



# Social Workers Registration Board

Kāhui Whakamana Tauwhiro

Aotearoa New Zealand's social worker regulator

## Our vision

Ko tō mātau whāinga... Ka tautoko ngā tauwhiro i te mauri ora o ō tātau hapori, o ō tātau whānau me ngā tāngata takitahi hoki

Social workers enable the Mauri Ora of our communities, family, whānau and individuals

## Our purpose

Ko tā mātau kaupapa... te tautiaki i te iwi tūmatanui mā te whakarite, ka noho haepapa ngā tauwhiro, ka haumaruru, ka whai pūkenga, ka tika hoki ki ngā mahi ināianei, ā, haere ake nei

To protect the safety of members of the public by ensuring social workers are accountable, competent, and safe to practise now and into the future

## Briefing to the Incoming Minister for Social Development

13 November 2020

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# 1. Congratulations and welcome

Congratulations on your re-appointment as Minister of Social Development. We look forward to continuing to work with you to protect the safety of members of the public and enhance social worker professionalism by:

- Ensuring social workers are competent and accountable for the way they practise
- Supporting and encouraging professional social work practice and conduct
- Setting standards for social work education and training.

As you know, we are:

- Aotearoa New Zealand's social worker regulator under the Social Worker's Registration Act 2003 (SWR Act)
- A Crown entity under the Crown Entities Act 2004, monitored by the Ministry of Social Development
- Governed by a Board, which you appoint.

We will continue to support your work and responsibilities as Minister through:

- Advice on our operations
- Input into advice on social work policy provided to you by the Ministry
- Recommended social work sector improvements
- Proposals for our Crown funding.

From 27 February 2021, the amendments to the Act move social workers from a voluntary to a mandatory regime where registration and certification is required for all those who:

- Call themselves a social worker
- Are known as a social worker
- Are held out to be a social worker.

Given this change, our focus since 2019 has been on our two-year change programme to modernise operations and develop the policies required to meet the expectations of us.

Improved operations will also enable us to move to the modern regulator approach. We have yet to make significant use of a wider range of modern regulator tools. However, the strategic thinking is in place to guide us for when we get some 'clear air' later in 2021.

In the meantime, our updated systems and processes reflect what is needed for responsive, public safety-focused and intelligence-led activities. The most impactful of these is the new database (just gone live) for better operations, and data collection and information analysis to provide insights for our activities.

We have also strengthened our ability to be an active partner with Māori. This enables us to build on relationships held by our Māori Board members, staff and Te Kāhui Māori members, and work more authentically with the social services sector and the community.

Government recently designated SWRB as the lead agency for social worker workforce planning. As a new function, this will inform a wider workforce strategy for the social services sector. We are scoping what is needed to deliver this work and to inform a 2022 Budget bid.

I look forward to our discussions about your priorities to improve the Mauri Ora and wellbeing of our communities, family, whānau and individuals.

Below is a briefing about our functions, activities, and areas for discussion.

**Shannon Pakura RSW**  
[Chair, Social Workers Registration Board](#)

## 2. SWRB at a glance

### Who we are

- Aotearoa New Zealand’s social worker regulator under the Social Workers Registration Act 2003

### Our mandate

- Protect the safety of members of the public
- Enhance social worker professionalism

### Our structure

- Crown entity under the Crown Entities Act 2004
- Monitoring agency - Ministry of Social Development

### Our Board members (see Appendix 1 SWRB Board member profiles)

Seven Board members appointed by you – four must be registered social workers

#### Registered social workers

- Shannon Pakura (Chair)
- Hori Ahomiro
- Andrea Nichols (Chair, Professional Standards Committee)
- Rose Henderson

