with you and the Federation on the issues that matter most.

I'll close by returning to where I started: the centenary of women as Justices of the Peace.

One hundred years ago, someone made the argument that the JP service would be better, stronger, and more legitimate if it reflected the full breadth of the community it served. They were right.

Whatever challenges lie ahead, I am confident that the same principle holds: the JP service will continue to be trusted, valued, and vital, as long as it continues to reflect and serve the communities of New Zealand.

Thank you for everything you do.

# From the Professional Development Team

trainer@jpfed.org.nz



Shinae Skelton

## Applying for probate – JPs' role in court process

### What is probate?

“Probate” means “to prove”, derived from the Latin verb “probare”, meaning to test or examine.

Probate is the means by which the High Court recognises a deceased person’s will is valid and that the named executor of the will is authorised to administer the estate.

Probate must be granted by the High Court for estates valued over \$40,000, previously \$15,000.

Once probate is granted, the executor can deal with the deceased’s assets. This includes closing bank accounts, selling or transferring property, and distributing the estate in accordance with the will.

Where a person dies without a will, or where the will is lost and no copy is available, probate is not available. Instead, an application is made for letters of administration, a related but distinct process.

### Who can apply for probate?

Only the executor named in the will may apply for probate.

Where more than one executor is named, they may apply jointly, or one may apply alone if the others formally renounce or reserve their right to apply later. Additional steps are required where a named executor has died or lacks capacity to take on the role.

### The application

The application for probate is made to the High Court. The application consists of:

- the formal application
- an affidavit in support of the application
- the original will
- the death certificate (a certified copy will suffice)
- an affidavit of attesting witness (in certain circumstances where there are issues with the will).

As a Justice of the Peace, you are most likely to encounter an application for probate when being asked to take an affidavit in support of the application for probate or to certify copies of documents to be exhibited to the supporting affidavit. This affidavit:

- contains evidence that the person who made the will has died (e.g. a sworn statement by someone who attended the funeral or saw the deceased’s body, or



a death certificate)

- contains evidence of where the deceased was living just before they died
- states that the will is the deceased’s last will
- possibly presents other evidence, depending on the will (e.g. a will with a limitation of effect clause will require evidence of any overseas wills and assets).

It is at the affidavit stage that JPs are most frequently involved, as executors may require a JP to witness their affidavit and to certify copies of supporting documents.

### The High Court

Probate applications are dealt with by the High Court, usually “on the papers” without the need for a hearing. Applications are filed at the registry closest to where the deceased lived or owned property. In most cases, provided the documentation is in order, the process is straightforward.

#### Common issues and delays

Most delays in probate applications arise from avoidable errors. These include:

- discrepancies between names on the will and the death certificate
- undated or improperly witnessed wills
- missing pages or attachments
- affidavits sworn incorrectly or using outdated forms.

<https://www.publictrust.co.nz/resources/probate-explained-what-it-is-how-to-apply-and-how-we-can-help/>

# A series of events

**A law firm contacted the Federation recently, regarding issues their clients had encountered when attempting to affirm their affidavit.**

The firm was assisting two clients with an application for probate. The two clients, located in different New Zealand cities, were executors of a will and needed to complete a joint affidavit as part of the process for applying to the High Court for probate. The affidavit had the original will annexed.

The firm provided an affidavit which needed to be sworn or affirmed by both clients. The affidavit had the original will as an exhibit. The first client made their affirmation before a Justice of the Peace. The affidavit was then posted to the second client who made their affirmation before a second Justice. The document was then posted back to the law firm.

**Mistake One:** While both of the JPs appropriately crossed out “sworn” in the jurat (the section at the end) to indicate that the deponents had made an affirmation rather than an oath, neither Justice altered the beginning of the document to indicate an affirmation was made.

The firm contacted each of the JPS to explain that the affidavit had not been fully completed. The firm arranged with each Justice to have the document posted to them and provided envelopes for the document to be returned to them upon the error being fixed. The JPs needed to cross out “sworn” at the beginning of the document.

**Mistake Two:** Upon remedying the issue with the affidavit, one Justice submitted the affidavit and will in its envelope to the incorrect courier. The signed joint affidavit and the original will were lost.

Upon the original will being lost, two affidavits were then required – one for the application for probate and a second special affidavit to explain the absence of the original will and confirm the genuineness of the copy supplied.

One of the deponents accidentally took the wrong copy of the affidavit to be affirmed before a JP. The affidavit was the same as the first, lost, affidavit, which stated that an original version of the will was annexed to the affidavit.

**Mistake Three:** The JP took the client’s affidavit, which stated that a will was annexed as an exhibit to that affidavit, despite no exhibit being present with the affidavit.

**What could the Justices have done differently?**

**Mistake One** - not fully amending the affidavit to show that the deponent affirmed:

Both JPs amended the jurat to show that each client affirmed their affidavit.

You should also amend the beginning section of the document accordingly.

There are two places in the affidavit that must be amended to show the client(s) either affirmed or swore:

**1** I, [full name of applicant] of [address], [occupation], ~~swear~~ (or solemnly and sincerely affirm) as follows:

~~SWORN~~ (or affirmed) at [place]  
this        day of        20  
**2** before me:  
.....  
.....  
(signature of applicant)

**Mistake Two** - incorrectly posting the document contributing to the loss of the document:

Where possible, return documents to the client themselves, for them to take responsibility for posting the document to the receiving agency.

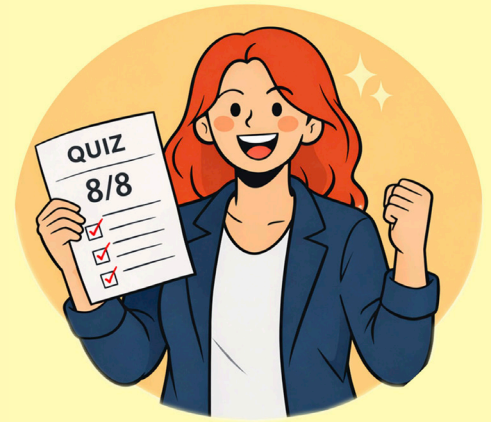
If you are taking responsibility for posting a document, you must be absolutely sure that you are submitting the document via the correct courier and to the correct address.

**Mistake Three** - taking an affidavit without the proper exhibits being present:

While the client made an error in presenting an incorrect copy of an affidavit to the Justice, the error could have been identified when no exhibit was presented alongside the affidavit.

Where a client has an affidavit which states that an exhibit is annexed to that affidavit, the exhibit must be present at the time the affidavit is taken. An exhibit note must be placed on any exhibit to the affidavit.

