

SILVER FERN FLAG

A FLAG FOR NEW ZEALAND



silverfernflag.org



FLAG SIGNIFICANCE

ELEMENTS

A stylised **Silver Fern**, *kaponga*, a New Zealand icon for well over 160 years, has been worn proudly by many generations of New Zealanders, from sports people, to military personnel, police, and fire-fighters. The silver fern is an element of indigenous flora representing the growth of our nation. The multiple points of the fern leaf represent Aotearoa's peaceful multicultural society, a single fern leaf spreading upwards represents that we are all New Zealanders – one people – growing onward into the future.

The **Southern Cross**, *Māhutonga*, is the defining element in the present New Zealand Flag, and represents our geographic location in the antipodes. The Southern Cross is visible throughout the year in the southern night skies. It has been used as a navigational aid for centuries and it helped guide early settlers to our islands. Each star is also representative of the major island groups of New Zealand – North Island, South Island, Stewart Island, and the Chatham Islands.

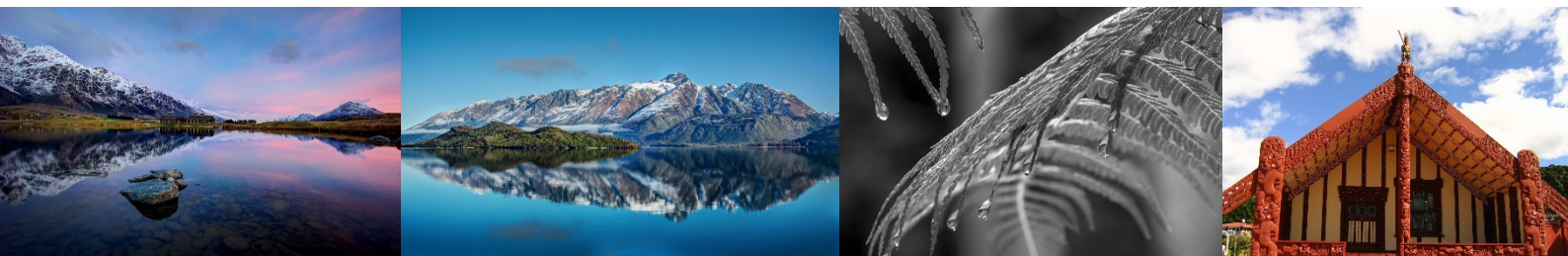
COLOURS

Black represents the pride and strength of New Zealand, and since 1975 is a gazetted official NZ colour.

Red is a significant and prestigious colour to Māori, Red represents our heritage and also represents the sacrifice made by all New Zealanders during wartime.

Blue represents our clear atmosphere and also the Pacific Ocean, which surrounds our archipelago nation, over which all New Zealanders, or their ancestors, crossed to get to New Zealand.

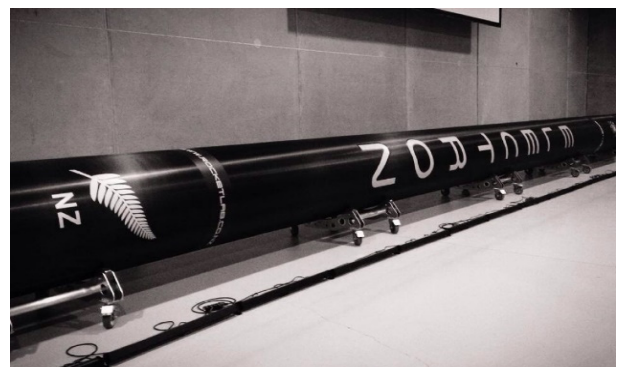
White represents Aotearoa, 'Land of the Long White Cloud', the Māori name for New Zealand. The colour white also represents peace.





SILVER FERN

Why use a Silver Fern? Quite simply, a flag is meant to be flown. Flags should be highly visible symbols of a nation's presence. A visit to any town in the USA or Switzerland, for example, shows what happens when a flag is an emotional symbol. The New Zealand flag needs to have emotional symbolism in order for it to be embraced and used by New Zealanders. In many instances, a flag is used in an international context. There is no question that the Silver Fern is the most recognised symbol of New Zealand. For over a century and a half the Silver Fern has been the emblem of our sports men and women. The Silver Fern is used extensively as a symbol by Government, tourism, trade organisations and commercial brands. it's on our money, it's on our passports, it's on our national airline, our rockets, it even appears on our war medals, and memorials. The Silver Fern says "New Zealand".



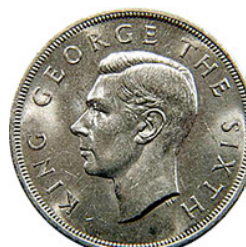
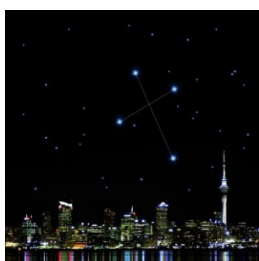


SOUTHERN CROSS

Why include the Southern Cross? For hundreds of years the Southern Cross has been a big part of our history, celestial navigation helped bring early settlers to our islands and the constellation places us geographically in the antipodes.

