Strategic intentions
2017/21
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Speaker’s Statement of Responsibility

I am satisfied that the information on strategic intentions provided by the Office of the Ombudsman is in accordance with the Public Finance Act 1989 and is consistent with the policies and performance expectations of the Officers of Parliament Committee acting on behalf of Parliament.

Rt Hon David Carter
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Responsible Minister of the Office of the Ombudsman
30 June 2017
Introduction from the Chief Ombudsman

The Ombudsmen are appointed by Parliament to give effect to a number of key democratic and human rights measures aimed at safeguarding the rights of individuals and promoting government accountability and transparency.

In essence, we investigate, review and inspect the administrative conduct of public sector agencies and provide advice and guidance, in order to ensure people are treated fairly in New Zealand.

The activities we carry out are balanced between:

- a reactive focus on resolving complaints from the public about government administrative conduct and access to official information; and
- a proactive focus on identifying, resolving and investigating systemic administrative issues, monitoring public sector compliance and good practice, and providing advice, guidance and training.

As a result, I have decided to review the outcomes framework set out in our Strategic Intentions document to better capture the linkages between the services we currently deliver, and the outcomes and impacts we are seeking to achieve. This review should be completed during the 2017/18 year, and so the next Strategic Intentions document for 2018-22 will be significantly refreshed.

What I can say at present is that we are well placed over 2017-21 to fully realise the benefits of greater efficiency and investment in our complaint handling operations. In addition, we will continue to expand our proactive activities in a principled and effective manner, in accordance with the trust that Parliament has placed in us to carry out this important work.

Peter Boshier
Chief Ombudsman
Chief Ombudsman’s Statement of Responsibility

In signing this statement, I acknowledge that I am responsible for the information on strategic intentions for the Office of the Ombudsman. This information has been prepared in accordance with sections 38 and 40 of the Public Finance Act 1989.

Peter Boshier
Chief Ombudsman and Chief Executive
Nature and scope of functions

Who we are
The Ombudsmen are Officers of Parliament. Each Ombudsman is appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of Parliament. We are responsible to Parliament and independent of the Government.

Our purpose
Our overall purpose is to investigate, review and inspect the administrative conduct of public sector agencies and provide advice and guidance, in order to ensure people are treated fairly in New Zealand.

Our functions
Our functions are to:

• resolve and investigate complaints about public sector administration and decision making;¹
• resolve, investigate and review complaints about decisions on requests to access official information;²
• identify, resolve and investigate significant and systemic concerns with public sector administration and decision making;³
• monitor general compliance and good practice by public sector agencies in managing and responding to official information requests;⁴
• deal with requests for advice and guidance about alleged serious wrongdoing;⁵
• monitor and inspect places of detention for cruel and inhumane treatment;⁶
• protect and monitor disability rights in New Zealand;⁷
• provide comment to the Ministry of Transport on applications for authorised access to personal information on the motor vehicle register;⁸
• provide advice, guidance and training in areas relevant to our role, in order to improve overall administrative capability;
• publish relevant information about public sector administrative performance; and
• improve public awareness of the importance of good administration and the official information legislation, and accessibility to our services.

¹ Under the Ombudsmen Act 1975.
³ Above, n 1.
⁴ Through investigation under the Ombudsmen Act.
⁵ Under the Protected Disclosures Act 2000.
⁶ We are a National Preventive Mechanism under the Crimes of Torture Act 1989. This Act fulfils New Zealand’s responsibilities under the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture.
⁷ We are part of the Independent Monitoring Mechanism protecting and monitoring implementation in New Zealand of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
Our contribution
In carrying out our functions, we provide Parliament and the New Zealand public with an independent and impartial check on the quality, fairness and integrity of public sector administrative conduct.

By contributing to administrative improvement across the public sector, we can help to reduce overall downstream costs caused by poor decision making and ineffective administrative processes.

What is the public sector?
We have authority to investigate approximately 4,000 entities in the public sector, including:

- government departments and ministries;
- local authorities;
- crown entities;
- state-owned enterprises;
- district health boards;
- tertiary education institutions;
- school boards of trustees; and
- Ministers of the Crown and the Police (in relation to decisions on requests for official information).

Constraints
We have a wide jurisdiction across the activities of the entire public sector, but finite resources with which to carry out our role. To some degree, therefore, we must carefully target our interventions.

We also face the following constraints in providing an independent and impartial check on administrative conduct:

- we can only influence the public sector through:
  - resolution;
  - investigation and review;
  - inspection;
  - advice and guidance;
  - recommendations; and
  - publication and reporting;
- we can only comment on the matters that come to our attention;
- we are only one of a number of accountability mechanisms;
- there are no statutory timeframes within which public sector agencies must respond to us in relation to our investigation of administrative and decision making practices, and our recommendations in that respect are not binding;
- people can only make complaints and seek guidance from us if they are aware of our various roles; and
- people can only make requests for official information if they are aware of the official information legislation.

Given the constraints on our role, most of our activities to improve administrative conduct are carried out through persuasion and reporting, rather than compulsion. To do this effectively, we need to be relevant, fair and accessible. We need to provide well-reasoned and independent opinions, and our interventions need to be proportionate, taking into account the impact on the agency and the costs and benefits of any proposed remedies.

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9 While there are timeframes that agencies must comply with in responding to us under the official information legislation, there are no timeframes in relation to our general investigation role under the Ombudsmen Act.

10 While there is a statutory duty to comply with our recommendations made under the official information legislation (unless vetoed), there is no duty to comply with our recommendations made under the Ombudsmen Act. Nor are our recommendations under the Crimes of Torture Act binding.
Strategic Direction

Our strategic direction is:

- guided by the legislative functions assigned to us by Parliament; and
- informed by the current environment and the Government’s strategic direction.

