



B.28AP(21)

Annual plan 2021/22



Photo acknowledgement:
Ginny Dunn, Office of the Auditor-General

Annual plan 2021/22

Presented to the House of
Representatives under section 36(4)
of the Public Audit Act 2001.

June 2021

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Auditor-General's overview

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā karangarangatanga maha o te motu, tēnā koutou.

I am pleased to present my Office's *Annual plan 2021/22*.

The purpose of our work is to improve trust in, and promote the value of, the public sector. Our work programme for 2021/22 has been prepared with this firmly in mind.

We have decided to continue to progress five priority areas for our work in 2021/22:

- the Covid-19 response and recovery;
- how well the public sector is improving the lives of New Zealanders;
- how well the public accountability system is working as a whole;
- keeping New Zealanders informed about public sector performance and accountability; and
- sharing insights about what “good” looks like.

Our priority areas take into account the environment we are working in. They provide a balance between the immediate response to Covid-19 and the important issues in the public sector that pre-dated Covid-19. This includes improving outcomes for Māori, reducing family violence, and improving housing, education, and health outcomes.

We will also consider how well New Zealand's public accountability system meets public expectations with a particular focus on the well-being agenda, understanding Māori perspectives on accountability, and significant government investment decisions. Our work also includes a focus on ethics and integrity in the public sector. We will continue supporting the public sector through providing more good practice guidance, finding different ways to share examples of what “good” looks like, and continuing to support audit and risk committees.

Our plan was finalised following feedback on our *Draft annual plan 2021/22*. A wide range of stakeholders, including members of Parliament, government and non-government organisations, and the public provided comments, which we have used to refine our plan.

I thank everyone who took the time to send feedback on our draft plan. A summary of the changes we have made is provided in Appendix 1. We will also use the feedback as we carry out more detailed planning of our work.

The response to Covid-19 and a large reform agenda has placed the public sector under ongoing pressure. I acknowledge the significant efforts of public servants who work to deliver services we all rely on every day. It is my expectation that our work will support the public sector's efforts in these challenging times.

I also thank my staff for their work to continue to support trust and confidence in the public sector. Our 2021/22 work programme is comprehensive, challenging, and necessary. I look forward to reporting on it as the year progresses.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Ryan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Ryan
Controller and Auditor-General

24 June 2021

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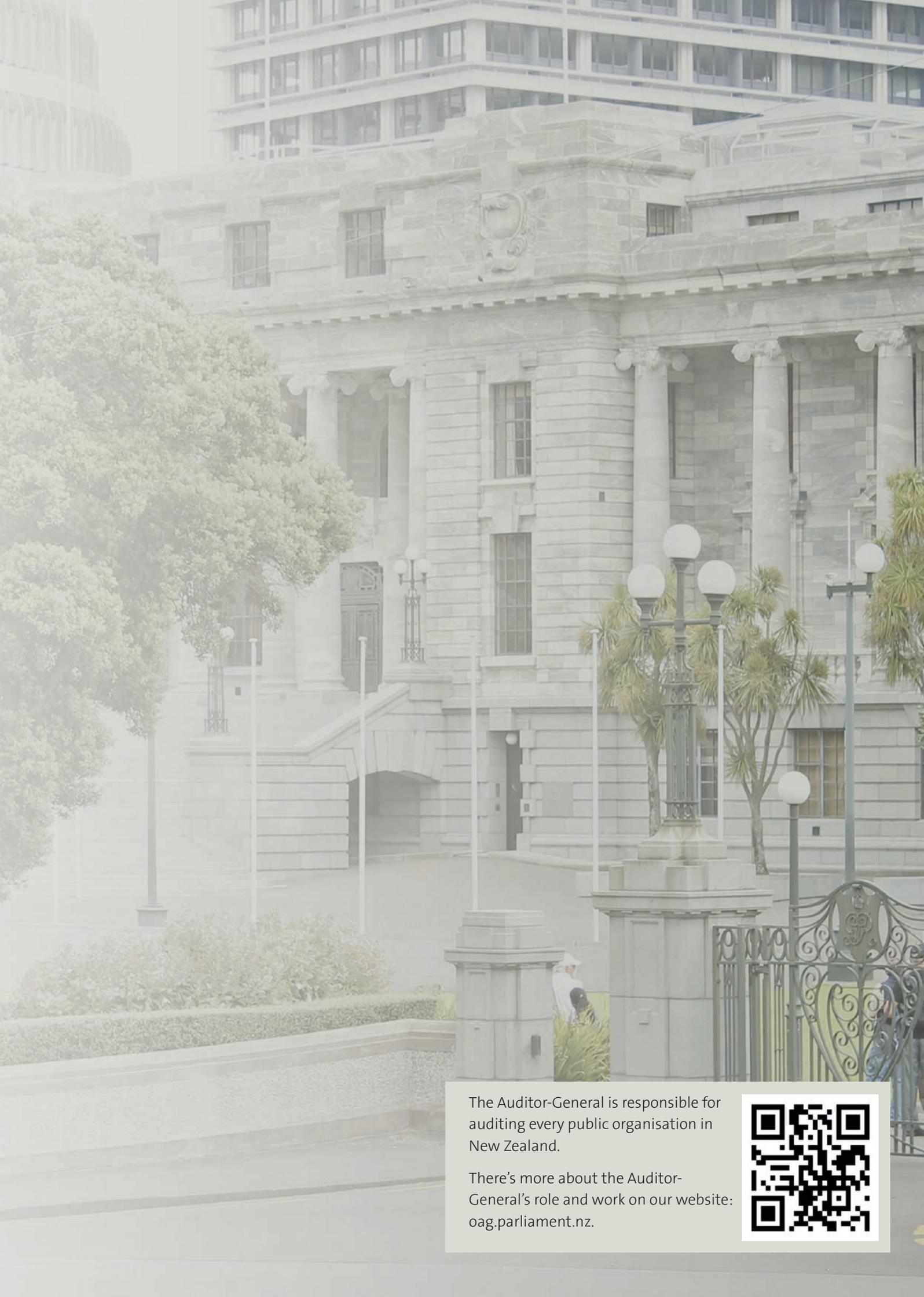
Introduction

Our purpose is improving trust, promoting value in the public sector. Everything we do is focused on how well public organisations perform, account for their performance, and deliver value for money.

This annual plan is a key accountability document for our Office. It describes the work we consider will help us to achieve our ultimate outcome – that Parliament and the public can have trust and confidence in New Zealand’s public sector.

This annual plan outlines our discretionary programme of work for 2021/22 – performance audits, special studies, regular reports and updates, and good practice guidance. It does not cover in depth our mandatory audits of nearly 3400 audits of public organisations and their subsidiaries,¹ nor the inquiries that we will carry out. In contrast to our planned work, our inquiries work responds to matters of current concern and is largely unpredictable.

By 30 June each year, we are required to present our annual plan to the Speaker of the House of Representatives (see section 36 of the Public Audit Act 2001). The annual plan provides Parliament, the public, and the public sector the opportunity to understand our Office’s priorities for the year.



The Auditor-General is responsible for auditing every public organisation in New Zealand.

There's more about the Auditor-General's role and work on our website: oag.parliament.nz.