Our unique red-starred version of the southern cross should be kept, as it is part of our history, the stars first featured on our ensign of 1869, (made official in 1902) and it is believed they were coloured red to honour Māori. There are different traditional interpretations of the Southern Cross, and it is known by at least eight different names in Māori. Tainui Māori saw it as an anchor, named Te Punga, of a great sky canoe, while to Wairarapa Māori it was Māhutonga – an aperture in the Milky Way through which storm winds escaped.

When New Zealand soldiers sailed off to fight in South Africa in the Boer War at the beginning of the 20th century, they sang: 'We are the boys of the Southern Cross, our stars shine on our flags'. Over a century later the constellation continues to be relevant to nationhood and national honour. For example it is depicted on our Tomb of the Unknown Warrior, unveiled in 2004. Featured on the lid of the tomb, the stars are seen to have guided the unknown warrior back to New Zealand from distant battlefields. The Southern Cross also featured in our first coat of arms of 1911. Finally New Zealand is the only country on earth with the Southern cross on its flag where the constellation can be seen throughout the year, and throughout the entire country on a clear night, despite having the Southern Cross on their respective flags, the northern regions of Australia, Brazil, and other nations don't see the Southern Cross at night all year round.



Southern Cross
Healthcare



SERVICES

Consideration would need to be given to lesser known flags flown by various services such as the Royal NZ Navy. At present the navy raises a white version of the NZ flag called the white ensign. In the past there have been various attempts to design future services flags, all with varying degrees of success. Upon flag change, we could follow examples set by other commonwealth nations and put a future national flag in the canton, or 1st quarter (the top corner nearest to the flagpole) and the emblem of the service organisation in the fly (the 2nd and 4th quarters of the flag furthest from the flagpole). Canada did this quite successfully with their joint services and Air Force ensign, seen in the examples below.



The Canadian Air Force Ensign



Canadian Joint Forces Ensign



Present NZ Police Ensign

The Canadians simply removed the Union Jack and replaced it with their present flag. It would follow that NZ would do the same upon flag change, for example, a future New Zealand Navy flag could include the existing navy emblem which features an anchor, and silver ferns.

Services flags can be updated easily when flag change occurs, and we can easily follow a precedent set by the 53 other commonwealth nations who have updated their flag since World War Two.



NAVY



ARMY



AIRFORCE



MARITIME



CUSTOMS



CIVIL AVIATION



POLICE



FIRE



SERVICES

Another approach to services flags would be to use the silver fern device in a similar fashion to the United Kingdom's Union Flag based service ensigns, this would mean replacing the Union Flag with the Silver Fern, and sometimes replacing the Southern Cross with the shield of the service it represents in the fly.



Existing Air Force Ensign



Proposed Air Force Ensign



NAVY



ARMY



AIRFORCE



MARITIME



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CIVIL AVIATION



POLICE



FIRE

Concept drawings by Steven Squires and Kyle Lockwood.



1. ANZAC Day poster – 25th April 2015



2. It's time for a NEW Zealand Flag – 5 June 2015



3. Some criticise the fern as being solely about sport, the fern has also been a services symbol since the 1890s – 12 June 2015



4. New Zealand has been separate from the UK since 1947, it's time our flag reflected New Zealand's maturity – 20 June 2015



KYLE LOCKWOOD

DIP D ARCH, DIP ARCH TECH, MNZIOB

Kyle Lockwood was born in Wellington, his family connections to New Zealand span centuries, his Māori ancestors and some of his European ancestors were in New Zealand prior to the signing of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi.

His interests include drawing, design and photography. From an early age, he was often drawing the ships, aircraft, and buildings he could see from the front window of his grandparent's seaside home.

Kyle attended Massey University, in Wellington, where he studied two architectural qualifications and graduated as top student in 2001. It was at Massey where he first drew sketches for the Silver fern flag.

The Silver Fern Flag first won a flag design competition in July 2004. Since then he has had widespread support for his flag from all over the world, including support from Graham Bartram, Secretary-General of the International Federation of Vexillological Associations, Chief Vexillologist of the Flag Institute, and consultant on flag protocol to HM Queen Elizabeth II.

Kyle achieved a world-first when his flag designs were voted first and second place in New Zealand's national flag referendum of 2015.

Today Kyle works as an architectural designer in Melbourne, and like many Kiwis he has moved abroad for work experience, he has been involved in the building industry internationally for over 20 years, in New Zealand, Australia, the Cook Islands, and Singapore. Kyle is also an overseas member of the New Zealand Institute of Building.

Further Information about the flag can be found at silverfernflag.org

