

# 1. SELECT, LEAD AND ORGANISE TEAMS

The New Zealand Team participated in two Games in 2024: the Paris Summer Olympic Games and the Gangwon Winter Youth Olympic Games.

The NZOC also moved forward with planning for the Milano Cortina 2026 Olympic Winter Games and Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games.

### Paris 2024 Olympic Games

The Paris Olympic Games took place from 26 July to 11 August 2024, with the New Zealand Team spread across Paris, Nice, Saint-Étienne, Marseille, Châteauroux, Tahiti and Lyon.

A total of 10,500 athletes took part, including 204 New Zealanders from across 23 sporting disciplines. The team was led by Olympian and five-time Commonwealth Games medallist Nigel Avery.

The Paris Olympic Games was New Zealand’s golden Games. With 20 medals – ten gold, seven silver and three bronze – the New Zealand Team’s results in Paris equalled

the previous record medal tally of 20, set by the team that competed at the Tokyo Olympic Games in 2021, but with a record-breaking ten golds.

The results also continued New Zealand’s impressive record of Games’ performance advancements with consistent improvements across every Summer Olympic Games since Sydney 2000.

The medals were won across nine disciplines, including a first-ever medal for New Zealand in high jump. Fourteen of the medals were won by women, five by men and one by a mixed sailing crew (Erica Dawson, Micah Wilkinson). Nine medals were won by Māori athletes.

After Late Athlete Replacements and Provisional Athlete (Accredited Travelling Reserves) usage was accounted for, the final number of athletes selected to the New Zealand Team to Paris 2024 was 204; 38 of these were Māori. This was 18 fewer total athletes than the final team of 222 at Tokyo 2020.

### Team Leadership and Performance Support

The New Zealand Team to Paris 2024 was led by Chef de Mission Nigel Avery. Nigel chaired a leadership group consisting of leaders across Operations, Sport Engagement, Athlete Engagement, Health, Psychology, Security, Public Affairs and Communications, Preparation and Recovery and Māori Culture. The total number of Performance Support personnel for Paris was 54.

During the Games, the Performance Support team worked exceptionally well together. This was due to clarity of roles and responsibilities across the various functions, a willingness to collaborate and pitch in, particularly in the set-up phase immediately prior to the Games, and ultimately due to effective leadership.

The functional areas led by the NZOC operations personnel were delivered effectively. The team did an impressive job managing team travel, on-the-ground transport, team accommodation, rate-card procurement and sport entry requirements, and built positive working relationships with the organising committee that helped to smooth the way for any issues that arose during the Games.

With only 47 per cent of athletes residing in the St Denis Village, a key challenge in Paris for Team Services was supporting the team across many locations. Considerable effort was made to provide consistency throughout all sites, with all sports receiving a Māori welcome, known as a whakatau, to the Olympic environment.