In essence, our functions cover a range of key democratic and human rights measures aimed at safeguarding the rights of individuals and increasing government transparency and accountability. The overall outcome we contribute to is maintaining a high level of public trust in government.

Within this context, we can assist in achieving the Government’s key priority to deliver better public services within tight fiscal constraints.\textsuperscript{11}

One of our primary strategic goals is to assist public sector agencies to improve their services to the public. Traditionally, the main mechanism we have used to do this is by investigating and reviewing decisions in response to complaints we have received from the public. However, we are now taking a more proactive approach, including more general activities to identify, resolve and investigate significant and systemic issues, review and monitor compliance and good practice, and provide advice and guidance. The aim of our interventions is to improve administrative systems and processes overall, and so support the delivery of better public services through:

- more effective and timely service delivery; and
- greater understanding of, and trust in, public sector processes and service delivery.

\textsuperscript{11} Refer http://www.ssc.govt.nz/better-public-services.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{The overall impact of our work}
\end{figure}
Outcomes Framework

Our Outcomes Framework demonstrates the linkages between the services we deliver through our outputs, and the outcomes and impacts we are seeking to achieve.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We investigate, review and inspect the administrative conduct of state sector agencies and provide advice and guidance, in order to ensure people are treated fairly in New Zealand</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
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<tr>
<td>A high level of public trust in government is maintained</td>
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<tr>
<th>INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government is increasingly fair, responsive and reasonable</td>
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<tr>
<td>State sector agencies are progressively more open and transparent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public is informed and better able to participate in government decision making</td>
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<tr>
<td>State sector agencies are increasingly more accountable</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPACTS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> Improved administration and decision making in state sector agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Official information increasingly available and public assured access is not denied unnecessarily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> Serious wrongdoing brought to light and investigated by appropriate authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong> People in detention treated humanely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTPUTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A.</strong> Investigate state sector administration and decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B.</strong> Investigate and review official information decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C.</strong> Deal with requests for advice and guidance about serious wrongdoing</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>D.</strong> Monitor and inspect places of detention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E.</strong> Improve state sector capability in areas relevant to our jurisdiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F.</strong> Improve public awareness and accessibility of our services</td>
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Operating intentions

The following section discusses the impacts we are seeking to achieve in contributing to the outcomes we have identified in our Strategic Direction.

Impact 1: Improved administration and decision making in public sector agencies

What are we seeking to achieve?

Independent oversight by the Ombudsmen can assist public sector agencies to identify and correct administrative deficiencies. In doing so, we provide one means of improving administration and decision making over time.

Improved administration and decision making in public sector agencies will ultimately result in better services being provided to the public.

How will we demonstrate success in achieving this?

The main measure currently being used to track improvements in the public sector is the Kiwis Count survey, which is independently administered by the State Services Commission. We will use the Kiwis Count survey to demonstrate improvements in administration and decision making in the public sector. Using the results of this survey, we will be able to track any overall improvements that are achieved through New Zealanders’ overall quality score for public services. While this is a relatively high-level measure, our role encompasses oversight of over 4,000 public sector agencies. The Kiwis Count survey provides an authoritative means to gauge perceived improvement in services provided by the public sector overall.

The Kiwis Count survey was first conducted in 2007 and from 2012 it has been conducted at least annually. In 2007, New Zealand’s overall quality score for public services was 68, and in 2009 it improved to 69. From June 2013 to June 2015, the overall quality score rose from 72 to 74. This compares favourably with the 2007 Canadian benchmark of 69.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall quality of public services improves over time</td>
<td>73 points</td>
<td>74 points</td>
<td>Result not yet available</td>
<td>75 points or higher</td>
<td>75 points or higher</td>
<td>76 points or higher</td>
<td>76 points or higher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12 Refer http://www.ssc.govt.nz/kiwis-count
What will we do to achieve this?
The main activities we will carry out to improve administration and decision making in public sector agencies are grouped under outputs A, E and F.

We discuss output A below. Outputs E and F relate to all impacts we are seeking to achieve, and will be discussed at the end of the Operating Intentions section.

Output A: Investigate public sector administration and decision making
The Ombudsmen Act 1975 gives us authority to investigate the administrative conduct of public sector agencies. We may decide to investigate:

• after receiving a complaint from a member of the public about a particular matter of concern; or
• without receiving a complaint (on our ‘own initiative’), particularly where we consider significant or systemic issues arise, or there is a need to review and monitor compliance and good practice.

Following an investigation, we may make any recommendation considered appropriate to remedy identified deficiencies, both in relation to individual matters and broader issues. While our recommendations under the Ombudsmen Act are not legally binding, they are highly persuasive and almost always accepted. If recommendations are not accepted, we may report the matter to the Prime Minister and House of Representatives or, in the case of local authorities, compel a report to be published.

Under this output we will:

• resolve and investigate complaints from the public about administration and decision making practices in public sector agencies;
• identify, resolve and investigate significant or systemic administrative issues;
• review and monitor the compliance and good practice of public sector agencies in the management of official information requests;
• form opinions and make recommendations to address identified administrative deficiencies;
• report on and monitor the acceptance and implementation of our recommendations;
• publish the outcome of key matters we have investigated;
• investigate and report on issues relating to implementation by public sector agencies of the Disabilities Convention; and
• provide advice and assistance where people raise matters that are outside our jurisdiction or can be resolved in a more appropriate way.