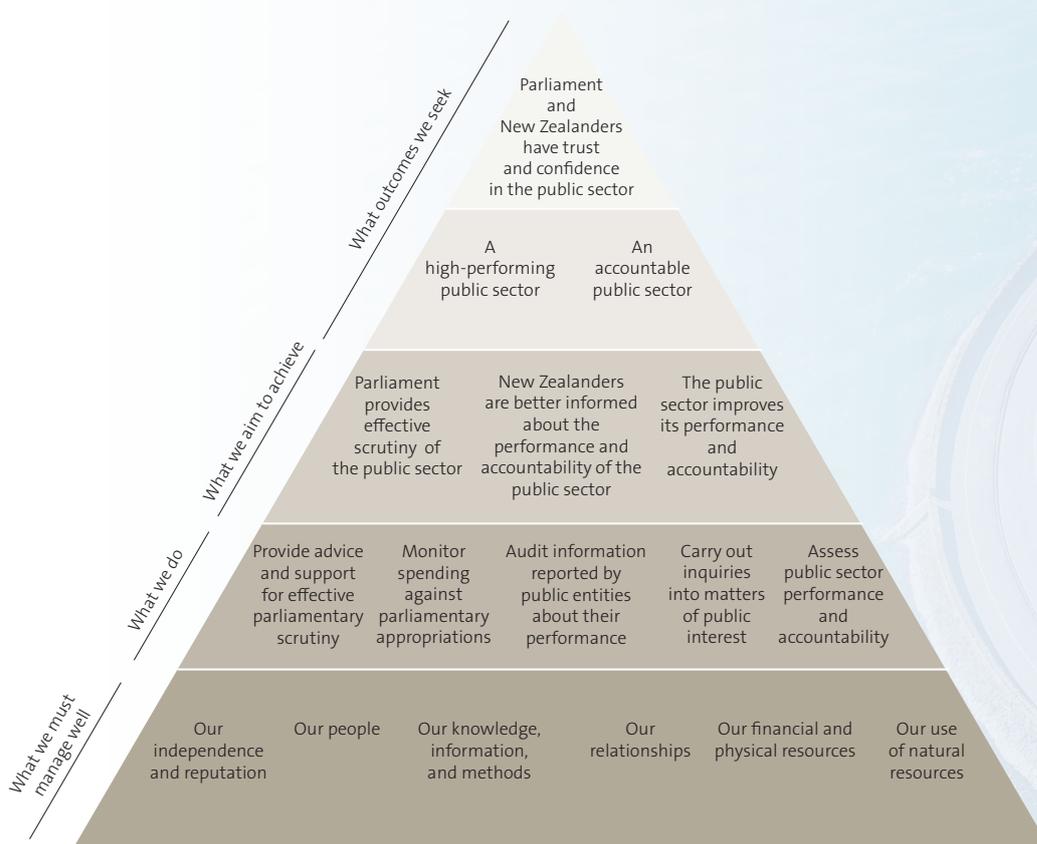
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What shapes our annual plan

Our strategic intentions provide the context for our work

The Auditor-General's strategic intentions to 2025 is our long-term strategic planning document. It sets out the outcomes and impacts we are working towards. It also provides the strategic context for our *Annual plan 2021/22*.

Our vision is of a high-performing and an accountable public sector. The ultimate outcome we seek is that Parliament and the public have trust and confidence in the public sector, as shown in our performance framework below.



Our medium-term strategy for 2018-2021 describes how we will build our core functions and what we will do differently to achieve our outcomes and impacts. These intentions provide the context for the work described in our annual plan.



Risks to achieving the work in our annual plan

We recognise that there are risks to achieving our work, including that:

- we do not have sufficient capacity or capability to do all the work;
- some unforeseen event disrupts or delays our work;
- we do not achieve the right balance in quality, timeliness, and cost of our work; and
- we do not achieve the impacts we are aiming for.

Our planning helps to mitigate these risks and regular reviews let us respond and adjust if new priorities arise. Our business continuity planning minimises the chance that unforeseen events will disrupt our work.

Many sources inform our decisions about what work to include

We carefully consider what work to include in our annual plan. We draw on a range of information sources to help identify and prioritise the work we include.

As the auditor of every public organisation in New Zealand, we have an ongoing role with every public organisation. This allows us to consider performance and accountability matters for the whole public sector. We regularly assess the issues, risks, and opportunities we see throughout the public sector. Our assessment is informed by the information our auditors and sector managers continually gather, our ongoing monitoring of risks, and our independent analysis of public sector performance and issues.

We also draw on our previous work and knowledge – reports we have published (including inquiries, research reports, and the results of recent audits) and information from our follow-up reports on how public organisations have implemented our recommendations.

Our central and local government advisory groups help us better understand the common themes and issues in their respective sectors. Our discussions with select committees and members of Parliament are also important sources of information.

The consultation process for our draft annual plan, enabling input from Parliament, the broader public sector, and directly from members of the public, also helps to prioritise our work.

We use all this information to help determine what work to include in our annual plan. The work that we intend to do is based on information we know at present. If new information or risks come to light, we might decide to change some of our planned work.

The environment in which we work is an important consideration

The public sector is seen as generally free of corruption and has strong transparency and accountability arrangements. New Zealanders have access to high-quality public services that are generally reliable and well managed. Our work on independently auditing the financial statements of the Government shows that our public financial management system remains strong.

However, the public sector is under significant and ongoing pressure due to the need to respond to both the global pandemic and to a large reform agenda, while maintaining existing services. Despite this, trust and confidence in the public sector remains high while expectations of government continue to increase.

Effects of Covid-19

Covid-19 has shown New Zealand's vulnerability to global risks and the challenging and changing environment in which we operate. The full effects of Covid-19 continue to unfold. There will be ongoing challenges facing the public sector, especially if there are further outbreaks of Covid-19 in the community. The Covid-19 vaccination programme will continue to be a critical government initiative in 2021/22. How well the vaccination programme is delivered will be important to maintaining New Zealanders' trust in public services and in government.

Government spending during the Covid-19 response has been significant – for example, the Business Support Subsidy Scheme, the Small Business Cashflow Scheme, and shovel-ready projects form part of the \$62 billion of funding available for the Government's spending on responding to Covid-19. Recovery from the effects of Covid-19 remained a key element of Budget 2021. It is important that the Government is transparent about the Covid-19-related spending and what it has achieved with it. Good quality decision-making, value for money, integrity, and effective monitoring and reporting practices are essential, particularly when large expenditure is occurring quickly and in new ways.

Some services were already under pressure before Covid-19 – for example, elective surgery. How public organisations are planning their response to, and recovery from, Covid-19 and how they position themselves to be successful in a post-vaccination environment will be important. Scenario planning and other ways to manage risk and uncertainty will also be important.

“ Covid-19 has shown New Zealand's vulnerability to global risks.

Loss of revenue and financial stability are serious issues for some sectors – for example, in tourism, hospitality, transport, and education. Long-term planning of economic and other initiatives becomes even more important, especially when considering scenarios of further outbreaks or other major risk events.

“ *A well-functioning housing system requires multiple agencies to work effectively together.* ”

Despite New Zealand’s generally successful response to Covid-19, the long-term effects on New Zealand and its place in the world are yet to be fully seen.

Climate change

There are significant and increasing estimates of the cost of adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change.

The transition to a zero-carbon economy will require effective leadership, governance, and accountability arrangements. The risks, strategy, and financial effects of this transition will need to be transparent. The level and speed of change that might occur will be a challenge for many public organisations.

The public sector’s contribution to the Government’s emissions reduction targets will require focused efforts to reduce emissions and enhanced reporting for many public organisations. Enhanced climate-related disclosure and assurance requirements are also expected for companies that operate in financial markets, including a small group of public organisations. We will prepare for a likely assurance role over the greenhouse gas emission disclosures by those public organisations.

We will also continue our work on measuring and reporting our greenhouse gas emissions as a voluntary contribution to the Carbon Neutral Government Programme. We will continue to consider the role we might play in assessing how public organisations are meeting the programme’s requirements.