# Test yourself on affidavits



1. **What must a Justice of the Peace do if an affidavit includes both “swear” and “solemnly and sincerely affirm” at the beginning?**
  - A. Leave both phrases unchanged
  - B. Ask the deponent’s lawyer to amend it
  - C. Cross out the unused phrase
  - D. Refuse to take the affidavit
2. **Which of the following is TRUE about joint deponents?**
  - A. Only one jurat is ever required
  - B. All deponents must swear or affirm in the same way
  - C. Each deponent must answer questions and take their oath or affirmation separately
  - D. Joint affidavits must always be completed on the same day
3. **Which statement about exhibits (attachments) is correct?**
  - A. Every page of an exhibit must be initialled
  - B. Exhibits do not need to be referred to in the affidavit
  - C. Each exhibit must have a distinguishing letter or number
  - D. The deponent must sign the exhibit note
4. **When completing the jurat, which combination of actions must the Justice of the Peace take?**
  - A. Record their JP number only
  - B. Sign the jurat and clearly print their name (or use a name stamp)
  - C. Stamp the jurat without signing
5. **Which statement best reflects a Justice of the Peace’s role when taking an affidavit?**
  - A. The Justice is responsible for checking the truthfulness of the affidavit’s contents
  - B. The Justice must ensure the affidavit is complete, properly executed, and sworn or affirmed correctly
  - C. The Justice must explain the legal consequences of the affidavit to the deponent
  - D. The Justice should suggest changes to improve the affidavit’s wording
6. **Under the November 2025 amendments to the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957, which of the following is required when a Justice of the Peace administers an affidavit via an audio visual link? (See the January 2026 Quarterly for more information).**
  - A. The client may sign the document before or after the video call
  - B. An audio-only phone call is sufficient
  - C. The JP must be able to see the declarant sign the document in real time
  - D. An electronic signature may be used
7. **What key change did Ashley’s Law introduce to applications for dissolution of marriage or civil union involving family violence? (See the January 2026 Quarterly for more information).**
  - A. It allows electronic signatures on dissolution affidavits
  - B. It removes the requirement for a two-year separation where a final protection order exists
  - C. It requires both parties to consent to the dissolution
  - D. It replaces irreconcilable breakdown as a ground for dissolution
8. **Which of the following documents must not be witnessed or accepted by a Justice of the Peace if it is electronically signed? (See the January 2026 Quarterly for more information).**
  - A. An affidavit
  - B. An employment agreement
  - C. A tenancy agreement
  - D. A commercial contract

# When to use the letters ‘JP’

Justices of the Peace are entitled to their own views. Appointment as a JP does not remove the right to hold opinions, take part in public debate, or speak out on matters that affect your community.

However, the use of the letters “JP” comes with responsibilities, and there are clear situations where using the title is inappropriate and potentially damaging.

Understanding this distinction is essential to maintaining public confidence in Justices of the Peace.

## Impartiality matters

The role of JP should remain, and be seen to remain, independent and impartial.

Making political or social comments in public forums, such as on social media or in letters to the editor of a newspaper, are expressions of personal views. When a Justice of the Peace publishes their opinion in a public forum and uses their title, the line between personal belief and public office becomes blurred. The public may attribute the Justice’s opinion to all JPs.

The JP’s opinion may be sound, well-written and/or sympathetic to one side of an issue. The issue is not the incorrectness or controversial nature of the stated opinion. The issue is the perception of the public, which will always be subjective. Someone who disagrees with the opinion may question whether the Justice could remain neutral while performing their JP duties.

## Unintended use of authority

Using JP letters in certain circumstances may unintentionally convey that your opinion carries greater weight, that your opinion is representative of other Justices’ views or that an organisation of Justices of the Peace, such as an association or the Federation, implicitly supports your views.

Bear in mind the power of including JP in your signature in your email. Are you asking for a quote? Writing a complaint? Will your email be received differently if the recipient is informed of your role as a Justice?

## Wearing two hats

You do not lose your right to free speech when appointed as a Justice of the Peace. What you cannot do is use your official status to emphasise that speech.

If you feel strongly enough to write to a newspaper,



take part in a public debate, or comment online:

- Do so as a member of the community.
- Use your name only.
- Do not refer to your JP status, even indirectly.

## When is it appropriate to use ‘JP’?

Using the letters “JP” is entirely appropriate when you are acting in your official capacity, such as:

- completing a jurat on an affidavit
- witnessing documents
- certifying copies
- carrying out any authorised JP function.

In these situations, the title provides clarity, legitimacy, and accountability.

## Rule of thumb

Before using the letters “JP” consider whether you are performing an official Justice of the Peace function.

# Bulk statutory declaration for NZTA

The Land Transport Act 1998 acknowledges that it would be burdensome on the prosecution to have to prove the identity of a driver for offences detected by vehicle surveillance equipment or point-to-point average speed systems or for parking offences. Instead, sections 133 and 133A enable the prosecution to charge the registered owner of the vehicle with these offences.

Where the registered owner is charged with a relevant driving or parking offence and they were not the person who committed the alleged offence, sections 133 and 133A enable the owner to shift liability on to the person who was responsible for the car at the time of the offence.

The owner must make a statutory declaration identifying the driver by giving:

- the full name and full address of the driver
- any identifying particulars that are within their knowledge, such as date of birth, occupation, email address and phone number.

Alternatively, the owner must make a declaration that they could not identify the driver after taking all reasonable steps to do so.

## Rental companies and other fleets

Vehicle rental companies often need to make statutory declarations under sections 133 and 133A of the Land Transport Act, to pass liability for driving and parking offences on to their customers.

Justices of the Peace located near these companies might be asked to assist employees of such companies by taking numerous statutory declarations in one sitting.

The New Zealand Transport Authority (NZTA) has helpfully created a bulk statutory declaration for alleged safety camera offences to transfer multiple safety camera notices to multiple people. These are available to companies upon request using NZTA's general safety camera question form on their website.



## Bulk statutory declaration for alleged vehicle offences

Use this form to declare that you're not the company or organisation responsible for multiple alleged vehicle offences. When you sign this form, you're making an official declaration under the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957.

Under section 44 of the Land Transport Act 1998, you could be fined \$10,000 if you're convicted of knowingly making a false or misleading statement in a statutory declaration.

Email your completed declaration to:

[safetycameras@reply.nzta.govt.nz](mailto:safetycameras@reply.nzta.govt.nz)

For faster processing, please include in the subject line: Bulk stat dec form

### Alleged vehicle offence and driver/person responsible details

Complete this section for each infringement or offence notice.