We treat matters as formal complaints once they have been put in writing.\[^{13}\] However, we also deal with a large number of enquiries from members of the public, mainly over the telephone, without a complaint being made to us in writing. While we term these matters ‘other contacts’, our staff spend a significant amount time providing advice and assistance, and resolving these matters.

Our combined performance measures for outputs A and B are set out below, at pages 13 and 14.

\[^{13}\] This is based on section 16(1A) of the Ombudsmen Act, which requires a complaint made orally to be put in writing as soon as practicable.
Impact 2: Official information increasingly available and public assured access is not denied unnecessarily

What are we seeking to achieve?

In reviewing decisions on requests for official information, we ensure that requests are being dealt with appropriately. In this way, we can enhance public trust and confidence in decision making processes, and also increase the availability of official information.

Making official information increasingly available, and assuring the public that access is not denied unnecessarily, will lead to greater transparency and accountability within the public sector, and facilitate public participation in the making and administration of laws and policies. Ultimately, this will help to improve public trust in government.

How will we demonstrate success in achieving this?

The main measure currently available to track perceptions of public trust in government is the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (the Index).14 Launched in 1995, the Index is an aggregate indicator that annually ranks 176 countries by their perceived levels of corruption in the public and political sectors. New Zealand is currently ranked first equal on the Index with Denmark. We will demonstrate our success under this impact by tracking New Zealand’s ranking on the Index.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand is ranked as one of the leading countries in public service probity as measured by the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index</td>
<td>New Zealand ranked second</td>
<td>New Zealand ranked fourth</td>
<td>New Zealand ranked first</td>
<td>On average over the next five years New Zealand is in the top three</td>
<td>On average over the next five years New Zealand is in the top three</td>
<td>On average over the next five years New Zealand is in the top three</td>
<td>On average over the next five years New Zealand is in the top three</td>
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14 Refer http://www.transparency.org
What will we do to achieve this?
The main activities we will carry out to ensure official information is increasingly available, and to assure the public that access is not denied unnecessarily, are grouped under outputs B, E and F. We discuss output B below. Outputs E and F relate to all impacts we are seeking to achieve, and will be discussed at the end of the Operating Intentions section.

Output B: Investigate and review official information decisions

The Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) and the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) give the public the ability to request official information held by Ministers of the Crown and public sector agencies. The Ombudsmen are the review mechanism under both pieces of legislation. On receipt of a complaint, if the matter cannot be resolved we investigate and review whether a Minister or agency has complied with the legislation. The key obligations are to respond to requests for official information within the required time, and to grant such requests, unless in the circumstances of the particular case there is good reason for not doing so. Following our investigation and review, we may make any recommendation considered appropriate, including for the release of official information. With some exceptions, our recommendations must be observed unless vetoed by the Governor-General in Council or local authority resolution.

Under this output we will:

- resolve, investigate and review when complaints are made about decisions by Ministers and public sector agencies on requests for official information;
- form opinions on whether Ministers and agencies have complied with their obligations under the official information legislation, and make necessary recommendations;
- report on and monitor the implementation of our recommendations; and
- publish relevant information about public sector administrative performance, including details of the complaints we have received and the outcome of key matters we have investigated.

Performance measures: Outputs A and B

Our combined performance measures for outputs A and B are set out below. These are based on the Chief Ombudsman’s vision for all complaints to be completed within 12 months by 2019/20.

Figure 2: Chief Ombudsman’s vision for all complaints to be completed within 12 months by 2019/20
### How will we demonstrate our success in providing outputs A & B?

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<td><strong>Demand driven measures</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td># of OA complaints completed</td>
<td>2,226</td>
<td>2,241</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>2,150</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>2,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of official information complaints completed</td>
<td>1,213</td>
<td>1,331</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>1,350</td>
<td>1,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of OA other contacts completed</td>
<td>7,231</td>
<td>7,751</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>6,400</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of official information other contacts completed</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proactive measures</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>All complaints and other contacts considered</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of systemic investigations of general administrative practice completed (amended measure)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2–3</td>
<td>2–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of official information practice investigations completed (amended measure)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% net clearance rate of complaints</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>105%</td>
<td>105%</td>
<td>106%</td>
<td>105%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15 We expect to receive approximately 2,100 OA complaints in the 2017/18 year, and we should also complete the remaining backlog complaints in that year.
16 We expect to receive approximately 1,350 official information complaints in the 2017/18 year and we should also complete the remaining backlog complaints in that year.
17 We expect to receive approximately 6,000 OA other contacts in the 2017/18 year.
18 We expect to receive approximately 450 official information other contacts in the 2017/18 year.
19 This measure and the measure below were previously counted together as ‘# of wider administrative improvement investigations completed’.
20 We have revised our expected completion date for investigations of the 12 individual agencies identified in the investigation of OIA practices by central government agencies, from 30 June 2017 to 30 September 2017.
21 For the 2017/18 year, we aim to complete investigations of the 12 individual agencies identified in the investigation of OIA practices (see above; n 20, together with 4 new official information practice investigations. Our expected standard for the completion of official information practice investigations will scale up to 12 per year as our team carrying out this work becomes established.
22 ‘Net clearance rate’ means the total number of complaints closed in the reporting year as a proportion of the total number of complaints received during the year.
23 We are targeting the final completion of our backlog of aged complaints in the 2017/18 reporting year.
### How will we demonstrate our success in providing outputs A & B?