Māori-Crown relations

The public sector is increasing its focus on strengthening its relationship with Māori. It is also seeking to improve its competency in working with, and responding to, iwi and hapū. This includes policy formulation and areas such as water management and health. However, current capability in the public sector to respond is still developing.

Accountability expectations about progress with strategies and programmes specifically designed to improve outcomes for Māori, as well as for more general

spending that affects outcomes for Māori, are increasing. Many reforms (for example, water, health, and the Resource Management Act) are of particular interest to Māori.

The Public Service Act 2020 introduced a range of obligations for the public service to actively work with Māori. It will be important to understand how these changes are being led and implemented as the public service begins to work under this new Act.

Local government challenges

Councils continue to face change. New regulatory requirements and instruments (for example, new and updated national policy statements) have been introduced and other changes are proposed, including the “three waters” and resource management reforms. These changes could significantly affect the shape of local government. Councils are also considering the impact of climate change and what this means for the delivery of services over time.

Councils have received Covid-19-related funding (for example, shovel-ready funding). As with other organisations receiving Covid-19 funding, it will be important for councils to monitor the effectiveness of their spending and publicly report on it.

System-level changes and public service reforms

Public sector organisations continue to prepare cross-agency and sector strategies and initiatives to respond to long-standing issues, such as family violence and sexual violence. Public organisations worked well together to respond to Covid-19 (and have worked well together in response to other crises) due in part to having a compelling focus.

There have been important changes to legislation, in particular the enactment of the Public Service Act. This Act enables new ways of working across the public sector. This will, in some instances, require new accountability arrangements to be defined. However, improved performance reporting at the entity, sector, and, where appropriate, initiative level, as well as at an all-of-government level, will be important for New Zealanders to clearly see the effectiveness of government spending and performance against priorities, no matter how the public sector chooses to organise itself.

Recently announced reforms in the health sector will also bring new organisational structures and accountability arrangements.

We intend to continue our work to track and better understand reported performance across various sectors. This will enable us to provide a future assessment about the outcomes achieved from the changes and reforms currently being implemented across the public sector.

“*fraud and integrity risks increase when a significant amount of new money enters the system with expectations of fast delivery.*”

Infrastructure investment and management

There was significant central government investment in infrastructure before, and as part of, the Covid-19 response. There were also significant levels of investment in infrastructure announced as part of Budget 2021.

Councils are also proposing significant infrastructure investments. Demographic changes are putting increased pressure on high-growth areas, making the work that the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission Te Waihanga (Te Waihanga)² is doing on infrastructure strategic planning more important.

Historical under-investment in infrastructure has attracted increased public attention after some highly visible asset failures and service disruptions. Public expectations for a clearer picture on asset condition, as well as plans and strategies for funding and financing infrastructure investment (in both central and local government) are increasing.

Housing sector

Housing is important for social and economic well-being. The lack of a stable home is linked to poorer life outcomes and can adversely affect community cohesion.

Housing supply and affordability is a significant and complex issue. Higher house prices and rents have adverse effects on many households, particularly those on low incomes. Funding for housing and urban development initiatives were a major part of Budget 2021.

A well-functioning housing and urban development system requires multiple agencies from central and local government to work effectively together. Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has oversight of the system. Other central government agencies with significant housing functions include Kāinga Ora Homes and Communities (Kāinga Ora) and the Ministry of Social Development Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora (Ministry of Social Development). Positive housing and urban development outcomes also rely on

² Many government agencies have both English and Māori names. We list both, where available, then use the form that each agency predominantly uses on its website.

public organisations involved in the planning and provision of physical and social infrastructure, such as Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi) and the Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga (the Ministry of Education).

Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity threats remain a critical risk to public sector delivery, integrity, and ultimately the trust and confidence the public has in the public sector. Significant ongoing investment in cybersecurity will continue to be a feature of many public organisations, although risks will always remain.

Capability

In some sectors, there are capability gaps and disconnection between training and the skills needed. In particular, there are issues with the education workforce, the health workforce, and for a number of trades. The reform of the institutes of technology and polytechnics sector is intended to improve the vocational education system for better delivery of work-integrated skills for learners, employers, and communities.

Although strategic planning and building infrastructure will remain important, Covid-19 has helped drive new ideas for workforce planning, including flexible working and changed approaches to workforce well-being and capability. Border restrictions are also affecting some sectors, resulting in shortages of skills traditionally brought in from offshore.

Ethics and integrity

New Zealand's public service has a well-deserved reputation for integrity. However, fraud and integrity risks increase when a significant amount of new money enters the system with expectations of fast delivery.

Sexual harassment and bullying remain workplace issues in the public sector. Despite genuine attempts to address them, reviews continue to show that current efforts to reduce sexual harassment and bullying are not always effective.

Family violence and sexual violence

Family violence and sexual violence are widely recognised as complex problems. These crimes persist despite the efforts of successive governments, government agencies, and numerous community organisations working with those who are either harmed by or perpetrators of violence.

Equity

Attaining social and economic equity for Māori and Pasifika continues to be a challenge. Outcomes continue to be consistently and significantly lower than other groups, while gender inequalities and geographical inequities also persist.

The economic impact of Covid-19 places lower socio-economic groups at greater risk.

Unemployment rates remain high for sections of the population. Children who live in poverty have significantly worse health and educational outcomes than other children. Many people with disabilities face reduced opportunities, with poorer life outcomes compared with non-disabled people.

Five priority areas for our work in 2021/22

Given all these considerations and the feedback we received on our draft annual plan, we have determined five priority areas for our work in 2021/22:

- the Covid-19 response and recovery;
- how well the public sector is improving the lives of New Zealanders;
- how well the public accountability system is working as a whole;
- keeping New Zealanders informed about public sector performance and accountability; and
- sharing insights about what “good” looks like.

In the pages that follow, we describe in more detail the work we plan to carry out under each of the five priority areas. Appendix 3 provides a summary of our work planned for 2021/22 and the timing for that work.

3

The Covid-19 response and recovery

In 2020/21, we started a three-year programme of work to provide independent information to Parliament and the public about the effectiveness of the Government's response to, and New Zealand's recovery from, Covid-19.

Parliament gave the Government considerable flexibility to fund its response to Covid-19 within existing legislative and financial constraints. The Government's emergency response was carried out at pace and under extraordinary conditions. This, combined with the larger than usual level of expenditure tagged to Covid-19 initiatives, meant that sound financial management, governance, and accountability were critical to ensuring that resources were directed to where they were needed most.

We consider it important that Parliament and the public are provided with clear and accessible information about how effectively Covid-19 funding is spent. Parliament and the public will also want to know whether that funding has provided value for money.

Building on the work we started in 2020/21, we will continue work on understanding how well the public sector responded to Covid-19 and how well it is positioned to support New Zealand to recover.

In 2021/22, we will complete our work on understanding the central response to Covid-19, progress work on case studies examining public sector business continuity, and begin the second phase of our work on the vaccine roll-out. Depending on how the Covid-19 situation evolves, we might look at other aspects of the response or look at how the Government is planning for a post-Covid-19 environment.

By 2022/23, we will look at evaluating the overall response to Covid-19 and understand whether the significant areas of expenditure have achieved value for money.

Planned work for 2021/22

Understanding the central response to Covid-19

In 2021/22, we will continue our work to provide an independent picture of the central response during 2020 to Covid-19. Our work is focused on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and its role in co-ordinating the national response.

We will look at the arrangements for responding to a pandemic and how these were implemented or adapted to respond to Covid-19. We also intend to assess how issues and risks were identified, and improvements made, to strengthen the ongoing response to Covid-19.



