Data and Information Re-use Chief Executives' Steering Group

2013 Report On Agency Adoption of the New Zealand Declaration on Open and Transparent Government

New Zealand Government

Executive summary

1. This report sets out the progress made by public service departments in adopting the Declaration on Open and Transparent Government since the first report in June 2012; and describes how re-use of this data is showing increased economic, social, transparency and efficiency benefits.

2. The progress builds on last year's results. Twenty six (84%) of departments now include the Declaration in their core business planning or plan to do so next year. This compares with 72% in 2012. Data Champions at senior management level in each department are driving this change. The majority of data planned for release in 2012 by departments was actually released. Ten departments were fully compliant with the Declaration, compared with six in 2012.

3. The New Zealand Government Open Access and Licensing framework (NZGOAL) is being applied more widely to enable legal re-use by third parties. Twelve have updated their website copyright statements, compared with two in 2012, and 69% of planned data releases will be licensed for legal re-use. This is a marked contrast with 2012 when 25 (69%) departments were focusing on only publishing or disseminating their data.

4. Notable highlights showing economic and social benefit from data release include the growth of the open data platform company, Koordinates, which is partnering with government to offer much of government's public data in open formats; the ANZ Truckometer, which uses New Zealand Transport Agency's open traffic density data to accurately predict GDP growth, and inform financial investment decisions; and Land Information New Zealand's open data being used by Navman to keep its Magellan handheld GPS devices up to date.

5. More public data is being re-used to illustrate government's performance. The Fairfax Media School Report used Education Review Office data and National Standards data; and journalists analysed sick leave and redundancy data, and also created infographics of budget data. Chief Executives' expense data are also being released in more open formats, allowing easier analysis.

6. Examples of efficiency gains include engineers and surveyors using aerial imagery directly from the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority's map service, and central and local government using the Ministry of Transport's household travel survey data to determine common destinations and model transport policies Official statistics inform government monetary policy, and underpin decisions on health and education funding and investment.

7. Plans for future release suggest further innovative progress. Of note are plans by the Ministry of Justice, Inland Revenue, Ministry of Education, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, and Statistics New Zealand.

8. Over 2013/14 the Programme Secretariat will intensify its support for departments whose adoption is at an earlier stage. It will also actively explore more public data release to encourage third party contribution to policy development; engage with Crown agencies and local government; work with users; and continue discussions with media organisations to build data journalism capability to use public data more actively.

Context

9. The Declaration on Open and Transparent Government[1], (the Declaration) approved by Cabinet in August 2011 [Cab Min (11) 29/12 refers], anticipated that the private and community sectors could use high value public data "to grow the economy, strengthen our social and cultural fabric, and sustain our environment". Cabinet also wished to "encourage business and community involvement in government decision-making". It anticipated "a more efficient and accountable public sector, more services tailored to citizen needs, and a greater level of participation in shaping government decisions".

10. Public service departments were directed to adopt the Declaration, and other agencies across the public sector encouraged or invited to do so. Cabinet noted that an aggregated progress report would be presented to the Ministerial Committee on Government Information and Communications Technology annually. Public service departments are the current focus as their data is generally fully taxpayer funded.

11. This work-stream is an activity of Directions and Priorities for Government ICT, approved by Cabinet in October 2010, which is currently being updated by the Government ICT Strategy and Action Plan to 2017.

12. It also complements the Better Public Services programme. Government departments supplying public data for re-use are gaining skills, competencies and agility that also contribute to achieving the Improving Interaction with Government result areas (9 and 10)[2]. In particular they are working to understand user demand, release datasets which have been aggregated, anonymised and confidentialised, and to use machine-readable formats that make it easier for citizens to interact with government via the internet. Through their re-use of public data businesses can also add value to government services.

13. The Data and Information Re-use Chief Executives' Steering Group[3] continues to oversee an active programme supporting adoption of the Declaration, application of the New Zealand Government Open Access and Licensing framework (NZGOAL)[4], and the release of high value public data for re-use.

14. The first benchmark report, covering the period August 2011 to March 2012, concluded that adoption had begun well. Open data leadership in public service departments was set up and departments were moving towards prioritising the release of high value public data with potential economic, social, transparency and efficiency benefits. There was also encouraging evidence of innovative re-use of government data by third parties.