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<td><strong>Proactive measures</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>% of complaints received from 1 July 2016 completed within 3 months(^{24}) from date of receipt</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>89%(^{25})</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of complaints received from 1 July 2016 completed within 6 months(^{24}) from date of receipt</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of complaints received from 1 July 2016 completed within 9 months(^{27}) from date of receipt</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of complaints received from 1 July 2015 completed within 12 months(^{28}) from date of receipt</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of complaints received before 1 July 2015 on hand at end of reporting year</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% net clearance rate of other contacts</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of other contacts completed within 3 months from date of receipt</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of completed complaints and other contacts meeting internal quality standards, following random quality assurance check(^{29})</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>70%(^{30})</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of OA and official information recommendations accepted (new measure)</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
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24 Counted as 90 calendar days.
25 Results for this measure and the next 2 measures are expected to be higher in the 2016/17 year than in out-years, given that these measures apply to complaints received from 1 July 2016 onwards.
26 Counted as 180 calendar days.
27 Counted as 270 calendar days.
28 Counted as 365 calendar days.
29 The full introduction of random quality assurance checks occurred in the 2015/16 reporting year. We also have other measures in place to ensure quality, including review of all correspondence by senior staff with delegated authority from the Ombudsmen.
30 We expect our quality results to improve as timeliness issues are addressed. The high number of backlog complaints closed in the 2016/17 year has impacted on our quality results in terms of timeliness.
Since 2012, we have experienced a significant increase in both the number and complexity of complaints received. As well as a general and continuing increase in official information complaints, we saw a dramatic upswing in complaints against the Earthquake Commission for approximately 3 years following the Canterbury earthquakes. The growing number of complaints on hand impacted on our ability to complete complaints in a timely manner. We accordingly sought additional resource through the Officers of Parliament Committee to address the increased work, and some of the resource we requested was provided for 2013/14 and 2015/16 onwards. We also implemented practice improvements and reorganised our teams and support structures.

A significant injection of short-term funds was later granted for 2016/17 and the next two reporting years. This has allowed us to ring-fence all complaints still on hand that were received before 1 July 2015, and establish a new backlog team to complete these complaints over a 3 year period. We are tracking to complete all of these complaints by 30 June 2018, a year earlier than expected, and we have accordingly returned the final year’s worth of funding for this initiative (for the 2018/19 reporting year).

As noted above, our current updated targets are based on an estimate of how we will progress over the next three reporting years to achieve the Chief Ombudsman’s vision that by 2019/20, 70% of complaints will be completed within 3 months of receipt and all complaints will be completed within 12 months of receipt.

We also consider that improving our throughput and timeliness will consequently improve our performance against internal quality standards, as the main reason complaints have not met internal quality standards previously has been because of timeliness issues.

We have amended our measures to report separately on the number of systemic investigations of general administrative practice and the number of investigations of official information practice, given Parliament’s desire for our Office to have an enhanced focus in these areas.

We also have additional measures of our performance for outputs A and B, which will be assessed annually on the results of our stakeholder survey.

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### How will we demonstrate our success in providing outputs A and B?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>2011/12 Actual</th>
<th>2013/14 Actual</th>
<th>2015/16 Actual</th>
<th>2017/18 Budget standard</th>
<th>2018/19 Target</th>
<th>2019/20 Target</th>
<th>2020/21 Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of complainants satisfied with overall quality of our service delivery</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of public sector agencies satisfied with our communication overall</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of public sector agencies satisfied the Ombudsmen’s opinions are fair</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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31 Previously assessed biennially.
32 We expect complainant satisfaction with our service delivery will improve as our timeliness improves.
We have in the past conducted a stakeholder survey biennially, with the next survey due in 2017/18.\(^{33}\) We now intend to conduct the survey annually. We survey both our complainants and the public sector agencies who have been the subject of an investigation. The objective of our survey is to assess the level of satisfaction with the service we provide, and to identify areas where we can improve. We currently conduct the surveys in-house, although we have obtained independent expert advice on the content of the survey questions.

We anticipate that our performance in terms of complainant satisfaction with the overall quality of our service delivery will improve as our timeliness issues are addressed.

Impact 3: Serious wrongdoing brought to light and investigated by appropriate authorities

What are we seeking to achieve?

It is in the public interest for serious wrongdoing to be brought to light and investigated. Under the Protected Disclosures Act 2000, employees\(^{34}\) have various protections when they ‘blow the whistle’ on serious wrongdoing\(^{35}\) by their organisation.

Insiders will often be the only ones with knowledge of serious wrongdoing. If they are unaware of the protections available to them, or do not feel confident raising their concerns through the appropriate channels, incidents of serious wrongdoing could go undetected.

In providing advice and guidance to potential whistleblowers, we can help to ensure:

- employees who are concerned about serious wrongdoing can seek advice;
- employees feel confident enough to raise their concerns through the appropriate channels; and
- legitimate concerns are investigated by appropriate authorities.

Ensuring that serious wrongdoing is brought to light and investigated by appropriate authorities will lead to greater transparency and accountability, and will ultimately help to ensure public trust in government.

How will we demonstrate success in achieving this?

As discussed previously under Impact 2, the main measure currently available to track perceptions of public trust in government is the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index. We propose to demonstrate our success under this impact by tracking New Zealand’s ranking on the Index.

What will we do to achieve this?

The main activities we will carry out to ensure serious wrongdoing is brought to light and investigated by appropriate authorities are grouped under outputs C, E and F.

We discuss output C below. Outputs E and F relate to all impacts we are seeking to achieve, and will be discussed at the end of the Operating Intentions section.

---

33 The survey was first conducted in the 2008/09 reporting year. The second survey was due to be conducted in the 2010/11 reporting year, but was deferred to 2011/12 due to the Canterbury earthquakes. The third and fourth surveys were conducted in the 2013/14 and 2015/16 reporting years respectively.