Case studies on public sector business continuity planning in response to Covid-19

In 2021/22, we plan to carry out case studies on how agencies have adapted and/or modified their business continuity planning in response to their experiences of Covid-19.

We will consider a range of agencies, including local government. Case studies will describe how agencies have learned from their experiences of Covid-19 and what changes they have made to be better prepared for future business disruption. Our work will help to inform our sharing of insights about what “good” looks like (see Part 7).

Further work on the Government’s roll-out of the national Covid-19 vaccination programme

In 2020/21, we started a programme of work looking at the national roll-out of the Covid-19 vaccine. Phase 1 of our work was a rapid review to provide an independent picture of how well positioned the Covid-19 Immunisation Programme was to meet the Government’s objective of vaccinating as many people as possible by the end of 2021.

In 2021/22, we intend to carry out a second, and possibly third, phase of work. Later in 2021, once the national roll-out is well under way, we will provide an update on progress since our Phase 1 report. This will include documenting any changes to the strategy or programme, assessing how much progress has been made, and how well the programme is being managed. Once the roll-out has been completed, we might look at what has been learned and how those lessons will strengthen the health system’s approach to immunisation more generally.

Examining other aspects of the Covid-19 response

Depending on how the Covid-19 situation evolves, we will ensure that we have capacity to complete a further performance audit on an aspect of the response. We want to retain some flexibility to focus on the issues that emerge as most significant to Parliament and the public.

At this stage, topics that we consider might be of interest include how well the Government worked with the most vulnerable during the response, another area of significant expenditure (such as the Small Business Cashflow Scheme), or the post-Covid-19 recovery planning.

4

How well the public sector is improving the lives of New Zealanders

Public money is spent on providing support and services that are designed to make a positive difference to New Zealanders. How the Government is improving the lives of New Zealanders is a priority area for our work programme.

The work we will carry out in 2021/22 on better understanding how well the public sector is improving the lives of New Zealanders is focused on:

1. improving outcomes for Māori;
2. reducing family violence;
3. improving housing outcomes;
4. improving education outcomes; and
5. improving health outcomes.

We describe below the work we will carry out in 2021/22 and work we are considering for 2022/23.

1. Improving outcomes for Māori

The public sector has an important role in building a successful and effective relationship between Māori and the Crown and contributing to improved outcomes for Māori. Public service leaders are required, under the Public Service Act 2020, to develop and maintain the capability of the public service to engage with Māori and understand Māori perspectives.

Our work will focus on how effectively the public sector is contributing to improved outcomes for Māori. There have been many government initiatives and targeted funding for particular issues. We want to understand what has been achieved for the investment that has been made, including the effectiveness of targeted funding. In 2021/22, we also intend to talk with iwi and hapū to gain their perspectives on the outcomes that matter most. We expect the results of this work, alongside the work we have carried out to see what has already been achieved, to inform the choices we will make about where to focus our work.

We will also continue our work on Māori perspectives on accountability, including researching what effective public accountability looks like for Māori. This work builds on our broader programme of work on how the accountability system as a whole is working for New Zealanders.

In 2021/22, we also plan to revisit our 2015 performance audit of Whānau Ora. That audit described what Whānau Ora is, looked at how it was funded, how much had been invested, and how much had been spent. This work will examine how effectively commissioning and delivery organisations are now using the Whānau Ora approach to help whānau achieve positive outcomes.



In 2022/23, we intend to progress work to look specifically at how well public organisations are meeting Tiriti o Waitangi settlement obligations. We might also look at how well public organisations are meeting new requirements in the Public Service Act 2020 to develop and maintain the capability of the public service to engage with Māori and to understand Māori perspectives, and comply with Tiriti obligations more generally.

| |
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| Planned work for 2021/22 |
| Understanding how well the public sector is delivering the outcomes that matter for Māori |
| We will carry out work in 2021/22 to identify areas of significant investment targeted toward improving outcomes for Māori and compare that with the results that have been achieved. |
| Māori perspectives on accountability |
| We plan to complete our research project exploring Māori perspectives on what effective public accountability looks like. Our work will give us a better understanding of the range of Māori views and how the public sector can build and maintain the trust of iwi and hapū. This research will build on what we have learned from our previous research into public accountability. It will inform the choices we make about future topics or areas for attention. We intend to publish our research. |
| Whānau Ora: What has been achieved? |
| In 2015, our work was focused on understanding the Whānau Ora approach and what the Government had invested. Revisiting our 2015 performance audit, we will examine how effectively commissioning and delivery agencies use the Whānau Ora approach to help whānau achieve positive outcomes. |

2. Reducing family violence

The Government has identified preventing and eliminating family violence as a priority in the wider effort to improve the well-being of New Zealanders.

In 2018, a cross-government joint venture was set up to work in new ways to reduce “family violence, sexual violence and violence within family/whānau”. The role of the joint venture is to help co-ordinate efforts and lead a whole-of-government, integrated response to family violence and sexual violence.

In 2019/20, we started a multi-year programme of work aimed at examining public organisations’ performance in achieving reductions in family violence. In 2021/22, we will look at how well agencies involved in the joint venture are working with the non-government sector to deliver services to help people affected by family violence and sexual violence.

In 2022/23, we intend to look at how well interventions are being implemented and service delivery performance more generally.

We intend to continue building our understanding of family violence, its costs to society, and whether the system responds effectively in ways that will lead to significant and sustained reductions. We plan to report at different stages on the results of this work.

Planned work for 2021/22**Family violence and sexual violence: How well are agencies working together and with the non-government sector to deliver services to address family violence and sexual violence?**

In 2021/22, we will continue our multi-year programme of work, with a view to examining how well the agencies involved in the joint venture are working together and with the non-government sector to deliver services to address family violence and sexual violence.

As part of this work, we expect to look at how public organisations are partnering with organisations delivering services to Māori and how the organisations are developing their capability to engage with Māori and understand Māori perspectives in their work.

We envisage that this work will include looking at the effectiveness of work with service providers that support population groups that can find accessing family violence and sexual violence services difficult (for example, Pasifika, people with disabilities, and migrant communities).

We expect to use a combination of approaches in carrying out this work (a mix of performance audit, data analysis, and research).

3. Improving housing outcomes

Adequate and affordable housing is crucial for social and economic well-being. Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the system leader for housing. HUD has embarked on a new “place-based” approach of targeting interventions more closely to regional and local needs. For this to work in practice, central and local government will need to work closely together.

Through our work, we want to gain assurance that HUD is effectively overseeing the housing system. This will involve looking at how HUD uses data and analysis for decision-making and planning. We will also look at how central and local government agencies are working together to deliver positive housing and community outcomes, including for groups at greater risk of poor outcomes. The planning, funding, and implementing of housing and infrastructure projects need to be well aligned to deliver these outcomes.

In 2021/22, we intend to complete performance audits looking at system-level oversight and the planning and implementation of specific housing and urban development projects. These performance audits will focus on HUD, Kāinga Ora Homes and Communities, and other central and local government agencies involved in planning or funding core and social infrastructure. We will seek to understand how efficiently housing projects are being delivered and how agencies are ensuring the quality of that housing.

Given the housing disparities that Māori and Pasifika experience, we will consider how the housing system is working for these communities in each topic of this programme of work.

Planned work for 2021/22**Effectiveness of Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga Ministry of Housing and Urban Development's leadership of the housing and urban development system**

Housing is a key determinant of social and economic well-being. New Zealand's housing and urban development system faces significant challenges, especially access to affordable housing.