15. This 2013 report describes progress since the first report, provides tangible examples of how high-value data is being re-used, and sets out the programme's next steps.

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[1] http://www.ict.govt.nz/programme/opening-government-data-and-information/declaration-open-and-transparent-government

[2] Result area 9: online business; result area 10: online services http://beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/The_Prime_Minister%27s_results_for_New_Zealanders.pdf

[3] http://www.ict.govt.nz/directions-and-priorities/data-and-information-reuse-chief-executives-steeri

[4] Approved by Cabinet in August 2010 [Cab Min (10) 24/5A refers]; see http://www.ict.govt.nz/guidance-and-resources/information-and-data/nzgoal

Departmental Adoption of the Declaration

16. A senior management Data Champion in each of the 33 public service departments leads adoption of the Declaration.[5] The analysis below collates the results of a survey[6] sent to 32 public and non-public service departments Responses were received from the Data Champions from 31 departments[7].

17. Departmental progress in adopting the Declaration is set out in Table 1. Progress has been assessed against 12 criteria[8].

Table 1: 2013 Departmental Adoption of the Declaration
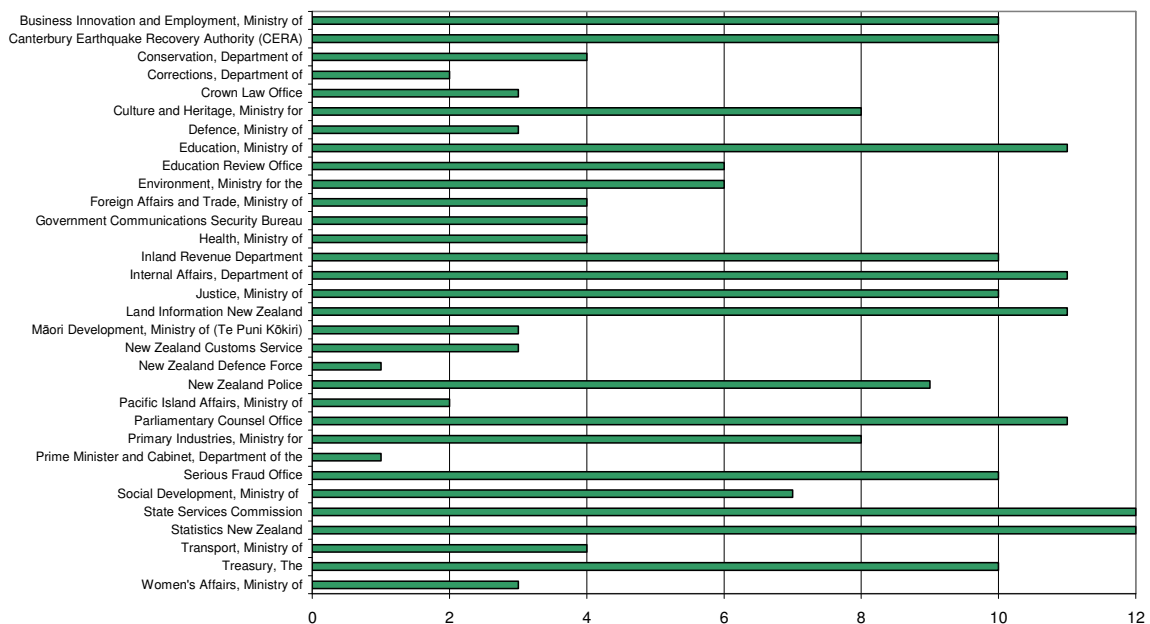
Incorporation into business planning

18. Good progress has been made in incorporating the Declaration into business planning. Twenty six (84%) of departments now include the Declaration in their core business planning or plan to do so next year. This compares with 72% in 2012.

19. Table 2 sets out responding departments' progress in incorporating the Declaration into their core business planning in 2013 compared with 2012.

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[5] This includes the SIS which does not participate further in this programme.
[6] See the survey questions on ict.govt.nz
[7] The NZ Defence Force did not provide a return; it is included in Table 1 as it has a Data Champion.
[8] The 12 criteria, all weighted equally, are: senior manager is Data Champion; Declaration in current planning; will be in future planning; data released in 2012 (excl CE's expenses); plans for future releases; NZGOAL on websites and publications; NZGOAL on data released; data in open, machine-readable formats; current data released on data.govt.nz; NZGOAL on future releases; future releases in open, machine-readable formats; and future releases on data.govt.nz.