34 ‘Employee’ includes a former employee, a secondee, a contractor and a volunteer (refer section 3 Protected Disclosures Act for full definition of employee).

35 ‘Serious wrongdoing’ includes:
- offences;
- actions that would pose a serious risk to public health and safety or to the maintenance of the law; and
- in the public sector context, unlawful, corrupt, or irregular use of funds or resources, and gross negligence or mismanagement by public officials.
Output C: Deal with requests for advice and guidance about serious wrongdoing

The purpose of the Protected Disclosures Act 2000 is to facilitate the disclosure and investigation of serious wrongdoing in or by public and private sector organisations, and to protect employees who disclose information about serious wrongdoing.

Under the Protected Disclosures Act, the Ombudsmen provide information and guidance to employees wanting to make protected disclosures. We also act as an ‘appropriate authority’ to receive protected disclosures and we can play a wider role to investigate or oversee investigations where serious wrongdoing by ‘public sector organisations’ is alleged.

In addition, if we receive a disclosure which does not amount to ‘serious wrongdoing’ under the Protected Disclosures Act, we can still address the matter where appropriate under our wider role to investigate the administrative conduct of public sector agencies under the Ombudsmen Act.

Under this output we will:

- provide advice and guidance to employees wanting to make protected disclosures;
- receive protected disclosures;
- investigate issues arising from protected disclosures or refer them to other appropriate authorities for investigation; and
- where required, review and guide investigations by public sector organisations.

Due to the significant nature of the issues arising under this output all matters we receive relating to protected disclosures will be dealt with immediately by 5 senior and experienced staff members, who provide direct advice to the Chief Ombudsman in this respect.

How will we demonstrate our success in providing output C?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demand driven measure</td>
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<tr>
<td># of requests for advice and guidance completed</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of enquiries completed</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactive measures</td>
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<tr>
<td>All requests for advice and guidance considered</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of requests and enquiries completed within 3 months from date of receipt</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>85%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

36 Refer to section 2 of the Protected Disclosures Act for the definition of ‘public sector organisation’.
37 The Deputy Ombudsman, General Counsel, Assistant Ombudsmen and Manager Strategic Advice.
38 Given the limited number of matters arising under this output, and the direct involvement of the Ombudsmen and senior staff in dealing with them, we do not conduct internal quality assurance and so do not have a specific measure to demonstrate the quality of our work in this area.
Impact 4: People in detention treated humanely

What are we seeking to achieve?

People deprived of their liberty are inherently vulnerable to abuse.

Our inspection of places of detention, and our reporting in this respect to Parliament and the United Nations, helps to ensure that people detained by the state are treated humanely. It also ensures New Zealand is seen nationally and internationally as a good global citizen, adhering to agreed international human rights instruments.

Ensuring that people in detention are treated humanely will lead to increased fairness and greater accountability within the public sector, and will ultimately help to ensure public trust in government.

How will we demonstrate success in achieving this?

As discussed previously under Impact 2, the main measure currently available to track perceptions of public trust in government is the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index. We propose to demonstrate our success under this impact by tracking New Zealand’s ranking on the Index.

What will we do to achieve this?

The main activities we will carry out to ensure people in detention are treated humanely are grouped under outputs D, E and F.

We discuss output D below. Outputs E and F relate to all impacts we are seeking to achieve, and will be discussed at the end of the Operating Intentions section.

Output D: Monitor and inspect places of detention

New Zealand is a signatory to the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The purpose of the protocol is to establish a system of independent monitoring of places of detention. The Crimes of Torture Act 1989 gives effect to New Zealand’s international obligations in this regard.

Ombudsmen are designated under the Crimes of Torture Act as a National Preventive Mechanism in respect of prisons, immigration detention facilities, health and disability places of detention, child care and protection residences and youth justice residences. Our role is to monitor and inspect detention facilities.

Under this output we will:

- identify, visit and inspect places of detention;
- make recommendations to improve the conditions of detention and treatment of detainees; and
- publish reports on our inspections and monitor the implementation of our recommendations.

During the period 2017-2021 we aim to complete up to 45 visits and inspections per year, to monitor the treatment of people in detention in the 107 facilities we have currently identified for inspection.

In the 2016/17 reporting year we have piloted more intensive inspections of prisons under formalised assessment criteria, with each inspection lasting for over a week and carried out by a team of up to 8 staff and contractors. We intend to continue developing this approach in 2017/18. We have been approved additional funding by the Officers of Parliament Committee from 2017/18 onwards to grow our OPCAT Inspections Team from three staff to eight staff.

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39 We are not designated to inspect Police detention facilities (this role is carried out by the Independent Police Conduct Authority) or service penal establishments (this role is carried out by the Inspector of Service Penal Establishments). Our current designations are under review.
so that we can increase both the intensity and frequency of our inspections of prisons.

Last year we indicated we were reviewing the scope of our involvement in aged care facilities with dementia units. There are approximately 185 aged care facilities with dementia units for which we are not currently funded to carry out inspections. We are currently undergoing a process through the Ministry of Justice to confirm these facilities fall within our designation in respect of health and disability places of detention.

In 2017/18 we will be scoping the resource we will need to conduct regular inspections of these facilities, in preparation for a funding request to the Officers of Parliament Committee for the 2018/19 year onwards. We will also be considering if we need any further resource in respect of mental health care facilities.

Our performance measures for output D are set out below.

