

New Zealand Trade and Enterprise in Canada!

Kia Ora and Seasons Greetings after what has been a tough year for us all in Canada and right across the world. No doubt we are all wondering when we will be able to see our extended families and travel again. I trust that you were all able to take a small break over Christmas and the New Year period.

My name is Rip Takhar and it is my pleasure to introduce myself to the Kia Ora Canada members and readership. It's also a great opportunity to share information about New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE), and its role in supporting NZ Companies in Canada.

I have been in Canada for three years and spent most of that time employed by L3Harris in Burlington, Ontario. Prior to my time in Canada, I spent 18 years in the Royal New Zealand Navy as an Engineering Officer. I worked in Auckland and Wellington and was fortunate to have several overseas deployments. It has been an exciting journey in which I have made great friends around the world.

Like most, I always enjoy meeting other Kiwis and sharing stories of common backgrounds and the odd mutual friend. The work that Kia Ora Canada does is an important part of this dynamic. They bring us together and allow us to create new friendships and a sense of belonging no matter how far we may be from home. For me, it is this deep connection with NZ that led me to the great team at Kia Ora Canada, but also a reason why I joined NZTE in Nov 2020.

The NZTE Canada Office is in Vancouver and I am the first Toronto based employee, so it's great to be able to connect with Kia Ora Canada and Kiwi's living in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) – virtually for now, and hopefully, in-person soon. Many of you may not be familiar with NZTE and the work it does, so below is a short summary. If you are interested in learning more, I have added a link at the end of this article.

New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) is a government agency charged with helping NZ businesses to grow internationally. We use our extensive knowledge and global networks to help exporters of all sizes make better decisions and connect to the right partners and investors. We also connect international businesses and investors with high-value growth opportunities in NZ.

By supporting NZ businesses, we boost NZ's economy and reputation, and help to share what's special about NZ with the rest of the world. We work with companies in a wide range of sectors including Dairy, Food and Beverage, Advanced Manufacturing, and Technology. So, when you see NZ products and services in Canada, chances are that NZTE played some part in making that happen. One of the key aspects of NZTE at the moment is to track how our NZ Companies are faring in light of COVID-19.

We have been asking NZ exporters to rate themselves using the traffic light system. Red for significant disruption, orange for minor disruption, and green for businesses that are doing well.

	April	November
Green	31%	51%
Orange	59%	43%

Red 10% 6%

It is great to see so many exporters moving from red and orange to green over the last six months. However, this has taken a large amount of work including many hours of video calls, webinars, product innovation and pivots to markets and channels. Depending on what sector businesses have been targeting, fortunes have been vastly different. Some common trends did emerge, for example a significant opportunity to shift towards more digital commerce, and more effective use of technology for business functions such as marketing, sales channels, and events.

The NZTE Canada team also provide consular services for NZ Citizens in BC. For those not in BC, you can get in touch with the NZ High Commission in Ottawa if you need Consular services support. If you're a NZ citizen, staff at NZ embassies can help you in several ways if you get into difficulties overseas:

- provide advice re lost or stolen passports if you need to travel urgently.
- help you contact family or friends to request emergency funds.
- provide a list of English-speaking lawyers, and contact family and friends on your behalf, if you are detained or arrested.
- provide advice on local medical facilities, help contact your family and or insurance provider if you are ill or injured.
- help with arrangements following a death overseas.
- in certain circumstances, provide notarial services such as witnessing affidavits, statutory declarations, and other documents for use under New Zealand law.
- account for New Zealanders who may have been affected by a major overseas crises, such as civil unrest and natural disasters.

Last year was entirely disrupted, hugely challenging and not at all what we expected just twelve short months ago. We have experienced working life and personal life in ways that we never thought possible and have seen things here in Canada and internationally that we could never have imagined. These services can be invaluable, especially in the current environment.

I look forward to the year ahead and meeting more Kiwis in the GTA. Wishing you all a safe, happy, and enjoyable 2021!

Ngā mihi, kia kaha!

Rip Takhar
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NZTE Canada.

For more information on NZTE or The NZ High Commission in Canada, please visit the following sites.

<https://www.nzte.govt.nz/>

<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/countries-and-regions/north-america/canada/new-zealand-high-commission/>