Note: if the vehicle was stolen or you don't know the driver's details fill in a *Statutory declaration for alleged vehicle offence* form instead.

Go to [www.nzta.govt.nz/form-sdvo](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/form-sdvo)

#### Vehicle offence details

Notice number		Plate	
Alleged offence date		Alleged offence time	

#### Driver or person responsible details

Full name	
Physical address	
Electronic address (if known)	
Date of birth (if known)	
Driver licence number (if known)	
Phone number (if known)	

Declarer's initials confirming the above to be true and correct.

If you have more infringements or offence notices, please [continue on a new page](#).

You'll need to copy and paste the above table, so you have enough for the notices you want to include in this declaration. Make sure you leave a space between each table, so they don't stick together.

### Declaration

I,

Full name	
Address	
Occupation	

solemnly and sincerely declare I've received the infringement or offence notices as the authorised representative of:

Company or incorporated body	
------------------------------	--

and I'm acting on its behalf.

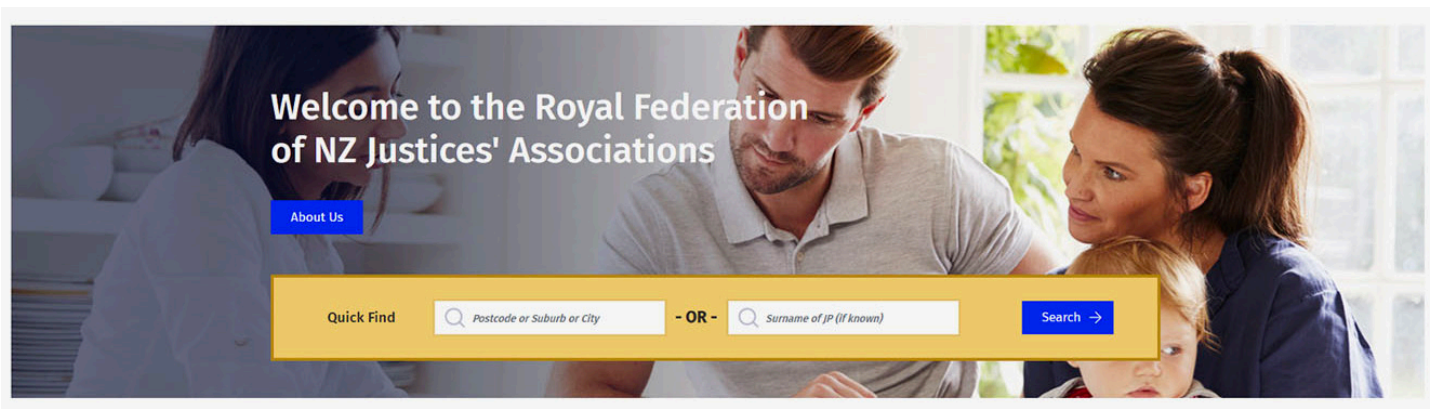
I've identified the drivers or persons responsible for the vehicles at the time of the alleged offences and I've named them on the previous pages.

You must have this form witnessed by a Justice of the Peace, Solicitor, Registrar or Deputy Registrar of a Court, or any other person authorised to take a statutory declaration under the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957.

I make this solemn Declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957.

Declaration date	
Declaration place	
Declarer's signature	X
Witness' name	
Witness' title	
Witness' signature	X

# Helping the public find you: the JP website search function



One of the most important public-facing functions of our website is the “Find a JP” search tool. For many members of the public, it is their first and only way of locating a Justice of the Peace. Understanding how this search function works, and how your address is displayed, helps ensure that clients can find you easily and without frustration.

Recent feedback from members, particularly in smaller towns, has highlighted some quirks and limitations of the current system.

## How the current search works

The website search function is a text matching search, not a map-based or “smart” search.

This means that:

- it looks for exact or very close matches to the words entered by the user
- it does not automatically treat macron and non-macron versions as the same word
- it does not translate or link alternative place names (for example, Māori and English names for the same area).

As a result:

- searching for “Wellington” will find Wellington and Mt Wellington-based JPs
- searching for “Hawera” returns different results from “Hāwera”
- searching for “Pātea” does not return JPs listed as in “Patea”
- searching for “Ōpunakē” does not return “Opunake”
- searching for “Tāmaki Makaurau” does not return JPs listed as in “Auckland”.

The Federation recommends that those using the search tool use their postcode in the first instance. However, this is not always possible. To assist clients in finding their local Justices, there are ways to list your address so that it is more accessible in “Find a JP”.

## Listing your address accessibly

While your local town, city or suburb name may include a macron, not every person will include this in their search. If you reside in a location which contains a macron in its name, such as Hāwera, it is possible to add a second address entry to your profile with the alternative spelling (“Hawera”). This ensures that most local searches succeed fully.

In larger centres, the spelling for suburbs and specific locations becomes important.

In larger centres, searching by city name automatically yields too many results. Clients will need to narrow their search by either postcode or suburb to receive a more relevant list of local Justices.

A search for:

- “Auckland” returns nearly 1000 Justices, spread across an area that can take more than an hour to cross
- “Tāmaki Makaurau” may return none or very few, depending on how Justices have listed their address.

## Multiple addresses

Members are able to list up to three addresses on their profile. This can be helpful, particularly where:

- a town has both macron and non-macron spelling
- a JP works from more than one location (home, business, service desk)
- a suburb and city name are commonly searched interchangeably.

For example:

- “Hāwera” and “Hawera”
- “Ōpunakē” and “Opunake”.

However, caution is needed. Adding broader addresses (such as regional names or well-known Māori place names) can sometimes hinder rather than help, especially if clients then receive a long list of JPs spread over a wide area with no clear indication of proximity.

### Changing address on the website

You can change your address on “Find a JP” by logging into the website. Once you have logged in, go to your profile page and scroll to the Address Details section. Do not type your address into the address box.

#### Address Details

Address	Enter your address	
		<a href="#">Click here to enter a PO Box, or to add an apartment/flat number and building name</a>
Country	New Zealand	
Availability	Evenings and weekends. Please phone for an appointr <span style="font-size: 0.8em;">▼</span>	
Active	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>If ticked, this address will show in search results.</i>
Is this a postal address?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>If ticked, this address will show in search results.</i>
<a href="#" style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 5px 15px; text-decoration: none;">Add another address</a>		

To ensure your address is properly updated, select the blue hyperlink. (Click here to enter a PO Box, or to add an apartment/flat number and building name)

This will expand the address details section, providing a range of boxes in which you can enter your details.