### How will we demonstrate our success in providing output D?

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<tr>
<td>Proactive measures</td>
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<tr>
<td># of full inspections and visits to places of detention</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of unannounced full inspections and other visits</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>At least 33.3%</td>
<td>At least 33.3%</td>
<td>At least 33.3%</td>
<td>At least 33.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of reports sent to places of detention within 3 months of visit</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of reports peer reviewed, to meet internal quality standards</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of formal recommendations accepted</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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40 The internationally accepted standard is for at least 1/3 of inspections and visits to be unannounced. Refer Guide to the Establishment and Designation of National Preventive Mechanisms.
All impacts

Outputs E and F relate to all impacts we are seeking to achieve. In carrying out our general functions, we take action to:

- improve public sector capability in areas relevant to our jurisdiction; and
- improve public awareness and accessibility of our services.

Output E: Improve public sector capability in areas relevant to our jurisdiction

The general interventions we make to improve public sector capability contribute to administrative improvement generally. We are being more proactive in assisting agencies to improve the quality of decision making and administrative processes before things go wrong and we need to investigate.

To improve public sector capability we:

- provide advice and comment on legislative and policy proposals to ensure they:
  - reflect good administrative practice;
  - promote good decision making; and
  - are consistent with the principles of open and transparent government; and
- provide advice, guidance and training to assist public sector agencies to:
  - develop and implement good administrative and complaints handling practices;
  - develop and implement good official information handling processes, policies and systems; and
  - comply with their obligations under the official information legislation; and

Figure 3: What can our interventions influence in the public sector?
• promote the proactive disclosure of official information where appropriate to reduce the administrative burden and transaction costs of reacting to individual requests for similar information.

We are currently conducting a project to examine how we might strengthen and extend our training to public sector agencies and other stakeholders. We expect to move from a focus on providing individual training sessions on request to a more balanced model of both proactive and reactive training using new technologies to maximise our reach. As a result, our measures in this area are likely to be reviewed for the 2018/19 reporting year onwards.

We also carry out work in the international sphere. The long-established New Zealand Ombudsman model is held in high regard internationally. Our assistance is increasingly being sought to help set up and improve Ombudsman-type accountability mechanisms in both the Pacific region and further afield. We aim to provide effective international engagement, advice and guidance where we can, in a way that accords with New Zealand’s international priorities.

Under this output we will:

• provide advice and comment on legislative, policy and administrative proposals and practices;
• provide comment to the Ministry of Transport on applications for authorised access to personal information on the motor vehicle register;
• build constructive stakeholder relationships with public sector agencies;
• provide advice, guidance and training on the official information legislation and good administrative practices;
• recognise in March 2018 the 30th anniversary of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act coming into force;
• regularly publish information and guidance on our current approach to relevant issues and principles; and
• monitor and assist in the development of international best practice and innovations.
Our performance measures for output E are set out below.

### How will we demonstrate our success in providing output E?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demand driven measures</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td># of requests for advice or comment from public sector agencies responded to</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of training sessions provided to stakeholders</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Proactive measures</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td># of guidance materials produced or updated</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of participants in Ombudsman external training sessions who report that the training will assist them in their work</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of agencies which report that they use one or more of the Ombudsman’s information resources currently available</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of overseas stakeholders who report value in the guidance and training received from our office</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
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<td>95%</td>
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</table>

41 We previously measured the use of our information resources biennially through our stakeholder survey, as discussed previously under Impact 1. We now intend to measure this annually.
Output F: Improve public awareness and accessibility of our services

The public needs to be aware of the Ombudsman and what we can (and cannot) do, to maximise our ability to achieve the outcomes and impacts we have identified in our Strategic Direction.

We undertake a range of public awareness related activities, including making speeches and presentations, publishing information and resources, and maintaining a website and social media presence so people can access information and resources electronically.

Under this output we will:

- use national surveys to measure the level of public awareness of the Ombudsman;
- identify and address barriers to accessing our services;
- deliver a nationwide outreach programme aimed at educating the public on our role;
- make information available to reach diverse audiences; and
- maintain and update our website and progressively use social media to enable people to readily access information relating to our work.

Our performance measures for output F are set out below.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demand driven measure</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td># of external speeches and presentations given</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactive measures</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of members of the public who have heard of the Ombudsman</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of complainants who found our website useful</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

42 Gauged through an annual, nationwide UMR survey, with the first survey conducted in May 2012.
43 We previously measured complainant use and satisfaction with our website biennially through our stakeholder survey, as discussed above under Impact 1. We now intend to measure this annually.
Managing in a Changeable Operating Environment

We operate in an environment where our stakeholders have high expectations, and there is an ever-changing demand for our services. While the role of Ombudsman was first established in New Zealand in 1962, our functions have been progressively expanding, particularly since 2000. We are also required to respond to changing models of public service delivery. We discuss below the current operating environment, and our strategies to manage our key risks in this environment.

Expanding functions

Until 2000, our core role was to investigate complaints about public sector administration and decision making practices, and to investigate and review complaints about official information decisions. Since then, our role has been progressively expanded, to include:

- dealing with requests for advice and guidance about serious wrongdoing;
- inspecting and monitoring places of detention;
- a focus on investigating significant or systemic issues;
- commenting to the Ministry of Transport on applications for authorised access to personal information on the motor vehicle register;
- protecting and monitoring implementation of the Disabilities Convention;
- publishing guidance and resources and providing training for agencies and other stakeholders, particularly in the official information area; and
- using our investigative powers to review and monitor compliance and good practice, particularly in the official information area.

We are continuing to embed new systems and ways of working to provide these functions. We have also received additional resources to carry out these functions effectively.

Our stakeholder expectations

Parliament expects us to:

- act robustly, independently and impartially; and
- provide timely and reliable reports on the administrative conduct of public sector agencies.

The public needs to know (or be able to easily find out) about us, what we do, and how and when to approach us.