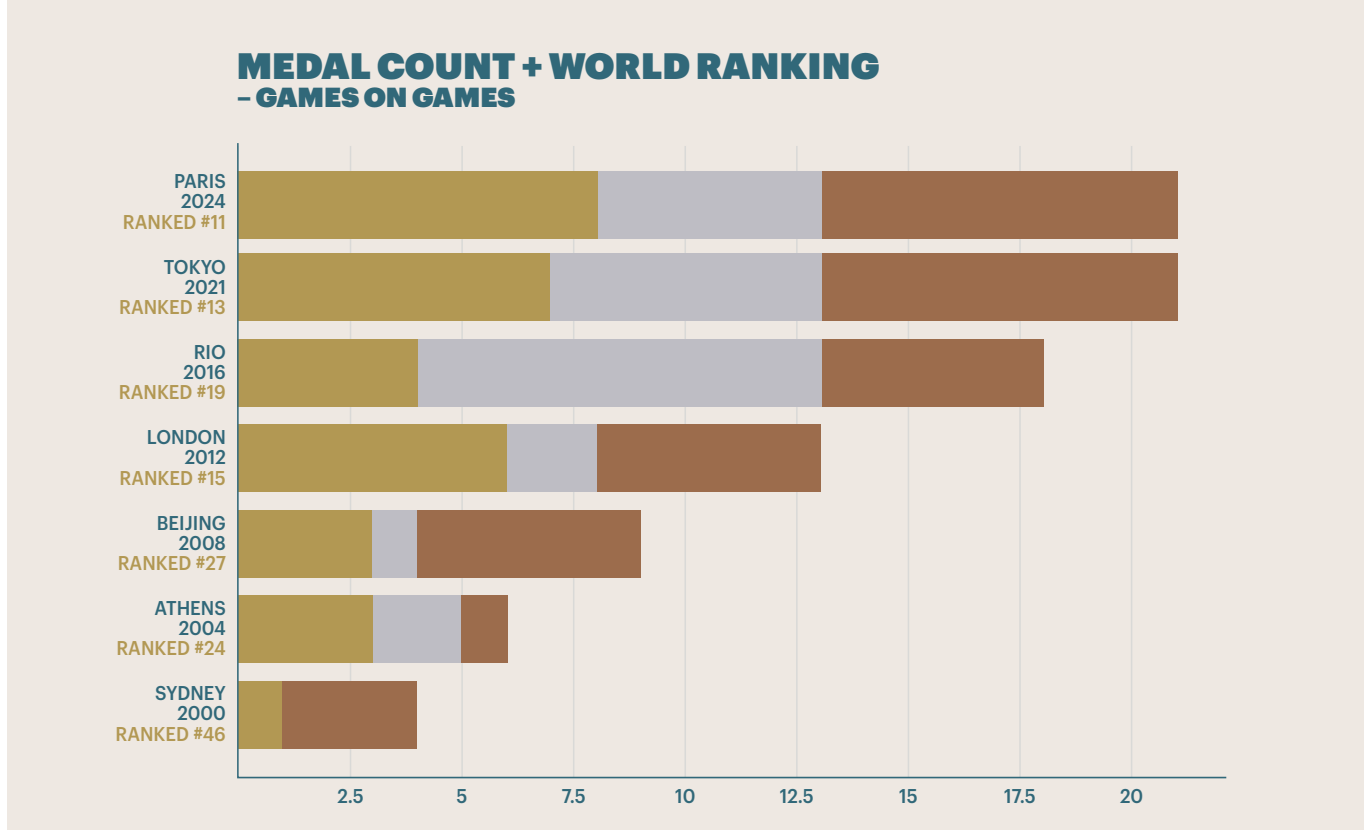
The NZOC Health Team, comprising 38 professionals, supported approximately 1,055 athlete and staff consultations. The psychology team worked closely with medical and athlete support services to provide holistic

care, ensuring quick responses to issues and timely mental health interventions. Pre-Games education shifted from a COVID-19 focus to broader infection control, emphasising vaccination, hand hygiene, mask use, physical distancing, and early symptom recognition to protect team health and performance.

Paris 2024 marked the retirement of Dr Bruce Hamilton as the Chief Medical Officer for the NZOC. Dr Bruce made a significant contribution to the development and execution of health service provision at all Games since 2014, and acted as Health Team Leader at the Rio, Tokyo and Paris Olympic Games. We extend our thanks to Dr Bruce for his significant expertise, which helped to ensure athletes and team support remained healthy at Games time.

Paris 2024 was Nigel Avery’s first Olympic Games as Chef de Mission. His steady leadership, positive nature and attention to detail were recognised by athletes and team support and he has since been appointed as Chef de Mission for the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games and the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

- 99% of athletes and support staff were proud to be part of the New Zealand Team (target 95%)
- 91% of stakeholders said the team was led and managed effectively (target 90%)
- 84% of athletes and support staff said the New Zealand Team environment added value to performance (target 90%)





**New Zealand Team Manaaki**

Manaaki is a Māori value that means to safeguard and look after others through kindness, care, respect, generosity and hospitality. It is central to the NZOC and underpins the culture of Te Kapa o Aotearoa – the New Zealand Team. This culture reflects the NZOC and Olympic values respectively, while honouring all things indigenous to Aotearoa New Zealand, to te ao Māori.

Team Manaaki is the backbone of the New Zealand Team and was woven through the comprehensive Paris 2024 Games Plan, designed and developed by Performance Support team leaders. The key objective for Team Manaaki during Paris 2024 was to ensure a safe and supportive environment and experience for all athletes and team members, enabling them to perform at their absolute best.