#### Address Details

Address	Enter your address
	<a href="#">Click here to enter a PO Box, or to add an apartment/flat number and building name</a>
Building	AMP Building
Street/PO Box*	86-90 Customhouse Quay
Suburb	Wellington Central
Town/City*	Wellington
Postcode*	6011
Country	New Zealand

As you can see in the example here, the Federation Office address is 86-90 Customhouse Quay, Wellington Central, Wellington, 6011.

Complete the Street/PO Box, Town/City and Postcode boxes as required. You do not need to type out the Building field, but may choose to if you live in an apartment, building or complex with a specific name. You do not need to type your full address into the Address field at the top of this section.

You must have the Active option ticked, otherwise your profile will not appear on “Find a JP”.

You must NOT have the postal address option ticked, otherwise your profile will not appear on “Find a JP”.

Once you have entered all the details, scroll to the bottom of your profile page and select:

[Save](#)

The Address field will now display your full, updated address.

Another series of address fields will appear. Follow the same process

**Address Details**

Address

AMP Building, 86-90 Customhouse Quay, Wellington Centr

[Click here to enter a PO Box, or to add an apartment/flat number and building name](#)

Country

New Zealand

Availability

Evenings and weekends. Please phone for an appointi ▾

Active

*If ticked, this address will show in the public search results.*

Is this a postal address?

*If ticked, this address will be hidden in the public search results.*

To add an additional address, select the blue button below your initial address.

Add another address

as described above to add a second address. For example, you may list your Town/City as Pōneke rather than Wellington, in the second address listing.

## What is your name?

The Federation receives regular inquiries from organisations seeking to confirm that a person who has completed a statutory declaration or certified copy is a New Zealand Justice of the Peace.

Most of these organisations first search for the Justice on “Find a JP”. However, their policy is to make further Inquiries if there is any difference between the name on the document and how it appears in “Find a JP”.

- Search for yourself on “Find a JP”. Is there any difference between how your name appears on the website and how you write or stamp it on documents? Even the addition of a nickname or a middle name is sufficient to spark an Inquiry.

### Using macrons in your name

In the past, there have been instances where:

- a JP used a macron in their online listing
- the same JP did not use that macron when signing documents
- agencies or organisations could not find the JP on the website.

This resulted in calls to the association or Federation to verify whether the JP existed.

Not all organisations have access to te reo Māori keyboards, and search systems do not always recognise macron alternatives. Consistency between how you sign documents and how you appear on the website helps avoid confusion and unnecessary follow-up.

## The Privacy Act

There is a small change to the Privacy Act coming into effect on May 1. The amendment inserts an additional principle (Principle 3A) of the Act. Principle 3A requires agencies to take reasonable steps to inform people when their personal information is collected from a source other than the individual themselves, unless a statutory exception applies.

We don't anticipate this amendment to the Privacy Act to impact upon current JP processes.

## Affidavits quiz answers (from P7)

- 1 **C** Cross out the unused phrase
- 2 **C** Each deponent must answer questions and take their oath or affirmation separately
- 3 **C** Each exhibit must have a distinguishing letter or number
- 4 **B** Sign the jurat and clearly print their name (or use a name stamp). You may use your JP number in addition to these, but it is not required by law. You will also need to write the date
- 5 **B** The Justice must ensure the affidavit is complete, properly executed, and sworn or affirmed correctly
- 6 **C** The JP must be able to see the declarant sign the document in real time
- 7 **B** It removes the requirement for a two-year separation where a final protection order exists
- 8 **A** An affidavit must have a wet ink signature

# A big vision

**Chief District Court Judge HEEMI TAUMAUNU (right) was a keynote speaker at AGM/Conference. This is an edited version of his speech.**

Justices are the fundamental plank of justice in this country. That's why I attend this Conference as often as I can. You are part of the judicial whānau. You play a very important role, and I want to continually come here and thank you for your service on behalf of the District Court.

We have four priorities in the District Court. The first is Te Ao Mārama and I'm going to talk about that in a little bit more detail. The second is timely access to justice. The third priority is our digital transformation initiative, called Te Au Reka, which is essentially going to completely transform the way we do the things we do in court. And finally, wellbeing. We need to try and do our work in a way that is sustainable for everyone.

## Te Ao Mārama

When you think about the history of this country and about the 1980s in particular, when the calls for transformative change to the way that justice is administered in this country were made, most of those calls were directed at the District Court.

When I became the Chief District Court Judge in 2019 and came down to the chambers in Wellington, I asked our clerks to dust off all those reports, analyse them, and provide me with a summary of the consistent themes. It took a long time but they produced a piece of work that really has been the foundation for Te Ao Mārama. The consistent themes came through their summary, and so Te Ao Mārama is based on that evidence-based research—that's what is the fundamental underpinning of Te Ao Mārama.

Enhancing the quality of justice for all - that is quite a big vision. When you come to court, you should be seen, heard, understood, and also able to meaningfully participate in your own case. Now, those principles are straightforward. But how do you actually make that happen? Te Ao Mārama is operationalised by designing and implementing, in the District Court, eight best practices.

## Eight best practices

The first one is one that will resonate with you because it is what you are. It is a **closer connection between the court and the community**. The court is inviting the community strength to come into the courtroom itself, into the courthouse, and for the court to be much better connected with the community. In eight funded locations around the country, community service providers have been contracted to sit in the court and help people who need help. It's that simple and it's going very well.

The second best practice is one that will resonate I think with almost everyone here: having **better information to make more well-informed decisions** - a real effort and focus on getting better information in front of a judge.

The third best practice is about **improving processes for victims**. Part of this, and really running through all these best practices, is the idea that quality justice means it has to be delivered in a timely manner.

The fourth best practice is to encourage people to be



heard in court. It's a direct response to the calls for transformative change. It's not always going to be the right thing to **encourage people to be heard in court**. You have to know it when you see it and you have to make the right call about that.

Another one is using **plain language** in court. Another is using alternative **courtroom layouts** which is associated with the other best practices. The seventh one is the idea of **toning down formalities** and this can be controversial.

These best practices are based on our knowledge of what we've done in the past that works with our specialist courts. The mainstream court is dealing with hundreds of people a day, sometimes thousands. What we really want to do is try to offer the opportunity to everyone, all New Zealanders, everyone coming to court, whether they're New Zealanders or not, everyone should have the benefit of these best practices to the extent we can offer them.

The final one is **solution-focused judging**. What is it that brought you to court in the first place? What are the underlying risks and needs that are driving the criminal behaviour? Is there anything we can do that might address that so it reduces the risk of you coming back to court again? How do we how do we find the solutions to the issues that are at play?