Table 2: Ways Open Data Incorporated into Agency Business Planning
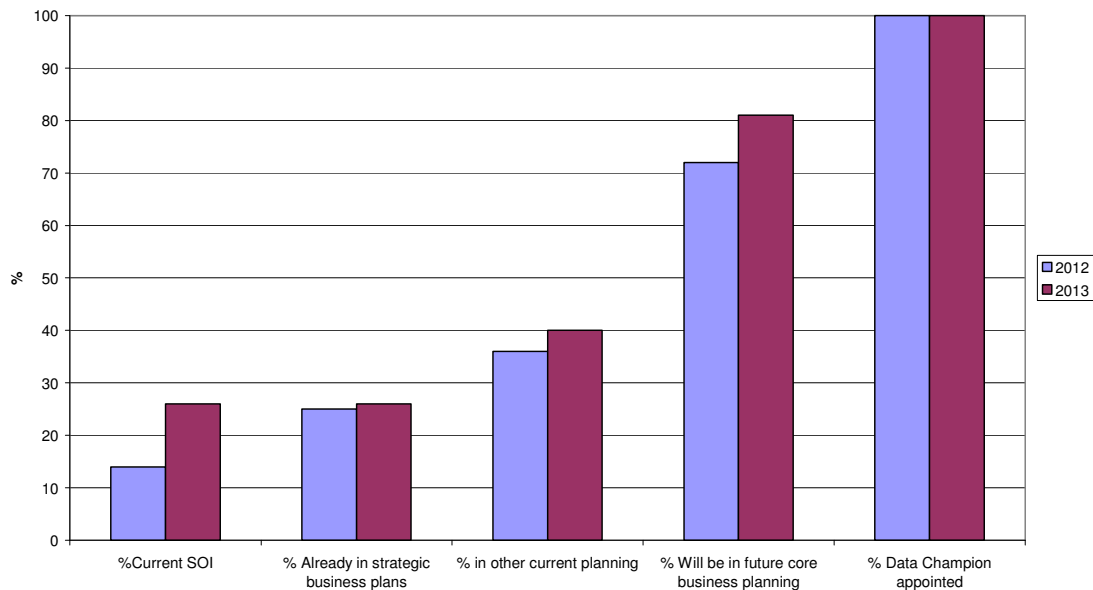
20. All but four (13%) of the responding departments now include the Declaration in their Statement of Intent or business planning documents. Fourteen (45%) are incorporating it in their departmental core business strategies:

    • Central Agencies' Strategic Asset Management Plan;
    • Department for Corrections Policy and Research Group's Business Plan;
    • Department of Conservation's Information Management Strategic Direction;
    • Justice Sector Group Business Plan;
    • Land Information New Zealand's Customer Services General Manager's deliverables;
    • Ministry for the Environment's Information Systems Strategic Plan;
    • Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Information Policy Programme;
    • Ministry of Education's Information Management Strategy;
    • Ministry of Culture and Heritage's Information and Technology Strategic Plan; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)'s processes and protocols;
    • Ministry of Transport (MoT)'s Business Plan;
    • New Zealand Custom Service's Business Technology Strategy 2012-16;
    • New Zealand Police's Strategic Planning for developing business intelligence; and
    • State Services Commission's Business Units' annual work planning.

21. Three of the departments (Ministry of Defence, Inland Revenue, and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs) that report no plans to incorporate the Declaration in their 2013 core business planning have still released high value public data for re-use over the survey period, or applied NZGOAL licensing to their publications or website. The other department, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, notes that it does not hold high value public data.

Compliance with the Declaration

22. Adoption of the Declaration requires agencies to release high value public data in open, re-usable, machine readable formats, and to list this data on data.govt.nz[9]. The following ten departments (compared with six in 2012) are consistently releasing public data fully compliant with the Declaration:

    • Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA)
    • Department of Internal Affairs
    • Inland Revenue
    • Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)
    • Ministry of Education
    • Ministry of Justice MOJ)
    • Parliamentary Counsel Office[10]
    • State Services Commission (SSC)
    • Statistics New Zealand; and
    • The Treasury.

23. A further three agencies reported plans for full compliance: the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, the Serious Fraud Office, and MBIE.

