

2015 REPORT BACK ON AGENCIES' PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING THE OPEN GOVERNMENT INFORMATION AND DATA PROGRAMME

Purpose

1. This paper presents a summary of agencies' progress implementing the Declaration on Open and Transparent Government (the Declaration), and progress with the Open Government Information and Data Programme (the Programme). This is a companion paper for the Open Government Information and Data Programme and Next Steps to recognise that there are opportunities to improve the way the Programme is operating, and those are discussed in that paper.

Executive Summary

2. Over 2010 and 2011 Cabinet approved three policies placing obligations on government agencies to identify their high-value public data and information and to take active steps towards releasing it in open formats, allowing re-use. Cabinet anticipated that third party re-use of open data would increase economic and social benefits through new tools, products and knowledge, and that information sharing would create more efficient government. Civil society and business would be more able to engage with and contribute to government policies.
3. The Open Government Data Chief Executives Governance Group¹ is reporting on agencies' progress adopting these policies as at 31 March 2015.
4. Four years on, public data is released increasingly in open formats by central government departments, and local government and Crown Research Institutes are moving towards this goal. As at 24 July 2015, 3,443 open datasets were listed on the directory data.govt.nz, an increase of 37% since the 2014 report.
5. As release of public data for re-use becomes business as usual for agencies, their knowledge of how the data is re-used has grown. Some cited benefits including enabling independent monitoring of government services and reducing risk or increasing safety levels. Others reported increases in economic growth through the generation or expansion of new business; building marketable applications; and reduced resourcing or processing time. Agencies had found efficiencies from using other agencies' data to deliver their services.

¹ This Governance Group replaces the Data and Information Re-use Chief Executives Steering Group

6. The success of the programme is reflected in the Global Open Data Barometer's 2015 rating of New Zealand as 4th equal out of 86 countries.
7. While the results show increased maturity, the Programme is not yet self-sustaining across the public sector.

Background

8. Over 2010 and 2011 Cabinet approved three information and data-related policies. These are the 2010 Declaration on Open and Transparent Government (the Declaration), requiring the release of high value public data for legal re-use, the 2010 NZ Government Open Access and Licensing framework (NZGOAL) which requires open licensing and formats, and the 2011 NZ Data and Information Management Principles, requiring government-held data and information to be open, readily available, trusted and authoritative, well managed, reasonably priced and re-usable unless there are necessary reasons for its protection^{2,3}.
9. Public service departments were directed to adopt the Declaration and the NZGOAL Review and Release Process⁴. Other public sector agencies, including Crown Research Institutes (CRIs) and local councils, were encouraged or invited to do so.

Actions to encourage accelerated supply of public data

10. Since the September 2014 report *Accelerating the Release of Public Data: Report Back on Actions to Increase Update and Address Barriers*, approved in September 2014 [CAB Min (14) 28/11 refers] the Open Government Data Steering Group⁵ has overseen the following processes to accelerate open data supply.
11. Five departments targeted by Cabinet in 2014 as priority⁶, given their data intensive functions and importance of their data for re-use, made solid progress over the year. The Chief Executives were asked to submit plans to actively release public data to their Minister. The Programme has provided guidance, support and technical assistance on public data and is working through any barriers to full participation.
12. The remaining 28 departments were asked to provide a plan to accelerate the release of their public data in their annual update to their Minister. The Programme meets six-monthly with each Data Champion to provide support for agency initiatives.

² Cab Min (10) 24/5A) and Cab Min (11) 29/12

³ The open data programme includes public service departments, Crown Entities, local government agencies, Crown Research Institutes, and some state owned enterprises.

⁴ <https://www.ict.govt.nz/governance-and-leadership/governance-groups/open-data-governance/>

⁵ Comprising senior executives from 11 information and data-intensive departments

⁶ Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI); Ministry for the Environment (MfE); Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)

13. All agencies were alerted to the Cabinet requirement [CAB Min (11) 29/12 refers] to annually submit plans for data release to portfolio Ministers.
14. Resourcing constraints identified in the September 2014 report were directly addressed through additional resourcing (secondment from the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) and two fixed-term staff in the Secretariat).
15. Departments were assisted in publishing in open data formats and listing on data.govt.nz; NZGOAL was revised to adopt the Creative Commons International 4.0 licences in line with international best practice; 150 staff attended NZGOAL training sessions; NZGOAL online training modules were prepared and published; and data.govt.nz was improved to increase transparency and usability.