That approach is not available for everyone under Te Ao Mārama. We have to be realistic about this. The reason that it's not going to be available for everyone is because if you're going to go to jail, then you are going to go to jail. This best practice is trying to target those people who would potentially receive a community-based sentence.

The first best practice of greater community connection links to solution-focused judging because where do the solutions lie? The courtroom can facilitate direct links into those solutions, but they lie in the community. And that's why the very first and the most important of all of these best practices is that greater community connection.

The point of the best practices is their cumulative strength. You've got to really put them all together and deploy them into the court. And once you do that, you change the face of the court. The experience is changed.

I know it's early days but I have seen some of the work that's going on in the funded locations. And it is so different to what I remember when I was practising in some of these courts. And for Judicial JPs, seeing these things in action will slowly but surely start to become more and more mainstream and you'll see it happening around you and you'll be part of it.



# Making a difference

**Secretary for Justice ANDREW KIBBLEWHITE was unable to attend AGM/Conference this year, but provided a video address in which he addressed questions from the Federation.**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today, and I'm sorry I can't be with you there in person.

I know the Minister is. And I know the Minister is always preferable to the chief executive.

It would have been great to be able to be down in Dunedin with you, but I can take a few minutes now to talk through some of the questions and issues that have been raised by members of the Federation. Before I do anything else, though, I really just want to say thank you. Thank you for the service you give. Often quietly, voluntarily, always in support of your communities. Justices of the Peace play a vital role in New Zealand's justice system.

Whether you're witnessing documents, taking affidavits, or supporting court processes, your work helps make justice accessible, practical and trusted at a local level. That contribution really matters. It's genuinely valued by the Ministry of Justice.

As Secretary for Justice, I want you to know that the relationship we have with the Federation and with JPs across the country is an important one. You are embedded in your communities. You are trusted, and

you help people navigate important moments in their lives with dignity and care. Many of you have asked about how the role of JP is viewed, and whether it's likely to expand or reduce over time.

From the Ministry's perspective, the role of Justices of the Peace remains as important as ever. JPs continue to enable timely access to justice across the country, particularly in local communities. At this point, the Ministry is not considering changes to the role. We see your work as a continuing and essential part of the justice system. There are also questions about technology, particularly artificial intelligence, and what that might mean for the future.

I want to reassure you that both the Ministry and the judiciary are approaching these questions carefully and deliberately. We're taking AI seriously. But we're not rushing it. Dedicated roles have been established to co-ordinate how emerging technologies are explored, tested and, where appropriate, piloted. Importantly, this work is guided by strong governance and ethical frameworks. We're aligning with the Public Service AI framework and working with cross-government partners to ensure that any use of technology supports fairness, transparency, and public trust, especially in the justice system.

Several questions focused on jurisdictional changes, particularly in relation to community magistrates. Recent changes in that area are about improving court timeliness, reducing adjournments, freeing up judges for more complex trials, and

helping cases move through the system more efficiently. These changes do not affect the jurisdiction of Judicial Justices of the Peace. Court scheduling and allocation decisions remain judicial decisions, and the JP role itself continues unchanged.

I can also confirm that there is no currently work under way on the use of night courts, and what role Judicial JPs might play there. Having said that, we do, of course need to stay open to any changes we might make to the justice system that would help us serve New Zealanders better. And some of you have asked about the Best Practice Manual, whether it still reflects today's social, cultural and community context.

The Ministry remains open to working with the Federation and the Minister's office to review and update the best practice guidelines when the timing is right. We recognise that New Zealand has changed over the past decade, and guidance materials need to evolve alongside those changes.

Before I close, I want to return to something really important. The work you do as Justices of the Peace strengthens public trust and confidence in the fairness and integrity of our justice system. You provide calm, trusted support and moments that matter to people, often at times of stress or uncertainty. That service makes a real difference.

Thank you again for the contribution that you make and for the partnership that we share. I wish you all the very best for the remainder of your Conference.



**Conference delegates assemble on Saturday morning, ready to get down to it.**

# AI eyes the future of JPs

Those who attended the Federation's AGM/Conference in Dunedin will recall an interesting and informative Stargazer session, looking at the possible future role of JPs in an increasingly digital and AI-dominated world ... Auckland Region Representative TONY KORTEGAST reports

The output of the Conference Stargazer sessions is available on the Federation website; this article is to make that output and the themes from those sessions available to all Justices across the country.

Delegates in the Stargazer sessions addressed the question of whether or not JPs would be redundant in a future digital and AI-driven world. Some delegates even used AI during the sessions to generate questions.

These proved to be interesting and engaging debates, further informed by a later session where we learned more about the technical nature of AI development.

At the end of this, we ran an AI experiment. Spokespersons from each of the Stargazer sessions presented verbal feedback to the Conference, summarising the outputs of their individual discus-

sions. This was recorded as a voice memo, with the knowledge of all present, and was then processed by the writer using AI. The voice memo, which was almost an hour long, was used to generate a summary of the discussion, distil key themes, and make recommendations for how JPs - and the Federation in particular - might respond to this strategic issue.

This took LM Note approximately five minutes to complete, and the output is set out below.

The key takeaway is not that this is necessarily accurate or represents a final position. Rather, it demonstrates just how effective AI can be in taking a wide-ranging conversation involving multiple contributors and quickly distilling it into something useful.

We hope you find what it's come up with to be of interest.

## The Evolution of the Justice of the Peace — Vision 2050

AI generated Summary of the Stargazer Sunday feedback session

### Executive Summary: The Dual Reality of 2050

By 2050, the office of the Justice of the Peace (JP) will have navigated a landscape of radical disruption, where the convergence of ubiquitous automation and shifting social contracts creates a dual reality. To maintain judicial resilience, the JP role must transcend its traditional administrative roots, evolving from a desk-based ministerial service into a high-level digital overseer. This transformation is not merely an upgrade but a survival imperative; as routine tasks are subsumed by biometric integrity systems, the role's relevance hinges on its ability to provide sophisticated human judgment that algorithms cannot replicate.

#### Core Transformations

**Electronic Literacy:** Mastery of AI-assisted validation, biometric integrity (retina/facial), and secure digital interlinks.

**Disruptive Efficiency:** Professionalized service delivery characterized by reduced bureaucracy and 24/7 digital availability.

A profound strategic tension exists between **obsolescence** and **indispensability**. Disruptive automation suggests that as national intelligence systems and "surveilled citizenship" become the norm, the manual verification of identity and documents will face institutional redundancy. Crucially, while the public will always require human assistance, there is a distinct risk that this intermediary might not be a Justice of the Peace unless the profession professionalizes. Conversely, the indispensability argument holds that human fairness and the exercise of judicial discretion remain the bedrock of a stable society. The following sections outline the roadmap from manual processing to digital oversight.