#### Non-social workers

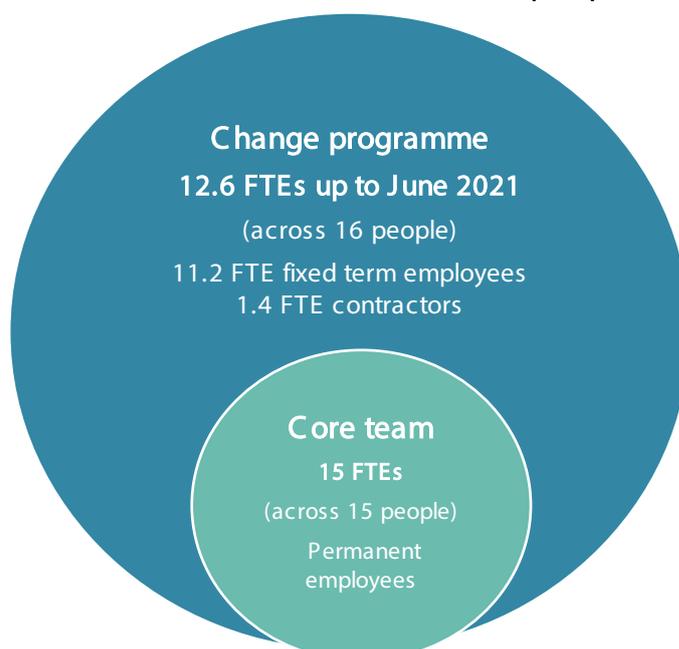
- Paula Rose, QSO (Chair, Remuneration Committee)
- Jeff Sanders
- Adam Davy (Chair, Finance, Audit and Risk Committee)

### Our staff (see Appendix 2 SWRB organisational chart)

- Chief Executive, Sarah Clark
- Registrar, Paul Kirby
- 26.6 FTEs across 29 people, including the Chief Executive and the Registrar

Of our 26.6 FTEs, 12.6 FTEs are fixed term to work on the change programme, which ends in June 2021. This is specialist support for policy development, programme management, and operational changes, and additional resource for increased new registrations and practising certification.

SWRB has 26.6 FTEs across 29 people



## What we do

We focus on ensuring social workers...



Are registered (qualified, competent and fit & proper)



Uphold the Board's Code of Conduct and meet the Board's Core Competence Standards



Hold a current practising certificate (maintain being qualified, competent and fit & proper)



Undertake continuing professional development and supervision to maintain and enhance knowledge and expertise

## Our functions...

Scope of Practice development

Professional standards setting under a Code of Conduct

Competence standards development

Registration

Practising certification

Regulatory and practice advice

Social work qualifications recognition

Social worker continuing professional development audits

Complaints and notifications assessment

Professional Conduct Committee administrative support

Disciplinary Tribunal administrative support

Social work sector engagement (incl. information campaigns)

Policy development and consultation

Social work trends information and data analysis

Crown entity reporting and obligations

### 3. Our outcomes, impacts and interventions

Since 2017, we have been updating our strategic thinking, modernising our operations, and developing the policies required to meet the expectations of us under the amended Act. The intervention logic for the SWRB is set out below.

While our Statement of Intent 2017–2021 was to be updated in 2020, you may recall you agreed to this occurring after February 2021 (the end transition period under the Act).

#### SWRB outcomes

Social workers enable the Mauri Ora of our communities, family, whānau and individuals

- Active partner with Māori
- Responsive to Aotearoa New Zealand's diverse communities
- Social workers with strong professional identity and practice
- Public trust and confidence in the social work profession



#### SWRB impacts

- The safety of members of the public is protected
- Social worker professionalism is enhanced
- Competent
- Safe to practise
- Accountable



#### SWRB interventions

- Registration
- Practising certification
- Code of Conduct and professional standards setting
- Competence standards development
- Regulatory and practice advice
- Qualifications recognition
- Continuing professional development audits
- Complaints and notifications investigations
- Professional Conduct Committee support
- Disciplinary Tribunal support
- Information and compliance marketing campaigns
- Policy development and consultation
- Sector leadership and engagement
- Workforce planning from 2021

## 4. Our funding

### Fees and the Disciplinary Levy

In 2019/20 we had revenue of around \$3 million. Most of this comes from practising certificate fees paid by registered social workers.

Changes to the Fees and Disciplinary Levy are made by the Board and are currently reviewed annually applying the Office of the Auditor-General and Treasury guidelines on setting charges in the public sector. Our next review starts in December 2020 and will be completed well before the annual practising certificate renewal in May–June 2021.