In 2021/22, we will examine how HUD is exercising system leadership and enabling positive outcomes. We want to gain assurance that the oversight of the housing system is effective. We will look at planning, clarity of strategy, how it translates into the selection of interventions, and how HUD monitors and adjusts implementation. We expect to examine governance and how well arrangements support effective interactions between HUD, other central government agencies, and local councils. We will particularly look at how HUD uses data and analysis to inform decision-making and planning. This will include looking at data and trend information for different groups at risk of poor outcomes.

Planning of significant housing and urban development projects

We will carry out a performance audit looking at how Kāinga Ora Homes and Communities works with other organisations to plan and implement significant housing and urban development projects.

We are particularly interested in how effectively central and local government interact on infrastructure planning and implementation, especially given recent announcements of significant additional funding (\$3.8 billion) for infrastructure and land development. As part of this work, we will consider how iwi and hapū have been involved in the planning processes, and to what extent projects support positive outcomes for Māori. We will also seek to understand how efficiently housing projects are being delivered and what agencies are doing to ensure the quality of that housing.

4. Improving education outcomes

Our education system needs to deliver, among other outcomes, workers with the skills that employers need, researchers who innovate, and people who contribute to a diverse and enriched society. To be successful, we need a stable and strong education system that keeps learners engaged, motivated, and able to achieve to the best of their ability.

Some young people do not, or cannot, engage successfully with education. School attendance rates are poor for some, and there are long waits for learning support, particularly early intervention. School exclusion rates are higher for some groups than for others. This has an adverse effect on the adult life of the disadvantaged learner, and on New Zealand overall.

The Ministry of Education is focused on the issues of disadvantage. However, the reasons for educational disadvantage and lack of student engagement are complicated, and education agencies are not the only organisations responsible for finding solutions. Many government-funded strategies, projects, and initiatives aim to address barriers to educational achievement.

Addressing educational disparities

In 2021/22, we will look at aspects of public sector performance in addressing barriers to successful education outcomes for New Zealanders. We will focus initially on what information the Ministry of Education has and how it is using it to understand and determine the reasons for educational disparities. We will consider how the Ministry identifies those learners at risk of disengagement from education and responds to those risks. We will also review how initiatives to address educational disparities for learners are developed and monitored and how the effects on educational outcomes for those learners are measured.

We will use the findings from this work to prioritise further work on disparity of outcomes for particular groups of New Zealand children in 2022/23 and beyond. We expect to review how effectively the Ministry is monitoring, evaluating, and learning from the effects of programmes and initiatives to ensure that students are successfully engaged in education.

Planned work for 2021/22

How the Ministry of Education is using information to address educational disparities

We intend to review how effectively the Ministry of Education is using its information to identify and address inequitable educational outcomes for learners. This includes how the Ministry identifies those learners at risk of disengagement from education and how it responds to those risks.

5. Improving health outcomes

Much of our planned work related to the Government's response to Covid-19 will involve parts of the health sector. We will closely follow the health reforms as they are implemented. In 2021/22 we also want to look at the investment that the Government has made in strengthening mental health services.

In 2018, *He Ara Oranga: Report of the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction* noted that 50-80% of New Zealanders will experience mental distress or addiction challenges, or both, in their lifetime. There is some evidence that this proportion is increasing. The report estimates the annual cost of serious mental illness, including addiction, in New Zealand is in the region of \$12 billion.³

In Budget 2019, the Government announced \$455 million for expanding access and choice of primary mental health and addiction services. We want to understand how the recent government investment has been directed and what has been achieved so far.

³ Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction (2018), *He Ara Oranga: Report of the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction*, Wellington.

Planned work for 2021/22

Effectiveness of investment in mental health services

We intend to identify the significant investment in mental health services in recent years and understand what the purpose of that investment was and how it is being used. We will report on what plans have been developed, how much progress has been made in implementing those plans, and any results achieved to date. This work might also be informed by some analysis of available data to understand what information agencies with responsibilities for mental health services are reporting publicly about improvements in service delivery and outcomes.

5

How well the public accountability system is working as a whole

An effective accountability system is critical to maintaining trust and confidence in the public sector and in government. We have an important role in supporting the public accountability system to meet New Zealanders' expectations today and in the future.

In 2021/22, our work on the integrity of public organisations, risk and resilience planning, and significant government investment decisions will continue.

Our work at a system level will also continue. This includes reviewing aspects of the implementation of the well-being agenda, understanding Māori perspectives on accountability, and influencing (where appropriate for us to do so) the direction of public sector reforms to strengthen accountability to Parliament and the public.

We intend to review and (where appropriate) comment on specific reforms in the public sector, for example, any further Public Finance Act amendments. We have a particular interest in how reforms will work to strengthen public sector performance and accountability, as well as how changes are planned, managed, and governed. Significant reforms have the potential to affect performance. We will be looking at how organisations are managing risks to service delivery, including through our annual audit work.

In 2021/22, we will also respond (where appropriate) to the Government's proposals to reform the health and disability sector.

Our work in 2021/22 on how well the public accountability system is working focuses on:

1. implementing the well-being agenda;
2. resilience and climate change;
3. integrity in the public sector; and
4. processes underpinning significant government investments.

1. Implementing the well-being agenda

Well-being is gaining increased emphasis throughout the public sector. The Public Service Act and Public Finance (Wellbeing) Amendment Act 2020 seek to support public sector stewardship of a set of long-term well-being outcomes.

The amendments will require the Government to set well-being objectives, the Treasury to report on the state of well-being at least once every four years, and public sector chief executives to prepare long-term insights briefings at least once every three years.



The Treasury is preparing a joint long-term fiscal statement and insights briefing in 2021/22 that will incorporate diverse views of well-being, including He Ara Waiora, a tikanga-based well-being framework. We will look at the overall approach the Treasury has taken, how well it meets the requirements of the Public Finance Act 1989 and the Public Service Act 2020, and the extent it helps Parliament understand the long-term fiscal challenges the Government is facing.

Planned work for 2021/22

Commentary on the Treasury's statement on the Government's long-term fiscal position and insights briefing

The Treasury plans to publish its statement on the Government's long-term fiscal position in September 2021. This year, the Treasury is incorporating well-being information from its first long-term insights briefing to the Minister of Finance, as required by the Public Service Act. The long-term insights briefing looks at the medium- to long-term trends, risks, and opportunities for New Zealand through the Treasury's fiscal stewardship lens.

We will look at the Treasury's 2021 statement in terms of how well it describes what the state of the Government's finances might look like, given the range of challenges and opportunities the Government and the country might experience in the future. We also want to review how well the information needed for the insights briefing has been collected, summarised, and integrated into the statement about the Government's long-term fiscal position.

2. Resilience and climate change

Central and local government have important roles in strengthening New Zealand's resilience to a range of risks and potential adverse events. Significant public money is spent on managing risk and strengthening New Zealand's resilience, whether that is responding to adverse events or recovering from them.

In 2022/23, we intend to look at the effectiveness of the emergency management system in planning for, responding to, and recovering from adverse events. Carrying out this work in 2022/23 will allow us to build on what we learn through our work in 2021/22 on the Covid-19 response and on Auckland's emergency management (to be reported in 2021/22). This work might also include a focus on cyber security. For example, we are interested in the extent to which public organisations are taking steps to improve their resilience to cyber threats, given the Government's cyber security strategy published in 2019.

A critical aspect of ensuring resilience to adverse events is understanding, planning for, and responding to the effects of climate change. Many public organisations have climate-related roles and responsibilities. In 2020/21, we focused on councils and their response to climate change. During our audits of the 2021-31 council long-term plans, we considered how councils are factoring climate change into their planning and proposed spending decisions, particularly for areas that might be more vulnerable to climate change effects in the future

and for significant infrastructure projects. We also collected information about how many councils had declared climate emergencies and what actions they were planning in response.