### The Digital Shift: From Desk-Based to Decentralized Services

In the 2050 horizon, the digitization of justice is a fundamental structural shift. Technology is no longer a tool used by the JP; it is the envi-

#### Enduring Constants

**Human Element:** Providing the "human touch," empathy, and reassurance in complex judicial encounters.

**Trusted Service Provider:** Maintaining the office as the high-integrity "first rung on the judicial ladder."

ronment in which justice is accessed. The transition to decentralized services ensures that the "point end" of the judicial system is available anywhere, at any time, moving away from physical presence toward authenticated digital interactions.

The mechanics of the role will be redefined by a suite of emerging technologies:

- **Biometric Integrity & Identity:** Identity verification will shift to retina scans, facial recognition, and Radio Frequency ID (RFID).
- **Multi-Factor Authentication:** Systems including 2FA, holograms, and "RealMe" style verified IDs will render physical signatures relics of the past.
- **AI-Assisted Validation:** Automated systems will pre-check documents for complexity and errors, flagging inconsistencies with a precision that exceeds human capability.
- **Voice Recognition:** Statutory declarations and affidavits will be processed via secure voice-capture platforms.

### Strategic Impact on Ministerial Tasks:

- **Interlinked Redundancy:** Direct "interlink information" protocols—allowing the Ministry of Justice to pass secure data directly to the Health Department or other agencies—will eliminate the need for JPs to attest physical copies of IDs.
- **Automated Witnessing:** Platforms like DocuSign and integrated voice-recognition systems will automate the witnessing of signatures, making the physical presence of a JP for "signing" obsolete.
- **Ministerial Obsolescence:** Routine tasks, such as the dissolution of marriages, will be reduced to a streamlined "button press" online, removing the JP from the administrative loop.

This evolution leads to the era of the **"surveilled" citizen**. In 2050, citizens may navigate society with embedded chips in their arms or legs, their every movement and interaction captured by National Intelligence Systems. In this high-surveillance environment, the JP's role shifts from a manual verifier of facts to a high-level digital overseer, ensuring that

the automated “machinery of justice” maintains its integrity and serves the individual.

**The Indispensable Human Element: Judgment and Community Connection**

While ministerial tasks face automation, the strategic importance of the “human touch” remains absolute. As the “first rung on the judicial ladder,” the JP provides the essential human interface in a system that could otherwise feel cold and mechanical. AI can process data, but it cannot embody the spirit of the law.

**Non-Digital Competencies**

The source context identifies clear boundaries where AI fails and human JPs must lead:

- **Complex Judgment:** The ability to weigh nuanced human factors where no binary “right or wrong” exists.
- **Reassurance:** Providing clarity and emotional support to individuals overwhelmed by the legal process—a “people-to-people” connection machines cannot simulate.
- **Fairness and Integrity:** Upholding the moral weight of the office, ensuring that justice is not just “calculated” but “felt.”

The JP remains a vital **community connector**, particularly for those caught on the wrong side of the digital divide. For the vulnerable, the elderly, and those in rural areas, the JP is the bridge between a complex digital state and the individual’s need for accessible justice. This human connection is cyclical; even in a hyper-technological age, society will inevitably return to a desire for personal interaction and expert wisdom.

**Required Skillsets for the 2050 Justice of the Peace**

The 2050 JP must be a “hybrid professional,” merging technical mastery with deep emotional intelligence and judicial acumen.

1. **Advanced Electronic Literacy:** Mastery of AI-assisted validation tools and biometric platforms is non-negotiable. JPs must be experts in navigating secure digital interlinks to perform their duties.
2. **Complex Judicial Judgment:** As ministerial tasks disappear, the role will focus on “point end” judicial responsibilities. This is epitomized by the **2:00 AM police call for search warrants**; high-stakes decisions requiring immediate human judgment and the signing of

urgent warrants will remain a human-centric necessity.

3. **Relationship & Stakeholder Management:** JPs must build sophisticated relationships with government agencies and community stakeholders to ensure seamless, professional service delivery.
4. **Adaptability & Lifelong Learning:** The pace of institutional change requires a commitment to constant upskilling, ensuring JPs stay ahead of the “disappearance” of old tasks and the “emergence” of new ones.

The demographic reality—with an average age of 73—presents a significant transitional challenge. The “Under 45 view” is critical, as this younger cohort will carry the “**bigger load**” of the transition. Success requires a robust mentorship framework where the wisdom of seasoned JPs is transferred to a digitally native generation.

**Leadership and the Transitional Roadmap**

Proactive leadership is a strategic necessity during the “transitional phase” from 2024 to 2050. The office must be prepared for the redundancy of its current form to ensure the survival of its essence.

**The Leadership Mandate**

Leadership must “come from the front,” fostering a culture where JPs “think and adapt as one.” The profession must abandon siloed thinking and embrace an open-minded approach to imminent changes. This requires a delicate balance: remaining responsive to technological disruption while maintaining the bureaucratic safeguards necessary for legal validity.

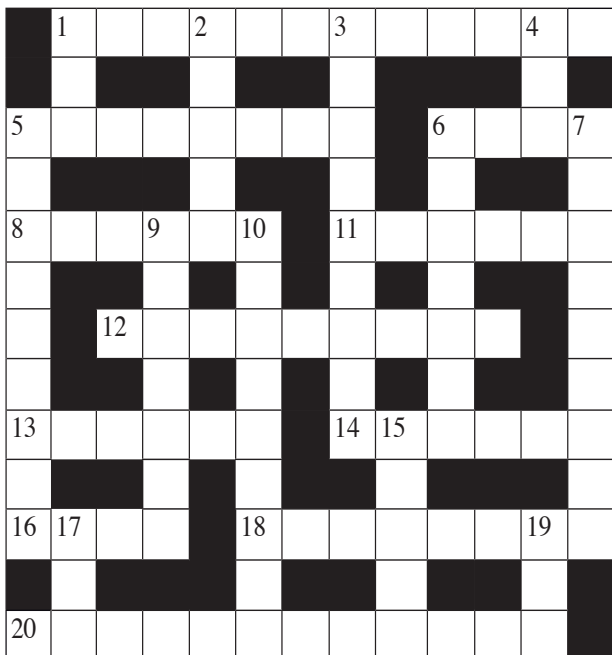
**The Hierarchy of 2050**

A structured body, such as the Royal Federation, remains essential to provide unified guidance, training, and professional development. This hierarchy ensures that the transition is not fragmented but is instead a cohesive move toward a modernized, professionalized office.