### \$3 million per year from social workers

#### Practising certificate fees

Paid by registered social workers:

- At registration
- Annually to continue to practise

#### Disciplinary Levy

Paid by registered social workers to cover:

- Investigations
- Disciplinary proceedings

#### Fees

Paid by:

- Social workers, e.g. registration
- Education providers for programme recognition activities

### Crown funding – Vote Social Development

- **\$114,000** per year contribution to Crown entity reporting and other obligations
- Short-term contribution of **\$1.22 million** in 2019/20 to the new database and information campaign, and **\$667,000** in 2020/21 to complete these
- **\$605,000** to assist with scoping the new workforce planning function

In 2020/21, we are also receiving assistance from other agencies in the sector...

#### Oranga Tamariki

To assist with:

- Paying new registration fees for NGO social workers working with children and families
- Additional staff to support registration applications
- Social workers to provide assisted compliance for experience pathway registration applications

#### MSD

- **MSD graduate analyst** for 3 months part-time to support our review of the Act
- Assistance with managing our property and lease

## 5. Our register

As the regulator of social workers, we maintain the social worker register and issue annual practising certificates to practising social workers. In the past year, there has been an increase in the number of registered social workers and those holding practising certificates. Note that not all registered social workers are practising, but they can still be on our register.

Number of social workers on our register and holding practising certificates  
(30 June 2019 compared to 4 November 2020)



## 6. How we work with you and others

### Your responsibilities

Assisted by officials at MSD, your responsibilities include:

- Board member appointments
- Independent Social Worker Disciplinary and Complaints Tribunal Chair and Deputy Chair (must be practising lawyers), social worker members, and lay members appointments
- Monitoring our operations, performance and managing associated risks
- Setting SWRB priorities in your annual Ministerial Letter of Expectations
- Review and approval of our Statement of Performance Expectations and Statement of Intent
- Feedback on our Annual Report
- Presenting the above Crown entity documents to the House of Representatives
- Presenting the Board's Fees Notice to the House of Representatives for Gazetting

### How we assist you

Our Board Chair and Chief Executive typically meet with you quarterly. We provide your office with:

- **Quarterly reports** – on progress against priorities and operational activities, including financial information
- **Briefings** – on events, issues management, and key operational policy decisions

From time to time we may seek meetings with other Ministers such as the Minister for Children.

## Our work with MSD

MSD is our Crown entity monitoring agency and works with us on policy advice to you and others. We meet regularly with MSD and work closely with MSD's:

- **Strategy and Performance team** – on our accountability reporting and other obligations under the Crown Entities Act 2004
- **Policy team** – for input to policy on social work and wider social services sector, legislative settings, and workforce planning

## Our sector leadership role and engagement

### Social Work Alliance leadership role

We have a sector leadership role to support the Social Work Alliance.

*The Alliance worked closely with MSD in 2018 and 2019 on the amendments to the Act*

Cross-sector representative body of social workers and peak bodies  
Connects the sector and provides opportunities for feedback on significant policy development  
Members include: Major social work employers, education providers, professional organisations, and the Public Service Association

### Organisations we engage with

- Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Work
- Tangata Whenua Social Workers Association
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- New Zealand Qualifications Authority
- Tertiary Education Commission
- Committee on University Academic Programmes
- Oranga Tamariki
- District Health Boards
- NGOs
- Office of the Children's Commissioner
- Council of Social Work Educators

## 7. Areas for discussion

### No immediate issues

We have no immediate issues to discuss with you in your first 100 days of office.

### Near term briefings to expect from us

In the coming months we will work with MSD to provide briefings for you about priority areas.

- Review of the Act, including the parameters of our education function
- Social work education review
- Our Statement of Intent 2022–2026
- SWRB organisational restructure
- Our Treaty of Waitangi Policy
- Māori Development Strategy and Action Plan
- Scope of Practice development
- Development areas for Māori cultural competence of social workers
- Workforce planning function and Crown funding

## Top sector issues raised with us by others

- NGO claim to the Public Services Commission for pay equity with government organisations
- Ministry of Education/Tertiary Education Commission funding categorisation for social work degrees
- The independent Social Worker Disciplinary and Complaints Tribunal's lack of available social worker members is significantly delaying hearings, which is reducing justice quality. A key issue is member remuneration as lower rates are set by MSD, in contrast to higher rates set by the Remuneration Authority, e.g. for Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal members (Motor Vehicle Sales Act 2003)
- SWRB Board member remuneration needs to be addressed to recognise the increased responsibility and workload under the mandatory regime

## Upcoming events to consider

- Your attendance at the Board meeting on 26 February 2021
- Announcing SWRB holds the sector-wide workforce planning function
- With the ANZASW and SWRB, acknowledge social worker mandatory registration being in force in conjunction with the celebration of the IFSW World Social Work Day on 16 March 2021

# 8. Our operational environment

## Impact of COVID-19

Like others, we have found new ways of working due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our staff can work from home with equipment for business continuity and to stay connected to the team and support systems. We have also sped up our move from paper to digital and online interactions.

