



Te Kawa Mataaho
Public Service Commission

Better Public Services Programme - Frequently Asked Questions [archived]

1 May 2018: The Government announced in January 2018 that the Better Public Services programme would not continue in this form. These pages have been archived.

1 What is the Better Public Services Programme?

The Better Public Services Programme is the next phase in the Government's public sector reforms and is squarely focused on getting the system working to deliver better results and improved services for New Zealanders.

The public sector represents one-quarter of New Zealand's real economy and has a big influence on how our society and economy perform. As such government agencies need to perform better by finding new and different ways of working that deliver greater value and better results for New Zealanders.

Some of the ways the Better Public Services programme will achieve this is:

- government agencies working more closely together and organising themselves around results that make a difference to New Zealand
- sharing functions and services, purchasing goods and services, and developing systems together
- greater use of technology and a shift to digital channels, so New Zealanders can more easily access government services
- agencies improving how they measure and report on performance
- greater responsiveness within the public sector to the needs and expectations of New Zealanders, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

2 Why do New Zealand's State services need to change?

The goal is a public service and State sector that provides better results and improved services with an ongoing focus on value-for-money and innovation.

New Zealand's State Services have been performing well in some areas. However, there are things that can be done better and opportunities to expand a number of innovations and good practices already underway. This particularly applies to initiatives that cut across multiple departments, and which have proved difficult to get traction on over many years.

3 What changes will New Zealanders see?

The Government has set ten challenging results for the public sector to achieve over the next five years. These ten key results have specific measures and opportunities for demonstrating the sort of innovative thinking required to build better public services.

These targets require a stretch beyond the immediately deliverable results and highlight opportunities for new ways of working together to deliver better public services to New Zealanders. The work underway in these areas will, in time, demonstrate innovation and improvement across a connected, collaborative public sector.

4 What are the results?

The results are grouped under five headings:

Reducing long-term welfare dependency

1 Reduce the number of people who have been on a working age benefit for more than 12 months.

Supporting vulnerable children

2 Increase participation in early childhood education.

3 Increase infant immunisation rates and reduce the incidence of rheumatic fever.

4 Reduce the number of assaults on children.

Boosting skills and employment

5 Increase the proportion of 18 year olds with NCEA level 2 or equivalent qualification.

6 Increase the proportion of 25-34 year olds with advanced trade qualifications, diplomas and degrees (at level 4 or above).

Reducing crime

7 Reduce the rates of total crime, violent crime and youth crime.

8 Reduce reoffending.

Improving interaction with government

9 New Zealand businesses have a one-stop online shop for all government advice and support they need to run and grow their business.


10 New Zealanders can complete their transactions with the Government easily in a digital environment.

5 How do the results areas work and when will they be reported on publicly?

Targets have been published for each result. The results fall into five themes. The Government has identified ten key priorities for the next three to five years. Delivering these results requires groups of agencies and sectors to work together in different ways from how they currently operate, as well as publicly report on their progress towards achieving these goals.

You can see more detail on targets at [here](#) (bps-results-for-nzers).

6 What material supported the Government's decision on the Better Public Services programme?

The Advisory Group's report informed the Government's decisions on the Better Public Services programme. You can read the report  [here](/assets/Legacy/resources/bps-report-nov2011_0.pdf) (/assets/Legacy/resources/bps-report-nov2011_0.pdf).

The Government set up the Better Public Services Advisory Group in May 2011 to provide advice on getting our public services to meet the needs of 21st Century New Zealand. The Advisory Group included key State sector people as well as selected individuals from outside the sector, who had expertise and understanding of the Public Service, to contribute their expertise to the group.


The Advisory Group engaged with public sector leaders and looked at past public service reforms in New Zealand and also at what is happening in overseas administrations.

7 Who was on the Advisory Group?

The Advisory Group comprised eight members:

- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Chief Executive Maarten Wevers (chair)
- Watercare Services Ltd (Auckland) Chief Executive Mark Ford
- Air New Zealand Group General Manager, people and technical operations, Vanessa Stoddart
- Wise Group Chief Executive Jacqui Graham
- State Services Commissioner Iain Rennie
- Secretary to the Treasury Gabriel Makhoul
- Victoria University School of Government Professor Peter Hughes
- State Services Commission Deputy Commissioner Sandi Beattie

Related Files

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Last modified: 5 July 2012