**Conclusion**

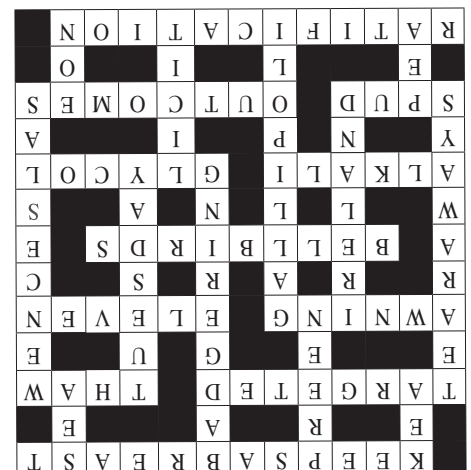
The 2050 vision for the Justice of the Peace is one of profound evolution. While the **mechanism** of justice will be digital, automated, and “surveilled”, the **essence** of justice remains a human-to-human commitment. The JP of the future is not a stamper of paper, but a guardian of judicial integrity in a digital age.

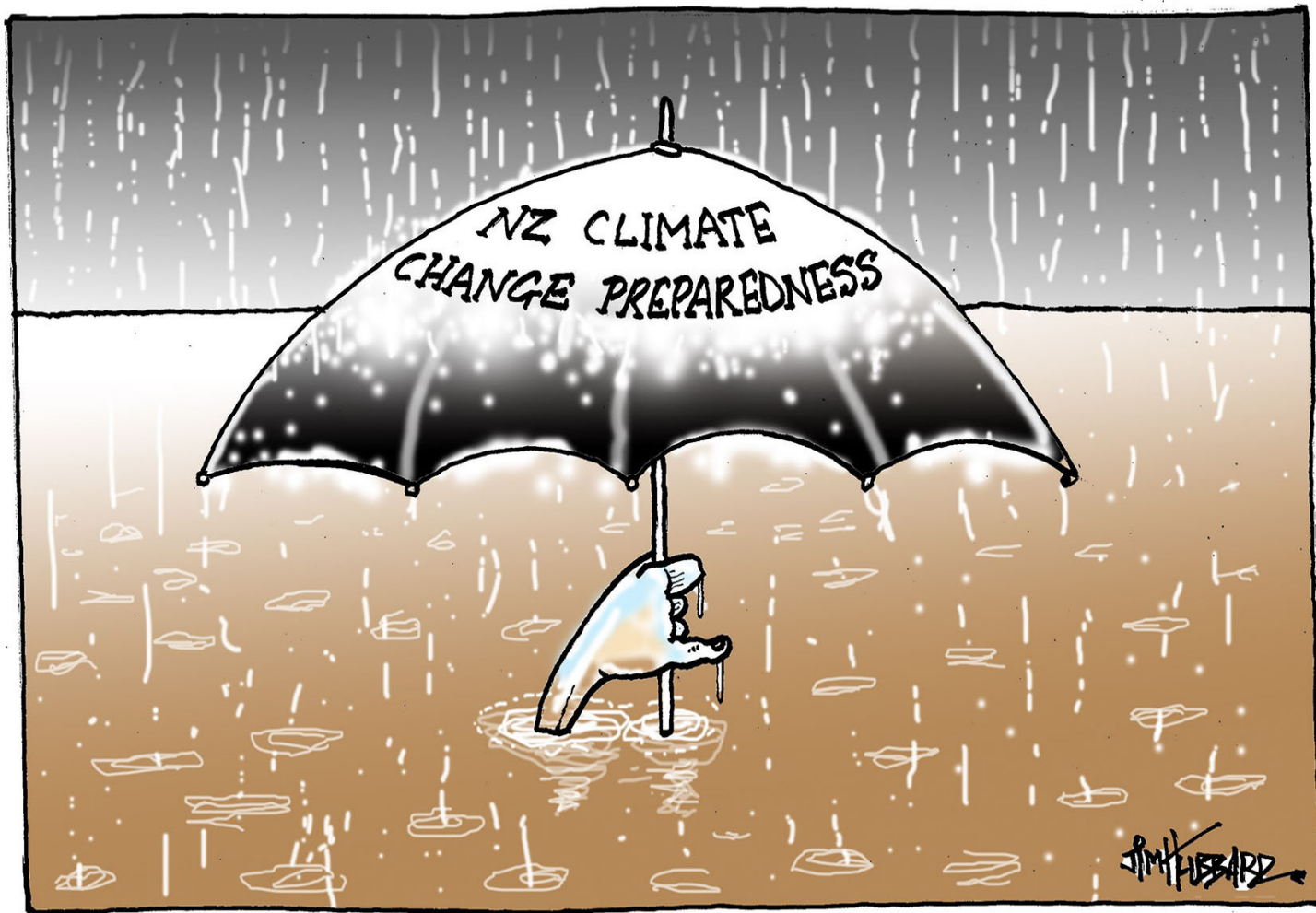
**CROSSWORD**






- ACROSS:**
- 1 Stays up to date (5,7)
  - 5 Selected for attack
  - 6 Defrost
  - 8 Sunshade
  - 11 Cricket team
  - 12 NZ’s ones are korimako
  - 13 Compound turns litmus blue
  - 14 An automobile anti-freeze or a solvent
  - 16 Start drilling oil well
  - 18 Results
  - 20 Formal confirmation
- DOWN:**
- 1 NZ’s alpine parrot
  - 2 Groom
  - 3 Hounding
  - 4 Caspian egg
  - 5 Larrikins
  - 6 U stayed (anag)
  - 7 Patron saint of Czechia

- 9 North Atlantic island nation in Europe
- 10 1981 Australian war drama
- 15 Legitimate
- 17 Legume
- 19 4 down eagle