As our staff were already stretched due to the change programme for mandatory registration and certification, the COVID-19 disruption brings additional challenges.

*91% of staff reported the experience of working from home has changed the way they perform some aspects of their role*

We surveyed our staff to check wellbeing, and if they felt supported by our leadership and business processes. While areas important to the organisation need to be improved, our staff continue to do their best in these uncertain times.

## Increased level of transactions

*With the change from voluntary to mandatory registration and certification, more social workers are:*

- *Registering*
- *Holding practising certificates*
- *Undertaking professional development*

As anticipated for 2019/20, new registrations and practising certificates increased. Any significant increase is expected closer to 27 February 2021 when registration and certification becomes mandatory.

We feel confident demand has not peaked and continue to ramp up our information campaign, which we expect will see new registrations rise. The new NGO fund from Oranga Tamariki to meet the registration fees for NGO social workers working with children and families this year is also a catalyst for increasing registrations in a sector that historically experiences challenges.

### Our new database is improving how we operate

Our new database went live on 14 October 2020 and is improving our systems and processes and providing real-time information for our operations management. This is already allowing a level of transparency and insight we have not had access to previously and giving us confidence in our volume and workflow assessment.

For instance, we now know that the target of 10 new registrations paid per day (on average) required to meet registration operational costs is likely to be reached in 2020/21 because since 14 October 2020 there are:

**1,500 registration applications** in the pipeline  
(yet to be processed and application process started)

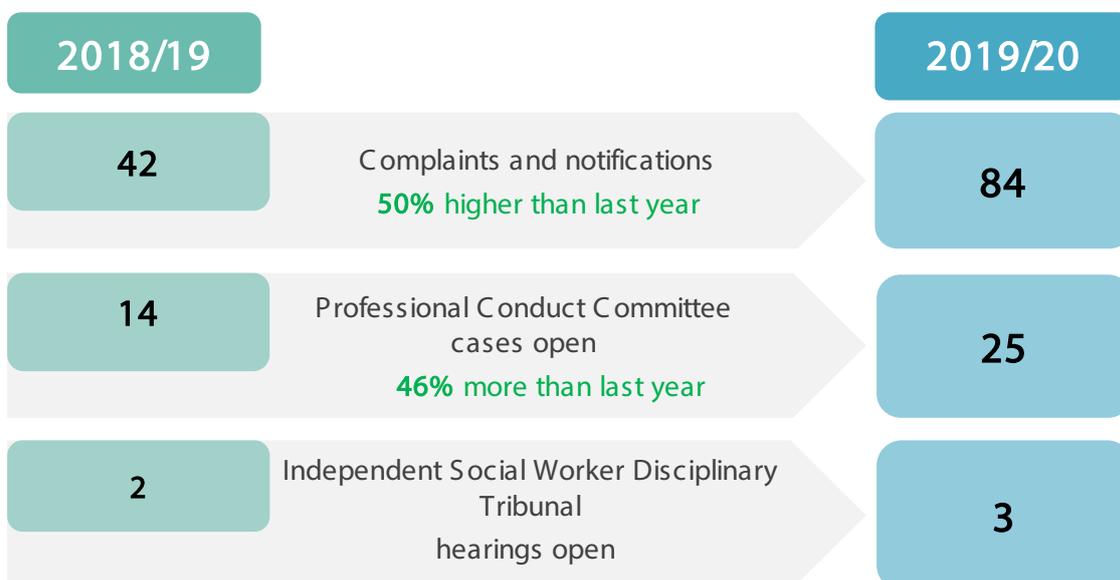
**21 expressions of interest**  
in registration per day

Our aim is to increase the six applications paid per day to a minimum of ten per day for 2020/21, with actions to improve efficiency including:

- Creating additional invoicing options
- Simplifying payment options for users
- Enabling employers to pay for social workers directly
- Progressing experience pathway and overseas applications promptly

### Increase in conduct, competence, or health issues raised

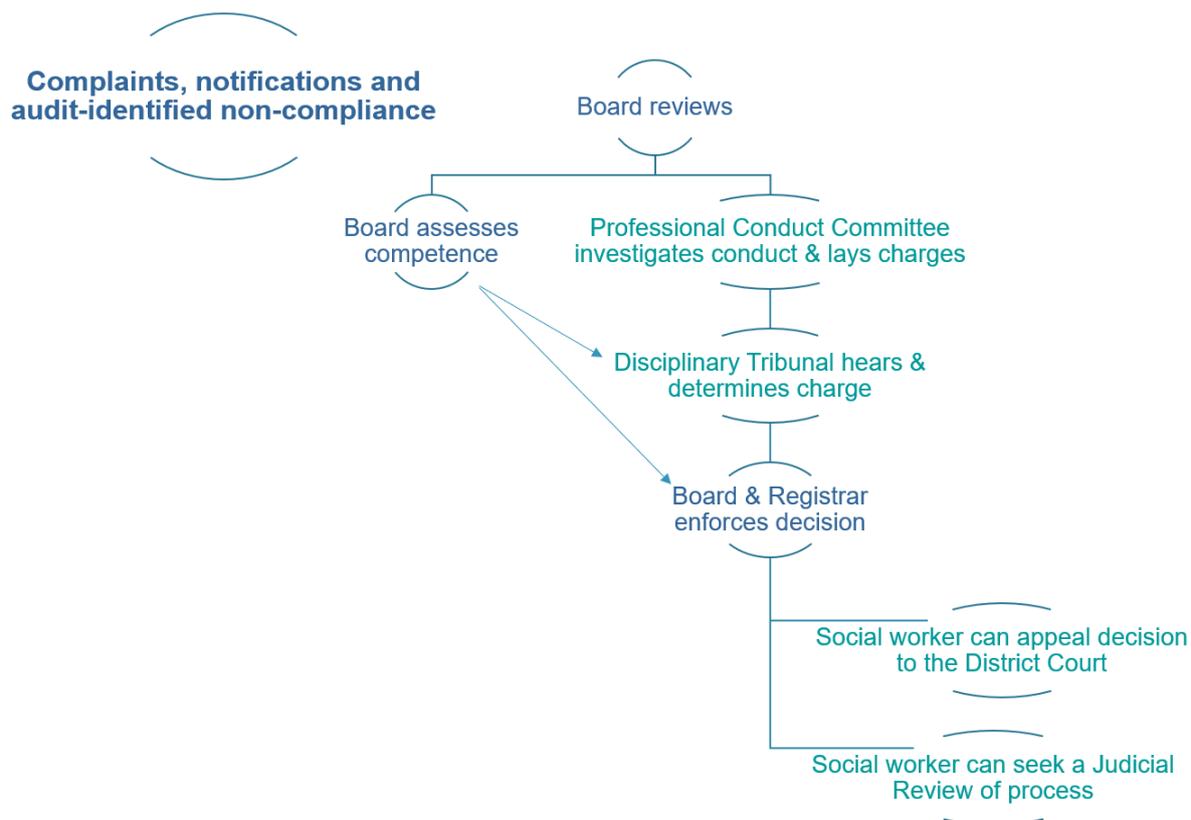
There has been an increase in all areas of the disciplinary process, which deals with complaints and notifications about social worker conduct, competence, or health.



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The disciplinary process involves significant work for us through investigations and in providing administrative support to the Professional Conduct Committees and the independent Social Worker Disciplinary and Complaints Tribunal.

### Social worker disciplinary process



### New workforce planning function scoping

Government recently designated SWRB as lead agency for social worker workforce planning, which is a new function in the sector. Workforce planning will inform the development of a wider workforce strategy for the social services sector. Establishment of the function recognises social workers are essential frontline professionals who are an essential workforce supporting our communities and improving wellbeing.

Workforce planning involves employer, sector organisation, education and training institutions and social worker engagement to:

- Identify issues
- Collect and monitor workforce data
- Analyse and develop insights
- Report on supply and demand scenarios

We are currently scoping what is needed for this function and to inform a 2022 Budget bid.