Applying re-use licences to public data

24. Adoption of the Declaration also requires agencies to apply the NZ Government Open Access and Licensing framework (NZGOAL) to the public data they release for re-use. Users can then legally re-use and adapt these materials. Agencies are now changing their online and offline publishing processes and updating their website copyright statements in accordance with NZGOAL.

25. 69% of planned data releases will be licensed for legal re-use. This is a marked contrast with 2012 when 25 (69%) departments were focusing on only publishing or disseminating their data. Eleven departments (35%) have updated their website copyright statements. This is a significant improvement from two departments in 2012.

2012/13 public data release

26. The practice of listing public data on the all-of-government directory, data.govt.nz, has continued. The majority of the data public service departments planned to release over 2012/13 was also actually released.

27. As was the case in 2012, Land Information New Zealand, Statistics New Zealand and The Treasury release the most public data.

28. Twenty-four (77%) departments released high value public data for re-use over the 2012/13 period. They expect 73% of the data released will have economic and social impacts, 64% transparency impacts and 28% efficiency impacts, with most of the data having anticipated impacts in more than one area.

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[9]See the New Zealand Data and Information Management Principles at http://www.ict.govt.nz/programme/opening-government-data-and-information/new-zealand-data-and-information-management-princi

[10] The Parliamentary Counsel Office releases legislation in re-usable formats, list it on data.govt.nz, but does not apply an NZGOAL statement as there is no copyright on legislation.

29. Key examples of new high value public data releases by departments are:

- Canterbury recovery data and imagery;
- Education Review Office (ERO) report links;
- New Zealand Legislation (constantly updated);
- Electoral street and places index;
- Hydrographic and marine charts (311 layers);
- Child, Youth and Family key statistics;
- Household travel survey;
- Treasury Bill and Government Bond tender results;
- Tourism forecasts;
- Expanded conviction and sentencing statistics; and
- Tables accompanying health reports.

30. The Ministry of Transport has released travel survey data on Statistics New Zealand's platform, NZ.Stat. It hopes to release more data on this platform, and expects this will increase the number of people who find the data and increase what they can do with it. The Ministry for the Environment is participating in a pilot project to extend the LINZ Data Service to release the Ministry's data and metadata.

Future data release plans

31. Table 3 shows future data release plans[11]. In contrast with 2012, the majority of this data will be licensed for legal reuse and listed on data.govt.nz in open formats.

Table 3: Future Releases of Open Data Planned
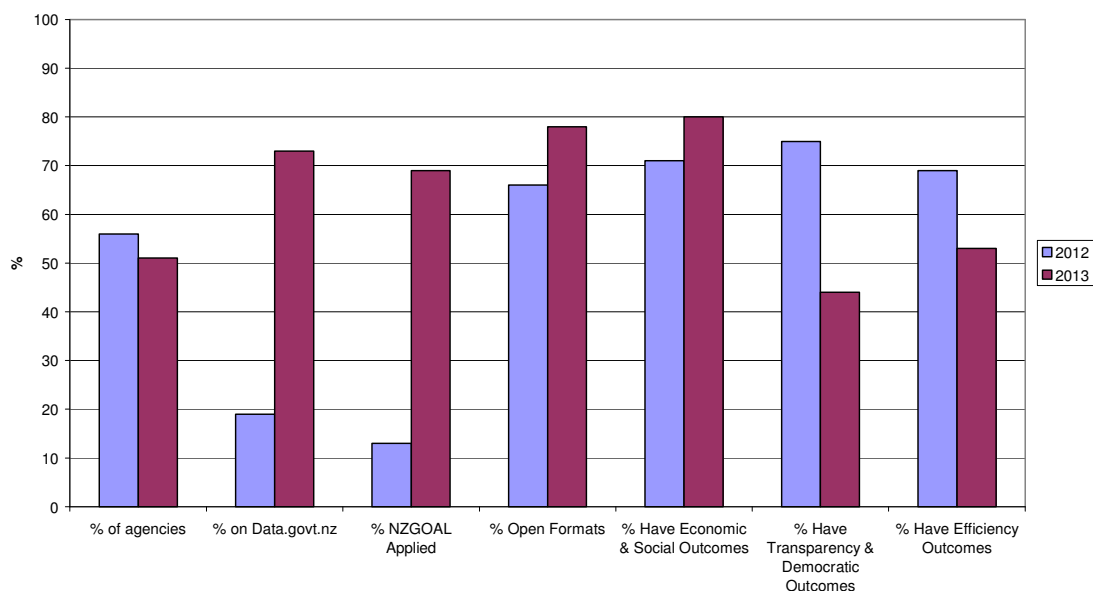
32. Departments expect that most data planned for release will have economic and social impact, followed by efficiency benefits, then transparency benefits.