Complainants expect a fast, fair, responsive and accessible service, which effectively resolves their concerns.

Public sector agencies expect:

- a fair and impartial intervention, which does not impose an inappropriate burden and which provides a useful outcome in terms of improving good administrative practice; and
- effective advice and guidance on areas relevant to our role and the agency’s circumstances.
### Key risk: Damage to credibility or reputation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our strategies to manage this risk</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We must be seen to be fair, impartial and independent, and to form well reasoned and persuasive opinions. We must also be trusted to safely and securely manage sensitive and confidential information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All staff take an oath of secrecy and adhere to a code of conduct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a risk that poor processes, flawed or inconsistent decisions, or insecure management of information will damage our credibility and reputation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are tracking towards 175 complaints and other contacts received against the Earthquake Commission (EQC) for the 2016/17 year. Although trending down from a peak in 2012/13, the continuing level of intake can be compared with the years before the Canterbury earthquakes, when we received approximately 10 complaints and other contacts concerning EQC per year. We are also planning for a potential further upswing in complaints following the Kaikoura earthquake in late 2016.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This would limit the effectiveness of our oversight of public sector administrative conduct and our ability to effect improvements in that respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthquake complaints</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While we are continuing to see a number of complaints arising from the Canterbury earthquakes, the nature of the complaints has changed. Early complaints related to the processing of individual claims have peaked and are reducing over time. However, complaints are continuing to emerge in relation to the quality of remediation undertaken and evaluation of the success of wider Canterbury rebuild and recovery decisions. |
| Formal induction and training for staff. |
| An ongoing programme of continuous practice improvement, to identify any professional practice issues that need to be addressed. |
| Mentoring and peer review by senior staff. |
| Guidance and resource material for staff. |
| Office quality standards and quality assurance. |
| Strategic direction by senior staff in identified areas of our work. |
Changing demand for our services

We are also receiving increasingly complex and challenging complaints overall. Changing pressures on different areas in the public sector result in changing levels and natures of complaint to us. In particular, we are continuing to receive increasing numbers of complaints in the official information area. These complaints can raise more complex issues and tend to take more work to complete than complaints about the administrative conduct of public sector agencies.

Another area of growth is public sector agencies seeking more advice and guidance from us, in particular on the application of the official information legislation, good decision making and effective complaint handling. Such assistance is increasingly becoming a key area of our business. We are also receiving an increasing number of requests from agencies for organisation wide training to be provided by our staff over multiple sessions and locations. As noted above, we are currently reviewing how we can most effectively provide such training in the future.

We are also increasing our focus on interventions relating to significant and systemic issues, and the need for reviewing and monitoring compliance and good practice, both by formal investigation and reporting, and through more informal communication channels with agencies. This reflects Parliament’s request for us to undertake these more general interventions, in particular in the prisons, disability and official information areas, together with our own increasing recognition of the need for such proactive interventions in order to achieve our desired outcomes and impacts. However, to be done effectively, this is a much more challenging and resource intensive process than individual complaints based investigations.

We have received funding from 2015/16 and 2016/17 onwards which will allow us to begin to effectively resource this area of work.
### Key risk: Complaint handling pressures and finite resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our strategies to manage this risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Progressive implementation of a revised operating model which realigns our practices to ensure they meet current business needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up-front assessment on receipt of complaints, to determine priority, approach and resource allocation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed allocation of work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased focus on early resolution before investigation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>More flexible investigation methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured investigation planning, review and debriefing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal reporting and oversight of complaints on hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal procedures for reporting and managing unreasonable complainant conduct, to minimise the impact that challenging interactions with certain complainants can have on our staff and resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An increasing focus on more general interventions to help public sector agencies improve their administrative, decision making and complaints handling processes before complaints arise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While we will not compromise the quality of our complaint handling process, there is a risk we will not be able to meet stakeholder expectations of the time taken to complete the complaints and other contacts we receive.

Timeliness is often critical to complainants and significant failures in this regard carry the risk that people will choose not to turn to us or, if they do, the outcomes we can achieve will not be relevant, useful or appropriate.

There is also a risk that a need to focus on individual complaints due to the sustained pressures we have in this area will limit our ability to address significant and systemic issues through more general interventions.

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### Impact of changes in public service delivery

In 2012 the Government announced the Better Public Services Programme[^44] which is expected to deliver:

- agencies working more closely together, and in a fundamentally different way;
- more contestability in service provision and use of alternative providers;
- greater use of technology; and
- greater responsiveness to the needs and expectations of New Zealanders, and a willingness to do things differently.

Change and reorganisation in both central and local government has placed new demands on us. People new to public service delivery standards and accountability frameworks need our advice and assistance, and transitional difficulties or disruptions to service results in increased complaints.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key risk: Loss of relevance</th>
<th>Our strategies to manage this risk</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>To achieve systemic improvements in public sector administrative conduct, we must: • respond to complaints in a relevant and appropriate way; • conduct effective inspections and systemic investigations; and • provide useful advice and guidance. There is a risk that we may be seen as too remote from every day realities, leading to inappropriate or irrelevant responses and guidance. We may also miss significant issues that arise, where more general interventions may be appropriate in addition to taking specific action to resolve a particular complaint.</td>
<td>Environmental scanning,(^45) to ensure that we remain connected to, and aware of, emerging trends and issues. Strategic direction by senior staff in identified areas of our work. The introduction of a formalised scoping process when significant and systemic issues arise, to ensure that we can identify and take appropriate action to address opportunities for administrative improvement across the public sector.</td>
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\(^45\) We conduct environmental scanning by: • liaising regularly with Ministers and state sector agencies; • presenting and participating in public forums and speaking engagements; • monitoring media and public opinion in online forums and publications; • obtaining information and feedback from those attending our outreach programmes, and from agency participants at our training sessions; and • carrying out biennial stakeholder surveys.
International environment

We also operate to some extent in the international environment, and must meet expectations in that regard.