In 2021/22, we will complete our analysis of the actions councils are planning and taking in response to climate change and report the results of this work.

In 2022/23, we will consider what other work we might carry out on the Government's response to managing climate change effects and reducing emissions under the zero-carbon legislation framework. This could involve looking at programmes to reduce emissions in particular sectors, the overall strategy to meet targets, and progress by public organisations in implementing the requirements of the Carbon Neutral Government Programme. We will also consider our role in providing assurance over climate-related reporting by public organisations.

Planned work for 2021/22

Climate change and local government

We will complete our analysis of the 2021-31 council long-term plans and other documents. Our work will establish how well councils are factoring climate change risks and vulnerabilities into their long-term planning, the climate-related actions they plan to take (both to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to climate change), and any funding pressures or information gaps they have identified.

We expect to report our findings in our report on the main matters arising from the audits of councils' long-term plans.

3. Integrity in the public sector

For public organisations to operate effectively and achieve outcomes, it is essential that they have public trust and confidence. Establishing and maintaining that trust and confidence requires a high level of integrity, fairness, and openness. Where there is a question about any one of those, trust and confidence can erode. It is important that public organisations and their staff meet high standards of integrity.

In 2021/22, we will continue our work on integrity to help support public organisations. The fostering of integrity and ethical standards reduces the risk of corruption or wrongdoing, can lead to improvements in the quality of decision-making, and positively increase staff engagement.

We expect that our work will continue to involve collaboration with other integrity-focused organisations, where appropriate – for example, Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission, the Office of the Ombudsman, Transparency International New Zealand, and the Serious Fraud Office. We will also engage with a wide range of other public organisations to encourage further discussion and promote good practice.

| |
|--|
| Planned work for 2021/22 |
| Completion of integrity framework and guidance |
| Building on our work in 2020/21, we will complete and publish an integrity framework and guidance. Where we identify a need, we will publish other supporting integrity resources. |
| Looking at integrity processes in central government |
| We propose to carry out audits of several central government agencies to examine how well they are performing in relation to specific integrity issues. Our interest includes the role of senior leaders in supporting integrity practices in organisations. We might look at what expectations are set and how senior staff show how they are meeting them. This might include when senior staff exercise their discretion to approve exceptions to organisational policies. We are also interested in how organisations are building a culture of integrity. |
| Monitoring progress: Operation Respect (New Zealand Defence Force) |
| Operation Respect was launched in 2016. It is aimed at eliminating inappropriate and harmful behaviours and sexual violence in the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF). In 2020, an independent review into the programme recommended that the Minister of Defence request the Auditor-General to carry out an audit of NZDF's progress on Operation Respect's specific outcomes every two years for 20 years. We will carry out the first audit in 2021/22. |

4. Processes underpinning significant government investments

In 2020/21, we expanded our focus on procurement to look more broadly at significant government investment decisions. It is important that public spending delivers value for money. The spending currently planned for a range of infrastructure projects is considerable. It will have debt implications for generations to come.

The *Government Investment Strategy* guides decisions about significant investments. There are 11 principles to guide decision-makers and those managing significant assets. The intent is to direct government resources to where they create the most value.

We are particularly interested in how effectively the systems and processes work to inform decisions and how decisions are communicated. Processes need to be fair and decisions need to be transparent.

Our work programme seeks to:

- increase the transparency of planning and decision-making processes for large-scale government investments (how does the Government decide what to invest in on behalf of New Zealanders?);
- identify opportunities to strengthen current public sector practice to ensure that the systems and processes underpinning large investments are effective and efficient; and
- understand how the emergency context of Covid-19 has affected government investment decision-making processes and identify any lessons learned.

In 2020/21, we published our work on the management of the Provincial Growth Fund (the Fund). In 2021/22, we intend to report on the reset of the Fund after the Fund investments were reprioritised to focus on the recovery from Covid-19.

In 2021/22 we will complete our work looking at the processes that have underpinned the significant investments the Government has made in the New Zealand Upgrade Programme and the shovel-ready fund. We originally planned to follow up this work by looking at the effectiveness of Treasury's investment management system in supporting significant infrastructure investments in 2021/22. After receiving feedback on our draft annual plan, we have decided to defer this work to 2022/23.

In 2022/23, we also plan to publish what we have learned from our procurement-related work.

| Planned work for 2021/22 |
|--|
| <p>Provincial Growth Fund: Reset of the Provincial Growth Fund and reprioritisation of investments</p> <p>The Provincial Development Unit in the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has reprioritised investments of the Provincial Growth Fund to focus on the recovery from Covid-19.</p> <p>We expect to report on the reset in 2021/22. The work is intended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand and document the decision-making process and advice that underpins the reset and reprioritisation; • understand the criteria and approach to the repurposing (that is, terminating projects, recouping funds, and allocating funds after the reset and reprioritisation) and how this links with the objectives of the Provincial Growth Fund; and • understand the systems, processes, and controls that give effect to the changes in the Provincial Development Unit. |
| <p>Systems and processes underpinning government decisions on major infrastructure investment</p> <p>In late 2019, the Government announced its \$12 billion New Zealand Upgrade Programme. In May 2020, the Government announced that the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund had set aside \$3 billion to fund infrastructure projects across the country. This portion of the fund is commonly referred to as the shovel-ready fund. The fund is targeted towards infrastructure investments that can enable immediate job creation, generate other public benefits, and have construction activity under way within 12 months.</p> <p>We intend to complete our performance audit to assess the effectiveness of the decision-making systems and processes that have underpinned investment decisions for the New Zealand Upgrade Programme and the shovel-ready fund.</p> |

6

Keeping New Zealanders informed about public sector performance and accountability

We have an important role to play in supporting New Zealanders' trust and confidence in the public sector. To have trust and confidence, New Zealanders need to be informed about the issues that matter to them in ways that are meaningful.

Our regular reporting is the main way we keep New Zealanders informed about how the public sector is performing. We intend to continue our work on understanding what information about public services New Zealanders consider relevant and important. We will also continue our work in tracking reported performance in health, housing, and education, and publicly report on this data.

The work we will carry out in 2021/22 includes:

1. a focus on public sector accountability to local and regional communities; and
2. our regular reporting.

1. Public sector accountability to local and regional communities

Our 2019 report *Public accountability: A matter of trust and confidence* observed that, although public officials and their agencies are primarily accountable to their Ministers and through them to Parliament, they must also maintain the trust and confidence of the public they serve. The report asked whether public accountability processes are enough to meet the current and future expectations of the public.

In 2020/21, we started a multi-year programme of work focused on what information about public services communities consider relevant and important.

Part of our work involves research into what information the public consider important to understand the performance of public services and community outcomes. We will examine what information communities want about public sector performance, where they get information now, and how they would like to access and receive information.

This research will inform our ongoing work looking at how we can support improved performance reporting in the public sector. Our research will provide useful insight into the way we present information on public sector performance.

In future years, we will consider looking at the progress and effectiveness of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's Regional Skills Leadership Groups in building the skills needed for economic well-being and development in the regions. Under this new regional approach, workforce, education, and immigration systems are intended to work together to better meet the differing skills needed throughout the country.



Planned work for 2021/22**Public sector accountability to communities**

We plan to carry out a project to determine the information about public sector performance that communities identify as relevant and important to their lives, the extent to which that information is readily available, and the ways in which people would like to receive information.

2. Our regular reporting

Each year, we consolidate the results of our annual audits in central and local government and other sectors. We publish the main findings in sector reports and letters. We use these products to advise select committees, help keep the public informed, and help plan our work programme. We also report on the results of our annual audit of the financial statements of the Government.

