



Summary

Auditor-General's mid-term review

Earlier this year, John Ryan reached the mid-point of his seven-year term as Auditor-General. He commissioned this review to reflect on where we are as an Office, identify the challenges the Office faces, and confirm the key priorities for the rest of his term.

The review's findings will be used to inform the refresh of our strategy and will help to prepare the Office for the next Auditor-General in 2025.

Review findings

The review found that good progress has been made with what we said we'd deliver for Parliament's additional investment in Budgets 2019 to 2021.

We have:

- broadened the focus and approach of our performance audits, inquiries, and other work with a view to increasing our impact;

- done more to influence improvements in public accountability; and
- invested more in our people, systems, and data and analytics to improve our capacity and capability.

Other improvements include:

- enhanced reporting to Parliament and the public, with more timely reporting on key issues;
- increased volume, relevance, and impact of published work;
- increased data and analytics in our work, and an extended research programme;
- expanded and updated good practice material and seminars; and
- more targeted and more regular engagement with Parliament and public organisations.



Challenges facing the Office

Long-standing challenges facing the audit profession, such as the global auditor shortage, affect the delivery of our mandatory audit work. Covid-19 has exacerbated many of these issues and created new ones, contributing to a backlog of deferred public sector audits. Although we are actively managing the backlog of audits, and we have made progress in addressing this, more needs to be done to sustainably deliver public sector audits in the future.

The review also identified several broader issues that are expected to affect our work. These are the Covid-19 pandemic, public sector reforms, bringing Māori perspectives more into decision-making, addressing climate change, and the rise of misinformation.

Key priorities to focus on

The Auditor-General's priorities for the rest of his term are focused on ensuring that the Office maintains the trust and confidence of Parliament, the public, and the public sector to increase our impact with public organisations and those who can influence change.

This will include:

- continuing to work on strengthening our relationships with Māori and implementing our Te Ao Māori strategy;
- continuing to build our internal capability and capacity; and
- building on our reputation as a trusted source of analysis, advice, and information about public sector performance.

Our people also continue to be critical to our success. To meet our aspirations for the Office, we must continue to recruit and retain people who believe in the importance of our role and are prepared to work to the high standards that Parliament and the public expect from us. We stand or fall on the values we bring to our work and, in particular, our independence and courage to speak truth to power, supported by the quality of our work.