Operating in the international environment is becoming an increasing area of our work. This is especially so given our responsibilities under two international conventions, and the ongoing international interest in the New Zealand Ombudsman model.

We have in the past focused international assistance efforts in the Pacific, through the Pacific Ombudsman Alliance (POA).46

We have seen this as a vital area of our work, providing our knowledge and experience to assist in the development of integrity institutions throughout the Pacific. However, the POA has now disbanded. Following this, we have seen increased interest from our Pacific neighbours for us to provide assistance directly, outside of the traditional POA framework. However, we are not currently funded to do so and so any assistance we can provide at this time will need to be on a discretionary basis funded from one-off savings.

Expectations in the international environment

The international community expects us to:

• act robustly, independently and impartially; and
• provide timely and reliable reports to the United Nations on the treatment of people in detention and the implementation of the Disabilities Convention.

New Zealand wants a stable region, with skilled and democratic accountability mechanisms.

The international Ombudsman community wants New Zealand input to international initiatives and access to New Zealand best practice, advice and guidance.

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<th>Key risk: Loss of international credibility and reputation</th>
<th>Our strategies to manage this risk</th>
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<td>There is a risk to New Zealand’s international credibility and reputation if we fail in any respect in our inspection and monitoring roles under international conventions.</td>
<td>Maintain effective networks and work closely with the other New Zealand and international agencies involved.</td>
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<td>In relation to our inspection role, the international community has identified a risk inherent in having ‘a single institution…to serve both as [National Preventive Mechanism] and as a forum for individual complaints’.47</td>
<td>Strong internal separation between our inspection and general complaint handling roles.</td>
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</table>

46 An alliance of Australian, New Zealand and Pacific Ombudsmen and Ombudsman type institutions, that received funding from the Australian and New Zealand governments.

Assessing Organisational Health and Capability

Our ability to deliver our outputs is essentially centred around the capability of our staff, supported by:

- the internal leadership, management systems and processes we have in place;
- our information and communication technologies; and
- our office accommodation.

The key capabilities we need to deliver our outputs and specific areas of focus during the period 2017-2021 are discussed below.

People

We aim to recruit and retain quality staff who adhere to high standards of professional conduct. We also aim to enhance the capability of our staff so that everyone can aspire to higher levels of performance. Measures to attract, develop and retain staff include:

- providing fair and consistent terms and conditions of employment;
- ensuring organisational development and sustainability by becoming a learning organisation;
- providing learning and professional development opportunities to enhance capability and performance; and
- providing opportunities for participation in health and wellness programmes that support the general wellbeing of staff.

The specific projects we are undertaking in this area include:

- negotiation of a renewed collective agreement with the union (PSA);
- progressive implementation of a revised performance review and professional development planning system, including the introduction of key performance indicators for staff linked to our outputs and output performance measures;
- implementation of a comprehensive internal learning and development strategy and building of internal capability for the management and delivery of learning and development for all staff;
- completing the roll out of consolidated corporate policies and procedures for finance, people, information, health and safety, emergency responsiveness and security management;
- continuing regular internal surveys to gauge staff satisfaction and identify areas for improvement; and
- developing and implementing organisational initiatives to support the implementation of our values.

Leadership and management systems

The Office is led by the Chief Ombudsman and supported by another Ombudsman and the Executive Management Team; made up of the Deputy Ombudsman, Assistant Ombudsmen, Finance and Business Services Manager and People and Capability Manager. Below that tier are a number of Managers with responsibility for oversight and formal reporting on the work of their team members.

The Office now has a strong focus on performance through quality, integrity and values. All staff members are accordingly assessed according to performance and achievement of the goals set out in our business model but also,
their adherence to and promotion of the Office’s agreed Statement of Values:

*Te Haerenga o te Kaitiaki Mana Tangata*
*Our true north—the journey of the guardian of the mana of the people through our people, purpose and passion*

Leadership is focused on securing high levels of professional conduct and performance through:

- fostering a staff environment which is happy, healthy, fair and encourages learning and development throughout our work;
- enabling work to be delivered in a timely and effective manner, with appropriate delegations, support and quality assurance oversight; and
- developing an approach to management which promotes and protects the health and safety of employees, particularly so far as unreasonable complainant conduct is concerned.

Our leadership believes that the monitoring and review of our processes and operating systems must be continuous so as to ensure their currency, capacity and relevance, quality and security is maintained.

**Technology**

We aim to take full advantage of available technology to improve our performance.

We have redeveloped our website and incorporated social media tools to increase our engagement and the accessibility of information about our role. As part of this project, we have introduced a consistent look to all our resources and communication products, and we are considering how we can use social media to best effect.

During 2017-2021, we intend to harmonise and improve our current information management technologies to support our business needs in multiple jurisdictions. This includes:

- implementation of a new technology platform;
- integration and upgrade of our Office’s legacy systems; and
- completion of our infrastructure upgrade.

We have an information management policy and strategy governance committee, charged with developing and maintaining a long term information management and technology strategy, and information management and technology governance and oversight, and we are implementing our Information Systems Strategic Plan.

**Capital and asset management intentions**

Our capital investment is primarily in the form of information technology equipment and computer software, as described in the Technology section above. Capital is otherwise committed to replacing office equipment and furnishings, and leasehold improvements when necessary.