## Appendix 1 SWRB Board member profiles

### Shannon Pakura (SWRB chair)

Ko Shannon Pakura, tōku ingoa



Ko Aotea te waka  
Ko Ruapehu te maunga  
Ko Whanganui te āwa  
Ko Te Ātihaunui-a-Pāpārangi te iwi  
Ko Ngā Paerangi te hapū  
Ko Kaiwhaiki te marae

Shannon is a past President of Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers and the former Chief Social Worker for the Department of Child, Youth and Family. Over the years, she has actively lobbied for mandatory registration of social workers in New Zealand. Shannon was one of the first social workers to be registered in Aotearoa New Zealand. She has worked extensively in the statutory child protection and youth justice social work sectors. Currently, Shannon is the Chair of the Social Workers Registration Board, a non-judicial member of the New Zealand Parole Board and the Māori Service Development Manager for Barnardos.

### Hori Ahomiro



Ko Rangioru tōku Maunga  
Ko Kaituna tōku Awa  
Ko Ngāti Moko tōku Hapū  
Ko Tapuika, Tūhourangi, Ngāti Awa me Ngāi Tūhoe  
ōku Iwi  
Ko Te Arawa me Mataatua ōku Waka  
Ko Hori Ahomiro, tōku ingoa

Hori is a registered social worker with clinical experience, who recently completed his Masters in Indigenous Studies at Te Whare Wānanga ō Awanuiārangi. He holds a bachelor's degree in Social Work, a diploma in Adult Education and is a qualified Supervisor of Kaupapa Māori, and Clinical Supervision. Hori has special interests in Te Reo Māori me ōna Tikanga, mental health and addictions, social justice, equity for indigenous peoples and whānau, hapū, iwi engagement and development. He has a range of experience in corporate, iwi knowledge, leadership, and governance. Hori is currently employed part time by the Te Whare Whakaruruhau o Tauranga Moana.

### Andrea Nichols



Andrea is a registered social worker with over 25 years' experience working with children, young people and their whānau within NGO and statutory settings. Until recently she worked in the Office of the Chief Social Worker where she led professional social work practice at a national level. She is currently Director, Safety of Children in Care at Oranga Tamariki, which is a unit responsible for reviewing and reporting on harm caused to children in care. Andrea has a strong interest in supervision and professional development for social workers.

### Rose Henderson



Rose has a long history in the social work profession, beginning as a social worker in the late 1970's. Rose established and co-ordinated the Invercargill Women's Refuge, moved into the mental health area as a Director of Allied Health, and was the President of the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers from 2003 to 2009. Rose is currently the President of the Asia-Pacific region of the International Federation of Social Workers. She has a depth of knowledge in employer relations and experience representing social workers at a national and international level.

### Paula Rose



Paula has a wide range of experience in the policing, welfare, community, and media standards sectors. She is a former National Manager Road Policing, New Zealand Police, and was involved in implementing the Ministry of Social Development's action plan for vulnerable children. Paula is a board member of WorkSafe, Brackenridge, and the Broadcasting Standards Authority, commissioner of the Transport Accident Investigation Commission, member of the Parole Board, and on the St John South Island Trust Board. In 2013, she was awarded a QSO for her contribution to policing and the community.