In combination with our annual audits, we carry out appropriation audits of government agencies. These are designed to ensure that government expenditure is within the authority provided by Parliament. We also carry out procedures for our Controller function in keeping with a Memorandum of Understanding we have with the Treasury. We report our findings and conclusions to the Treasury throughout the year through monthly Controller reports. Every year, we present a report to Parliament that includes an account of the work carried out under our Controller function for the full financial year, along with our findings and conclusions. We also produce an interim report on our half-year findings (our work from 1 July to 31 December of each year) and various reports on matters of interest.

Other reports that we regularly publish include our follow-up reporting on public organisations' implementation of the recommendations from previous performance audits, and a review of an aspect of Auckland Council's service performance.

We are reviewing the way we follow up with agencies on how they are progressing the recommendations we make in our performance audits. Currently, we carry out about two follow-up audits each year, which we report to Parliament.

We are planning to expand this so that most performance audits are followed up within two years of the audit being completed. To achieve this, we will write to agencies asking for an update on how they are progressing the recommendations from previous performance audits. We intend to publish those responses on our website. As well as this self-reporting by agencies, we will continue our independent assessments of progress on selected performance audit recommendations.

| |
|---|
| Planned work for 2021/22 |
| Sector reports |
| <p>We plan to prepare the following sector reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central government: Results of the 2020/21 audits. • Auditor-General quarterly updates for chief executives. • Results of the 2020 school audits. • Results of the 2020 audits of tertiary education institutions. • Results of the 2020/21 district health board audits. • Local government: Results of the 2020/21 audits. • Main matters arising from our audits of councils' 2021-31 long-term plan consultation documents. • Main matters arising from our audits of councils' 2021-31 long-term plans. |
| Other reports |
| Half-year Controller update |
| <p>Our Controller function is a core part of our role. It provides assurance to Parliament and the public about whether the Government has incurred expenditure in line with Parliament's authority. We report publicly on our work.</p> <p>In 2021/22, we will report our findings for 2020/21 in our report <i>Central government: Results of the 2020/21 audits</i>. We will also continue our regular half-year Controller update, which provides an account of our work and findings for the first six months of 2021/22.</p> <p>We will also publish Controller reports on matters of interest.</p> |
| Auckland landscape scan |
| <p>About 32% of people in New Zealand live in the Auckland region, and that is expected to increase by 600,000 people by 2043. This will take the total Auckland population to 2.2 million. Auckland is home to people from more than 200 different ethnicities, with 40% of Aucklanders born overseas.</p> <p>The Crown owns 20% of Auckland's land, and 31% of wider public sector employees are based in Auckland. Public sector spending in Auckland in 2019 was estimated at 36% of the total public sector spending for the country. Nationally significant public sector work programmes have major policy and delivery components in Auckland.</p> <p>Managing the infrastructure needed for Auckland's growth is increasingly being addressed through jointly funded (Crown and Auckland Council) large scale infrastructure projects. This creates complexity in governance, procurement, and the monitoring of outcomes for these projects.</p> <p>We intend to prepare an Auckland landscape scan to describe these and other issues of interest.</p> |
| Auckland Council review of service performance (topic to be confirmed) |
| <p>Section 104 of the Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009 requires the Auditor-General to review the service performance of Auckland Council and each of its council-controlled organisations from time to time. We are still assessing possible topics for this review.</p> |

7

Sharing insights about what “good” looks like

To improve their performance, public organisations need to understand what is expected of them. They also need relevant good practice guidance.

We plan to identify and share examples of good practice to support public organisations to improve. Building on our previous work, we intend to maintain our focus on supporting independent audit and risk committees. We see these committees as a vital partner in supporting public organisations to improve their performance and accountability.

In 2021/22, we intend to prepare more good practice resources on topics of interest to the public sector. These will supplement our existing good practice guidance. Where appropriate, we plan to work with other organisations that prepare good practice on similar topics to maximise our influence and help public organisations improve. We have an important and influential role as an information broker, pointing public organisations to comparable organisations that do similar activities well.

We plan to implement a range of approaches to share good practice, including a new speaker series that will occur at least quarterly. We intend to use existing forums and other events to share our good practice and examples of activities being done well that others can learn from.

Planned work for 2021/22

Helping to support the effectiveness of audit and risk committees

Independent audit and risk committees are a vital partner in supporting effective governance, accountability, and transparency of public organisations.

Building on our work in 2020/21, we will continue to support and strengthen these relationships by focusing our engagement with audit and risk committees for targeted sectors.

We will focus on:

- Continuing to run forums, including the local government audit and risk virtual workshops and the central government bi-annual forum, and considering what other sectors we might usefully work with.
- Engaging more with audit and risk committee chairpersons to share lessons learned from our inquiries and performance audits and provide other main messages.
- Reviewing and updating our good practice guidance for audit and risk committees.

Support material for new audit and risk committee chairpersons

Where we identify a need, new audit and risk committee chairpersons will receive information about working with our Office and copies of relevant good practice material.

Review of good practice guidance: Audit and risk committees

We will review and update our good practice guidance about audit and risk committees (as noted above).

Review of good practice guidance: *Public sector purchases, grants, and gifts: Managing funding arrangements with external parties*

We will review and update our good practice guidance on managing funding arrangements with external parties.



Sharing good practice: Performance reporting

To help improve public sector performance reporting, we plan to issue further good practice guidance on performance reporting.

Sharing good practice speaker series

Each quarter, we intend to host events where a range of speakers and panellists from the public and private sectors can share their good practice experience, practices, and processes.

Understanding performance and supporting the role of monitoring agencies

A wide range of monitoring agencies have an important role in ensuring that public organisations are fulfilling their obligations and are being managed effectively. In 2021/22, we will complete our work on examining the role and practices of monitoring agencies throughout central government.

This is a topic that will likely be of interest to, and have lessons for, all agencies that have monitoring responsibilities. Once we have completed this work, we will consider further opportunities, including whether a good practice guide might be useful.

Appendix 1

Response to feedback on our draft annual plan

Section 36 of the Public Audit Act 2001 outlines the requirements for the preparation of the annual plan of the Auditor-General. This includes the consideration of any comments of the Speaker or any committee of the House of Representatives on our *Draft annual plan 2021/22*. The information below outlines feedback received from committees and our response to the feedback.

The Finance and Expenditure Committee (FEC) suggested we consider how efficiently Kāinga Ora Homes and Communities is delivering housing projects, the quality of social housing being built, and the interaction between agencies involved in housing delivery. The FEC was also interested in our work on improving education outcomes, in particular the relationship between access to adequate housing and education outcomes, and how the work of other public organisations might contribute to this. We have added an efficiency perspective to our work on planning of significant housing and urban development projects. We will consider FEC's feedback as we carry out more detailed planning of other work.

The Justice Committee suggested we focus on public sector collaboration. We will consider this, where relevant, in all our planned work. Our continued work on the Joint Venture for Family Violence and Sexual Violence, in particular, will assess how agencies are working together.

Komiti Māori suggested we extend our work on improving outcomes for Māori to specifically take into account the Crown's partnership obligations under te Tiriti o Waitangi as a measure of public sector performance.

This is an area of interest for the Office. In 2021/22, we plan to examine the investment in initiatives designed to improve outcomes for Māori, and what has been achieved as a result. In 2022/23, we intend to progress work to look specifically at how well public organisations are meeting Tiriti o Waitangi settlement obligations. In the future, we might look at how the public sector is supporting the Crown in its relationships with Māori under te Tiriti, as required by the new Public Service Act 2020.