Manaakitanga, the process of delivering manaaki, is consistent with sustaining a high-performance environment. Team Manaaki achieved this through providing efficient, high-quality support with great care and respect in the build-up to Paris, and throughout the Games. Team safety and wellbeing remained top priorities and wrap-around services were delivered, including cultural support.

With the assistance and guidance of the Rōpū Tautoko (Māori Leadership Support Group), Games tikanga (practices) were developed in line with Te Whare o Pou Tangata to enable Team Manaaki to achieve its cultural objectives, to deliver a strong and authentic cultural programme in Paris, and to empower all team members to actively engage in Māori culture safely and appropriately.

These tikanga included karakia (prayers) for the ‘opening’ and ‘closing’ of the Olympic Village, whakatau or team welcomes for all athletes and team support, flagbearer ceremonies, the presentation of the Paris pounamu, sport farewells, athlete commemorations and medal celebrations, along with attendance at the Olympic Games’ opening and closing ceremonies.

Given the geographic spread of the team, considerable effort was made to ensure consistency of welcomes for team members residing outside the Olympic Village. It was evident that many of the sports invested time, effort and energy into learning the Pou Tangata haka and to gain a basic understanding of Māori culture and its importance to the team.

Manaaki was not exclusive to the Games team, and encompassed our entire NZOC membership including our patron, distinguished guests, donors, partners, sponsors, stakeholders, New Zealand Team whānau and friends, fans and every person who contributed to the campaign, at home and abroad.

Based on data from the post-Paris 2024 Team Performance Survey, Team Manaaki achieved its core objective and delivered a positive, memorable Games experience for all.

“The New Zealand Team’s space in the village was truly epic. It made it very enjoyable and easy to focus on performing well.” – Athlete

“Everyone was very helpful and supportive. I loved the integration of the New Zealand culture while being overseas; it kept me grounded and offered a sense of home.” – Athlete

“Once again, the on-site support was excellent as was the culture that was created.” – Coach

**Nigel Avery - Chef de Mission**

“A real highlight for me, beyond the field of play, was witnessing the evolution of Pou Tangata and the growing significance of the team welcomes. It was incredibly rewarding to see our haka being embraced by more and more teams within the wider group. The common feedback from those who dedicated time and effort to learn and practice the haka was that the process itself fostered an amazing sense of team spirit, connection, and unity. It became more than just a performance; it was a bonding experience that resonated deeply with everyone involved. The hakas were something that left a lasting impact on me and many others.

Teams like Rowing, Hockey, Track Cycling, Canoe Sprint, Football, Sailing and Rugby Sevens really committed to learning and practicing the haka. These resulting team welcomes were amazing, infused with authenticity and pride, and they elevated the entire experience for everyone. The welcoming processes was something we could deliver to all team members, regardless of where they were based in Paris or elsewhere in France. For those staying outside the main village, the feedback was positive—they felt truly connected and part of the wider Team, even at a distance. It was a powerful reminder of how Pou Tangata is driving our team unity and culture.”





New Zealand Team Rōpū Tautoko

The inclusion of the Rōpū Tautoko enhanced the team’s cultural engagement and experience overall. For many, including Olympic debutants, Paris was the first time for experiencing te ao Māori, actively participating in tikanga, and performing a haka. For returning team members, the inclusion of the Rōpū Tautoko was a significant and obvious boost that enabled them to deepen their understanding, raise awareness, and connect with te ao Māori.

The Rōpū Tautoko refers to a team of four Māori members: Team Matua Tā Derek Lardelli; Rose, Lady Lardelli; NZOC Pouwhiringa Oriini Kaipara; and David Jones. To ensure adequate cultural support across the entire team, Oriini and David remained with the Games team in the Olympic Village to support Team Manaaki, while Tā Derek and Rose led Whāngārā Mai Tawhiti to deliver a standout showcase of Māori culture at New Zealand House and across Paris.

The addition of seven professional haka performers from Whāngārā Mai Tawhiti was a first for the New Zealand Team at an Olympic Games. Although the haka group was based outside the Olympic Village, their presence and support during medal celebrations and ceremonies provided further exposure to te ao Māori, enhancing team pride.

Whāngārā Mai Tawhiti played a key role in welcoming and supporting the Māori King, Kiingi Tuheitia, and his whānau, to Paris and the team environments, as well as to Arras – to strengthen our ties with France through our shared history from World War I.