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11 Statistics NZ regular releases of official statistics are excluded from this table.

33. Plans include existing MOJ material being made available in more easily interpreted formats; regional Inland Revenue information released to support management decisions; National Standards data released in more open formats; New Zealand Qualifications Authority data added to the Fairfax Media School Report; and Tier 1 official statistics[12] publicised on data.govt.nz

Departments' other activities

34. Actual release of data over 2012/13 is not the only measure of progress. Departments are also actively preparing to release their high value public data. These data supply-related themes are common across many departments:

- Improving data structures and metadata to enable release for re-use;
- Collaborating on projects for better release methods;
- Developing "digital first" publishing and information strategies;
- Refining and documenting processes to discover and release data; and
- Sending staff to training on NZGOAL and data confidentiality.

Challenges being overcome

35. Departments continue to work through issues that also relate mostly to the supply of data. These issues, which can be resolved collectively through communities of practice, include:

- Wide promotion of the Declaration, including at the front-line;
- Identifying how to disseminate departments' open data;
- Changes to publication and release process, including identifying copyright ownership and pre-release risk assurance;
- Historical contractual agreements that do not clearly state IP ownership;
- Data quality and inconsistent data across sectors;
- Resources to find, catalogue and prioritise all of the department's data;
- Benefits realisation advice;
- Issues relating to information sharing between departments;
- Awareness of any limitations set by departmental legislation; and
- Capacity to release in multiple formats to meet a variety of user needs.

Secretariat support

36. As well as providing online guidance, the Programme Secretariat held one-on-one consultations with Data Champions. The overriding themes from those meetings were that Data Champions wanted additional NZGOAL training, clarity on the different services provided by other agencies (for example, LINZ and Statistics New Zealand), information on formats, conversion and standards, and assistance with anonymisation and aggregation of data.

37. As a result of this feedback, the Programme Secretariat expanded the toolkit on the programme's pages on ict.govt.nz and published 14 case studies highlighting the resultant economic and social, efficiency, and transparency impacts. These pages have been viewed by over 5,000 readers so far, mostly from New Zealand.

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[12] Tier 1 statistics are essential to understand how well New Zealand is performing and to inform critical decisions. .http://www.statisphere.govt.nz/tier1-statistics/defining-managing-tier-1-stats.aspx)

38.	Three well attended NZGOAL training sessions were held in 2012/13, NZGOAL copyright guidance was released[13], and Statistics New Zealand ran three workshops on anonymisation and aggregation of data, and one on data management.

39.	Discussions were held with journalists, Fairfax Media and the New Zealand Journalism Training Organisation aimed at raising the importance and capability of data journalism in New Zealand. These indicate a willingness to add data analysis to its NCEA-level 5, 6 and 7 course content.

The impact of public data release

40.	The 2012 report noted encouraging evidence of re-use by third parties and looked ahead to a comprehensive work programme in 2012 to ensure further uptake of the Declaration to enable wider external re-use and greater knowledge of the impact of that re-use.

41.	By comparison, in 2013, departments have reported valuable re-use of their public data. The description below summarises this re-use and supplements this with data from the case studies prepared by the Programme Secretariat.

Economic and social impact

42.	Data is being downloaded and analysed by economic researchers such as BERL Economics and the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research. The ANZ Bank has a regular economic forecast, the "ANZ Truckometer", based on analysis of the correlation between traffic volume data from the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) and Gross Domestic Product data from Statistics New Zealand. The other major trading banks also re-use Statistics New Zealand data in their forecasts, and the ASB re-uses CERA data in its regular "Cantometer" report.

43.	Other examples of private sector reuse are:

- International GPS and navigation company Navman uses data from the LINZ Data Service to keep its Magellan handheld GPS devices up to date;
- Engineers and surveyors use aerial imagery from CERA's map service;
- Landscape architects re-use data from the LINZ Data Service (LDS) for remote planning and design;
- Solid Energy re-uses LDS data for land and mining reviews; and
- Consultants re-use MBIE data to forecast tourism arrival and spend.