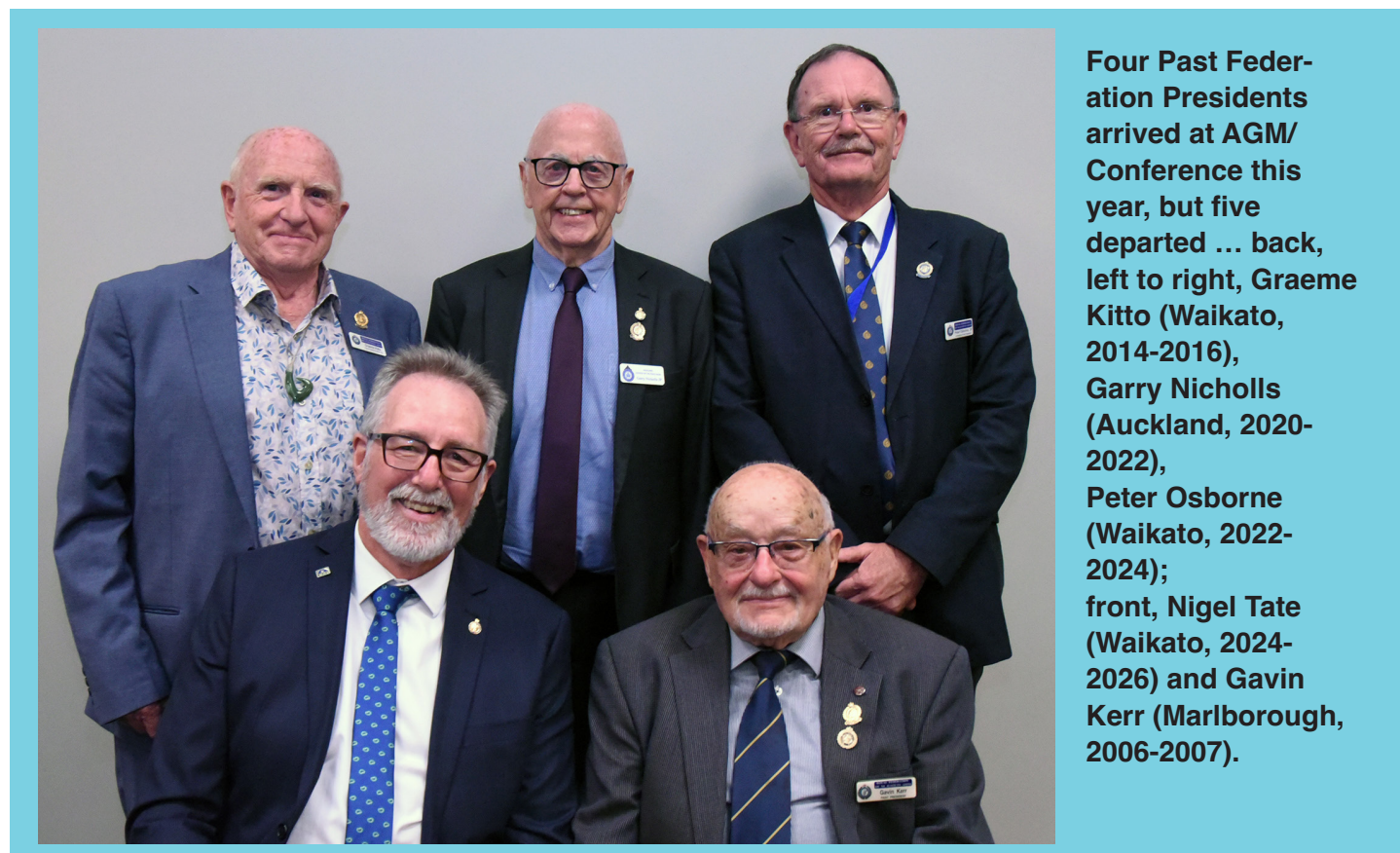
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<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>#2 <input type="checkbox"/> Size: (20mm x 20mm) Price: \$36.00</p> <p><b>Full Name, JP</b>                  #88888  <b>WELLINGTON</b>                  Justice of the Peace for New Zealand</p> </div>	<p>Certified true copy of a document presented to me as an original</p> <p>Signed .....</p> <p>Date .....</p> <p>Full Name, JP                  #88888                  WELLINGTON                  Justice of the Peace for New Zealand</p> <p>#7 <input type="checkbox"/> Size: (60mm x 40mm) Price: \$79.00</p>	
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<p><b>Prices include GST. Shipping flat rate: \$10.50</b></p>		

PURSUANT to section 3 (1) of the Justices of the Peace Act 1957, Her Excellency the Governor-General has been pleased to appoint the following persons to be Justices of the Peace for New Zealand.

Allardice, Kjesten Marie, Taupo  
 Boidya, Joy Henry, Rotorua  
 Bradley, Erin Therese, Hastings  
 Briscoe, Philippa Claire, Oamaru  
 Broadbridge, Robert Earle, Auckland  
 Chand, Jai, Auckland  
 Cogger, Stephen William, Dunedin  
 Conway, Lisa Irene, Auckland  
 Demeer, Gino, Auckland  
 Desai, Rakesh, Palmerston North  
 Dodunski, Vanessa, Feilding  
 Dsilva, Dominic Savio, Auckland  
 Fifield, Nicolas Stewart, Arrowtown  
 Geeson, Shirley Jane, Rakaia  
 Gibson, Shane Andrew, Wanaka  
 Hauptmeier, Nadine, Waimamaku  
 Hirovanaa, Noel Moirnhwhiti, Tauranga  
 Howie, Marion Joyce, Auckland

Knoff-Thomas, Mark Christopher, Auckland  
 Levinson, Maya, Tauranga  
 Lun, Andrea Rochelle, Auckland  
 Macmillan, Katharine Sophie, Tauranga  
 Maskell, Joanna Kate, Auckland  
 Mason, Sharon Elizabeth, Kirwee  
 Meharg, James Edward Stuart, Queenstown  
 Pouli-Lefale, Jonathan, Auckland  
 Prasad, Lalit, Auckland  
 Rowe, Jessica, Wellington  
 Sutherland, Alexander Campbell, Lower Hutt  
 Tema-Liapanek, Grace Saunoo, Pukekawa  
 Whitmore, Janeen Ellen, Reporoa

*Dated at Wellington  
 this 17th day of February 2026  
 Hon Nicole McKee  
 Associate Minister of Justice*



**Four Past Federation Presidents arrived at AGM/Conference this year, but five departed ... back, left to right, Graeme Kitto (Waikato, 2014-2016), Garry Nicholls (Auckland, 2020-2022), Peter Osborne (Waikato, 2022-2024); front, Nigel Tate (Waikato, 2024-2026) and Gavin Kerr (Marlborough, 2006-2007).**

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Opinions expressed in this journal, whether editorially or by contributors, do not necessarily represent the views of the Royal Federation of New Zealand Justices' Association (Inc). Contributions on matters affecting Justices and their associations are particularly welcome, but all contributions are subject to the discretion of the Editor. Contributors are requested to forward matter to the Editor, Geoff Davies, email merlin81@xtra.co.nz, to reach him not later than the last day of November, February, May and August to be available for publication in the upcoming issue.

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