As a result of the New Zealand Team’s performance on and off the field of play in Paris, particularly around showcasing Māori culture to the world, the NZOC was recognised by the Māori Sports Awards with the prestigious Te Pou Herenga Tahi award.



The NZOC acknowledges Te Matatini, the New Zealand Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), the Ministry of Culture and Heritage’s Cultural Diplomacy Fund and Ihi Aotearoa Sport NZ for providing funding support to deliver a strong cultural programme in Paris. The NZOC also recognises the contributions of Te Urunga Tū (NZOC Māori Advisory Committee), to ensure the NZOC meets our cultural aspirations.

**“We do what we do for the betterment of others and this develops and enhances them in every way.**

**He puna iti ra, he waimanawa no Poutangata**

**A small spring indeed but life-giving water from Poutangata**

**This teaches us to appreciate the significance of small contributions, whether they be in knowledge, culture, or resources. Size does not determine value and even seemingly minor aspects of our heritage and environment can provide substantial spiritual and cultural sustenance, contributing significantly to our overall well-being, identity and performance.”**

**Tā Derek Lardelli, Team Matua**

Paris 2024 Preparationa

During January to February, a series of Long List Games Ready Workshops were held in Christchurch, Cambridge, Tauranga, and Auckland to engage all eligible athletes, coaches, and support teams to Paris. These workshops covered Paris 2024 and Team Manaaki values and expectations delivered by Chef de Mission Nigel Avery, the Pou Tangata haka and Māori culture led by Team Matua Tā Derek Lardelli and Pouwhiringa Oriini Kaipara, media and communications, digital and social media guidelines, nutrition and health, mental wellbeing, uniforms, and words of inspiration and advice from former and current athletes.

Nine online masterclasses were held to enhance athlete education prior to Paris 2024. Hosted by subject matter experts and leaders from the Performance Support team, topics included heat mitigation, performing under pressure, physical health, post-Games wellbeing, the selection process, media and personal brand training, safeguarding awareness and anti-doping education.

In addition, a two-day Team Support forum was hosted by the NZOC in May for members of the NZ Team support personnel to Paris.

Gangwon 2024 Winter Youth Olympic Games

Gangwon 2024 was New Zealand’s most successful Winter Youth Olympic Games ever, with the team winning seven medals (one gold, two silver and four bronze).

A total of 2,000 young athletes (aged between 14 and 18 years) from around the world competed in seven sports, 15 disciplines and 81 events at the Games. It was the first time the Winter Youth Olympic Games had been held outside of Europe, with South Korea reusing many of the existing facilities from the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games.

New Zealand was represented by 22 athletes in Gangwon, consisting of seven freestyle/freeski athletes, five snowboard athletes, four curlers, three alpine ski racers, one luge athlete, one biathlete and one figure skater. Chef de Mission Marty Toomey led his first Winter Youth Olympic Games team, bringing significant experience from holding the same role at the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games.

The campaign saw New Zealand win its first-ever gold medal at the Winter Youth Olympic Games (Luke Harrold – freeski halfpipe). Team member Yanhao (Dwayne) Li won New Zealand’s first-ever medal in ice figure skating (bronze).

- 97% of the athletes were proud to be part of the New Zealand Team
- 90% said the team was led and managed effectively
- 83% said the team environment added value to their performance

Sixty-five per cent of athletes finished in the top half of their field in at least one of their events. Injury and illness hampered the participation of several athletes in some of their preferred events.

The Games were well delivered by the organising committee and provided an excellent development opportunity for NZOC and NSO support staff – with mentoring offered by more experienced staff on the ground and from New Zealand.

NZOC President Liz Dawson and CEO Nicki Nicol travelled to Gangwon to support the team and connect with international counterparts. They highly valued the opportunity to grow relationships with the Olympic Family and to cheer on New Zealand’s athletes.

Media coverage of the New Zealand Team was strong, with around 100 stories shared across New Zealand media platforms during the Games (\$550,000 value).

The athletes were celebrated through the NZOC’s social media channels and were engaged in the coverage, sharing much of the content with their own channels. Instagram was the main channel utilised, with daily event wrap stories posted to the New Zealand Team app and website.

Sky New Zealand was the rights-holding broadcaster for the Games and screened a pop-up channel with 12 hours of daily coverage from the ‘international feed’.