44.	The open data platform company, Koordinates, launched in 2007, has grown in size as it partners with government to provide access to much of government's public data. Its portal is widely used by government.

Efficiency impact

45.	Re-use is enabling significant efficiencies within government:

- Official statistics inform government monetary policy, and underpin decisions on health and education funding and investment;
- Tourism New Zealand re-uses the International Visitor Survey from MBIE to inform their strategy;

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[13]	http://ict.govt.nz/resources/information-and-data/nzgoal/nzgoal-guidance-notes/nzgoal-guidance-note-1-website-copyright-statement

- Energy data from MBIE is re-used by many agencies;
- CERA re-uses Key Indicator reports from MBIE to inform its work;
- NZTA, local government and independent researchers re-use household travel survey data from MoT to determine common destinations and model transport policies;
- The National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research has used Land Cover Database version 3 to update the River Environment Classification;
- Re-use of official statistics is widespread across government; and
- The Department of Conservation (DoC) re-used its own data to accelerate the development of a new service in the DoC Maps website.

Transparency impact

46.   Data re-used by the media demonstrates government's performance:

- Information published by the New Zealand Police;
- Case notes published by the SFO, which are also re-used by the general public (reducing the number of queries about progress of cases);
- CWA Learning Media re-used the names database from the Department of Internal Affairs in a visualisation of popular names;
- The Treasury's 2012 Budget data visualised by journalist Keith Ng;
- Sick leave and redundancy data analysed by the media; and
- The open format (csv) file of Education Review Office review reports has been used by the Fairfax Media 'School Report'.

User demand

47.   Users can request public data not currently released on the Request Register on data.govt.nz. These requests are now forwarded to the departmental Data Champion for action. Responses and actions are noted on data.govt.nz. As at 29 May 2013, there are 95 requests for public data on the register.

Delivery of the Programme

48.   Many departments support the cross-government programme:

- Land Information New Zealand hosts the Data and Information Re-use Chief Executive Steering Group Secretariat and provides a full time Programme Leader.
- The Ministry for the Environment, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, the Parliamentary Counsel Office and the Ministry of Education contribute part-time resources to assist the Secretariat with delivery of the Programme.
- The Department of Internal Affairs provides, operates, maintains and updates data.govt.nz. This was developed and continues to operate from within baseline.

49.   The Data and Information Re-use Chief Executive Steering Group comprises Chief Executives or delegates from Land Information New Zealand (Chair), Careers New Zealand, Department of Internal Affairs, Statistics New Zealand, Ministry for the Environment, and Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

50. The Open Data Working Group has representatives from the Department of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry for the Environment, Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Land Information New Zealand, New Zealand Geospatial Office, Parliamentary Counsel Office, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Statistics New Zealand.

51. The Department of Internal Affairs provides the website ict.govt.nz where all information relating to the Programme is published. This section of the website is maintained by the Secretariat.

Next Steps

52. The Data and Information Re-use Chief Executives' Steering Group will oversee the following next steps:

   a) Work with Data Champions to implement their Declaration adoption plans, intensifying support for departments whose adoption is at an earlier stage;

   b) Continue supporting departments with;

   - regular NZGOAL training;

   - guidance on data release, covering process, open formats, technical methods, and including georeferencing where appropriate;

   - helping Data Champions respond to requests made on the data.govt.nz data request register;

   c) Actively explore more public data release to increase third party contribution to policy development and advice;

   d) Continue to find, prepare and release case studies describing

   - how high value public data has been re-used and the impact of that re-use on the economy and society;

   - how departments are releasing public data which illustrates government's performance; and

   - the efficiencies gained from government departments' re-use of high value public data

   e) Encourage departments to actively engage with users to understand better their demand for public data and what impact their data re-use is having

   f) Accelerate the Programme Secretariat's work with users and feed this insight directly to the supplying departments

   g) Continue to promote data journalism and other evidence-based activities

   h) Work with Land Information New Zealand and Statistics New Zealand to ensure their data platforms are promoted across government as complementary; and

   i) Extend the programme to encourage Crown entities and local government to release their high value public data for re-use; and

   j) Report back in June 2014.