As a result of feedback received, we have expanded our planned work on the Canterbury earthquakes response to take a broader focus on the emergency management system. We now propose to carry out this work in 2022/23. This will allow us to build on what we learn through our work on the Covid-19 response and our work on Auckland's emergency management, which we will conclude in 2021/22. It also means we have been able to include additional work in 2021/22 on the Government's progress in improving mental health services.

Appendix 2

Summary of the public organisations we audit, as at June 2021

| Organisation categories | Number of organisations |
|--|-------------------------|
| Local authorities | 78 |
| Airports (including related entities) | 24 |
| Energy companies (including related entities) | 36 |
| Port companies (including related entities) | 20 |
| Other council-controlled organisations ¹ | 147 |
| Licensing and community trusts (including related entities) | 29 |
| Cemetery trustees | 1 |
| Other local government organisations ² | 65 |
| Total local government | 400 |
| Financial Statements of the Government | 1 |
| Government departments (including related entities) | 56 |
| State-owned enterprises and mixed-ownership companies (including related entities) | 37 |
| Crown research institutes (including related entities) | 13 |
| District health boards (including related entities) | 39 |
| Schools (including related entities) | 2475 |
| Tertiary education institutions (including related entities) | 65 |
| Other Crown entities ³ | 87 |
| Administering bodies ⁴ | 38 |
| Fish and game councils (including related entities) ⁵ | 15 |
| Other central government organisations ⁶ | 119 |
| Rural Education Activities Programmes | 14 |
| Total central government | 2959 |
| Government of Niue (including related entities) | 9 |
| Government of Tokelau (including related entities) | 2 |
| Public Audit Act section 19 audits ⁷ | 2 |
| Total | 3372 |

1. These are council-controlled organisations as defined in the Local Government Act 2002 (other than those that are airports, energy companies, or port companies).

2. These are related to local authorities but are not council-controlled organisations – for example, organisations exempted from being council-controlled organisations under the Local Government Act.

3. These are statutory Crown organisations (Crown agents, autonomous Crown organisations, and independent Crown organisations) listed in Schedule 1 of the Crown Entities Act 2004 and Crown entity companies listed in Schedule 2 of the Crown Entities Act.

4. These are administering bodies and reserve boards listed in Schedule 4 of the Public Finance Act 1989.

5. These are the New Zealand Fish and Game Council, 12 regional fish and game councils, the New Zealand Game Bird Habitat Trust Board, and the Game Animal Council, all listed in Schedule 4 of the Public Finance Act.

6. These are other central government organisations that do not have their own specific category. The majority are statutory organisations established under specific legislation, as well as other organisations listed in Schedule 4 of the Public Finance Act that are not categorised as reserve boards or fish and game councils.

7. These are entities audited under an arrangement in accordance with section 19 of the Public Audit Act 2001.

Appendix 3: Timing for our work programme

The Covid-19 response and recovery

| Focus | Work planned for 2021/22 | | | | 2020/21 | | | | 2021/22 | | | | 2022/23 | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|----|----|----|---------|----|----|----|---------|----|----|----|---------|----|----|--|
| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | |
| The Covid-19 response and recovery | Understanding the central response to Covid-19* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Case studies on public sector business continuity planning in response to Covid-19* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Further work on the Government's roll-out of the national Covid-19 vaccination programme | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Examining other aspects of the Covid-19 response | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

* Work from our *Annual Plan 2020/21* to be completed in 2021/22.

How well is the public sector improving the lives of New Zealanders?

| Focus | Work planned for 2021/22 | | | | 2020/21 | | | | 2021/22 | | | | 2022/23 | | | |
|------------------------------|--|----|----|----|---------|----|----|----|---------|----|----|----|---------|----|----|--|
| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | |
| Improving outcomes for Māori | Understanding how well the public sector is delivering the outcomes that matter for Māori | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Māori perspectives on accountability* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reducing family violence | Whānau Ora: What has been achieved?* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Family violence and sexual violence: How well are agencies working together and with the non-government sector to deliver services to address family violence and sexual violence? | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Improving housing outcomes | Effectiveness of Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga Ministry of Housing and Urban Development's leadership of the housing and urban development system | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Planning of significant housing and urban development projects | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Improving education outcomes | How the Ministry of Education is using information to address educational disparities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Improving health outcomes | Effectiveness of investment in mental health services | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Health system leadership and sustainability* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

* Work from our *Annual Plan 2020/21* to be completed in 2021/22.

How well is the public accountability system working as a whole?

| Focus | Work planned for 2021/22 | 2020/21 | | | | 2021/22 | | | | 2022/23 | | | |
|---|---|---------|----|----|----|---------|----|----|----|---------|----|----|--|
| | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | |
| Influencing improved performance and accountability | Making performance reporting more effective* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Landscaping of the public accountability system: Second report* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Implementing the well-being agenda | Commentary on the Treasury's statement on the Government's long-term fiscal position and insights briefing* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Progress towards implementing the United Nations' 17 sustainable development goals* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Resilience and climate change | Local government risk management: Stocktake of approach and reporting results* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Climate change and local government** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Integrity in the public sector | Completion of integrity framework and guidance* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Looking at integrity processes in central government | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Monitoring progress: Operation Respect (New Zealand Defence Force) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Getting it right – Managing conflicts of interest involving council employees* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Procurement | Governance of the Auckland City Rail Link programme* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Processes underpinning significant government investments | Provincial Growth Fund: Reset of the Provincial Growth Fund and reprioritisation of investments* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Systems and processes underpinning government decisions on major infrastructure investment* | | | | | | | | | | | | |

* Work from our *Annual Plan 2020/21* to be completed in 2021/22.

** To be reported in our report on main matters arising from our audits of councils' 2021-31 long-term plans.

Keeping New Zealanders informed about public sector performance and accountability

| Focus | Work planned for 2021/22 | 2020/21 | | | | 2021/22 | | | | 2022/23 | | | |
|--|---|---------|----|----|----|---------|----|----|----|---------|----|----|--|
| | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | |
| Public sector accountability to local and regional communities | Public sector accountability to communities* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Central government: Results of the 2020/21 audits | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Auditor-General quarterly updates for chief executives | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Results of the 2020 school audits | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Results of the 2020 audits of tertiary education institutions** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Results of the 2020/21 district health board audits | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Local government: Results of the 2020/21 audits | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Main matters arising from our audits of councils' 2021-31 long-term plan consultation documents | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Main matters arising from our audits of councils' 2021-31 long-term plans | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Half-year Controller update | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Auckland landscape scan | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Auckland Council review of service performance (topic to be confirmed) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Auckland Council review of service performance – disaster resilience and preparedness* | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

* Work from our *Annual Plan 2020/21* to be completed in 2021/22.

** Includes the work in our *Annual Plan 2020/21* on Underlying financial sustainability of tertiary education institutions and international comparisons.

Sharing insights about what “good” looks like

| Focus | Work planned for 2021/22 | | | | 2020/21 | | | | 2021/22 | | | | 2022/23 | | |
|--|--|----|----|----|---------|----|----|----|---------|----|----|----|---------|----|----|
| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 |
| Sharing insights about what “good” looks like | Helping to support the effectiveness of audit and risk committees | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Support material for new audit and risk committee chairpersons | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Review of good practice guidance: Audit and risk committees* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Review of good practice guidance: <i>Public sector purchases, grants and gifts: Managing funding arrangements with external parties*</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Review of good practice guidance: <i>Charging fees for public sector goods and services**</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Sharing good practice: Performance reporting | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Sharing good practice speaker series | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Understanding performance and supporting the role of monitoring agencies** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

* Work from our *Annual Plan 2020/21* to be completed in 2022/23.

** Work from our *Annual Plan 2020/21* to be completed in 2021/22.

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