**Sample Anzac Day Speech – April 2022**

Before dawn on 25 April 1915, the first soldiers of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps landed on the shores of the Gallipoli peninsula. What lay ahead of them was inconceivable, the battle raged for eight months and forged a bond between Australia and New Zealand that remains to this day. The casualties from that battle alone were overwhelming, 2800 New Zealanders and 8700 Australians were killed, but at least 130,000 soldiers from both sides lost their lives at Gallipoli.

It was New Zealand’s first engagement of the First World War, a day of confusion and sorrow, of unimaginable horror.

Anzac Day has been one of the most important dates on New Zealand’s calendar since 1916.

At first, it gave people a chance to honour the original Anzacs – the Australians and New Zealanders who fought on Gallipoli. Then it became a day for those who had served in the First World War. With New Zealand’s Armed Forces deploying during the Second World War, and wars, conflicts and the many peacekeeping operations that have followed, Anzac Day has become an occasion to honour all who have worn our country's uniform in service.

Today, we reflect on that service. We recognise all the New Zealand service men and women who have lost their lives in military operations carried out in our country's name. We honour those who returned, changed by what they have experienced. And we honour those who are serving today in our Army, Navy and Air Force and we thank them for their service.

Across New Zealand there are around 140,000 living veterans, ranging in age from their early 20’s to over 100 years old. On today of all days, take the time to learn their stories – the stories of courage and sacrifice of our surviving World War Two veterans and those who fought in Korea, Malaya and Vietnam, but also the stories of our younger veterans, those who have served in Afghanistan, Iraq, East Timor, and around the Pacific. All have done what was asked of them by their country, and served us proudly.

Today we remember the fallen, and we acknowledge those who serve still.

We honour the values of the original Anzacs – loyalty, selflessness, courage – and the ways in which later generations have measured their own achievements against those of the soldiers who fought on Gallipoli.

Ka maumahara tonu tātou ki a rātou – we will remember them.