## Jeff Sanders



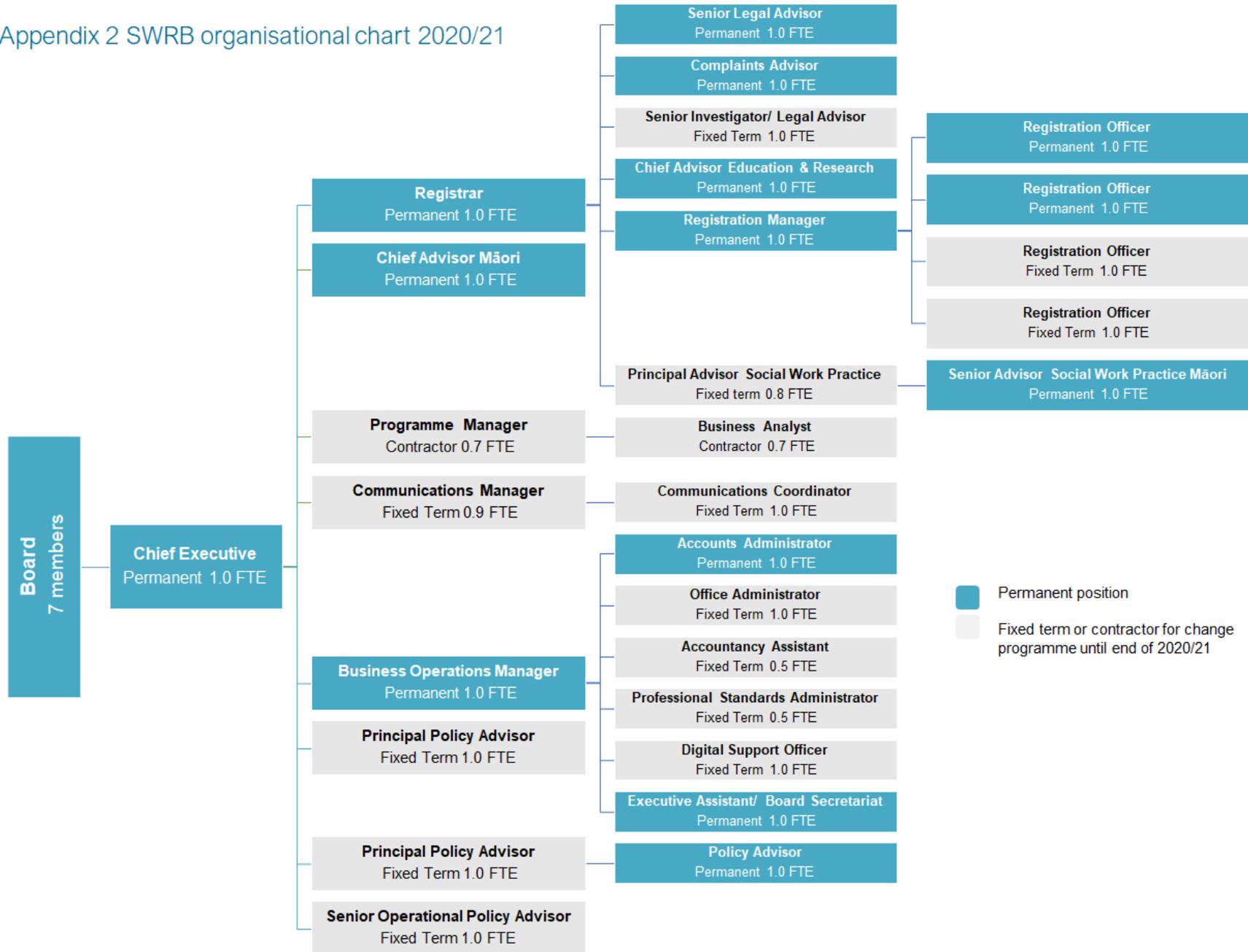
Jeff has been a senior manager and chief executive in the NGO sector, working in organisations providing services that make a positive difference to people's lives. These include IHC NZ, the Methodist Church, Relationships Aotearoa and Barnardos. Jeff retired as chief executive of Barnardos in 2019. Jeff's career has allowed him to be connected to local community needs, which has given him the desire and ability to seek out systemic change and ensure excellent provision of services. He has strong relationships in the NGO and government sectors and has built effective leadership teams in the organisations he has led. He has experience and understanding of how governance structures operate and what is required when considering and governing strategic the implementation of programmes of work. Jeff understands and is committed to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

## Adam Davy



Adam is experienced in governance, both in the business and social space. A fellow of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, and a chartered member of the Institute of Directors, Adam consults to the accounting and advisory firm BDO. Adam was previously BDO's National Head of Advisory and Director of Innovation. Adam is Virtual CFO of Accuro Health Insurance, on the Board and audit committee of Emerge Aotearoa Housing Trust, and Chair and Director of health and safety consultancy HazardCo Ltd. Adam's expertise covers strategic and business planning, business growth facilitation, management, and merger and acquisition negotiations. Adam brings energy and passion to the board, leaning towards opportunities over risks. He has enjoyed helping organisations reach a level of critical sustainability to deliver their strategic objectives

Appendix 2 SWRB organisational chart 2020/21



## Social Workers Registration Board

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### Office

Level 7  
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### Postal Address

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