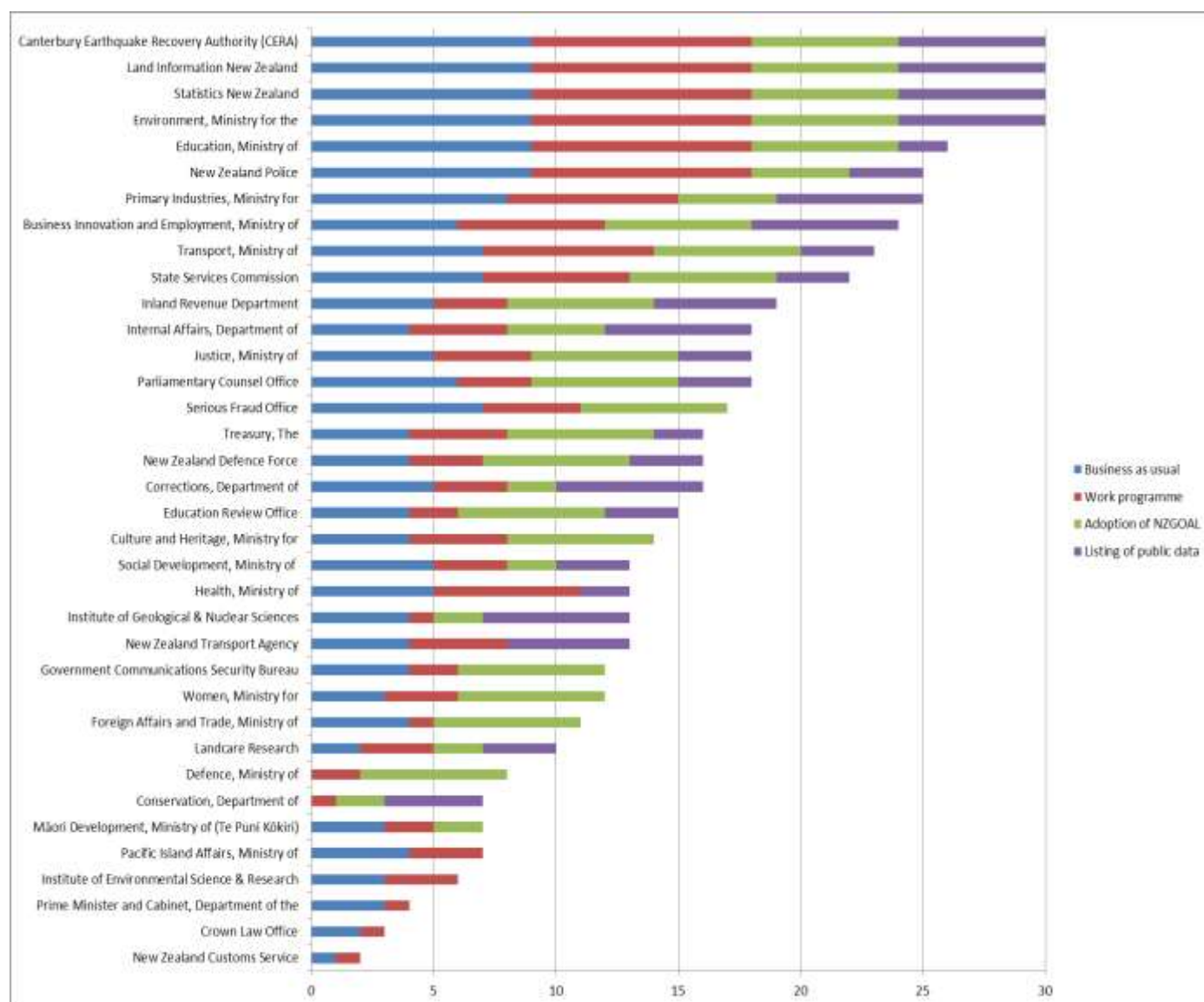
Agencies' Progress adopting the Declaration

16. As at 24 July 2015 3,443 open datasets were listed on data.govt.nz, an increase of 37% since the 2014 report. Data released by 17 departments (53%) meets open data format requirements⁷ and the requirements of NZGOAL.
17. Three data-intensive departments (Ministry for the Environment, Ministry for Primary Industries and Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment) whose open data supply Cabinet sought to accelerate⁸, join the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, Land Information New Zealand, Statistics New Zealand, Ministry of Education, New Zealand Police, Ministry of Transport and the State Services Commission in meeting 75% or more of government's open data and open licensing requirements.
18. There is room for improvement across the public service. While almost 60% of departments (19) performed well across all requirements in 2014/2015, the remaining 13 departments only partially met them.

⁷ Scoring 3+ against the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) five star open data model

⁸ See Accelerating the Release of Public Data: Report Back on Actions to Increase Update and Address Barriers [CAB Min (14) 28/11 refers]. The other two departments (Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Health) are committed to open data release and good progress is expected in the coming year

19. Agency progress against 4 sets of criteria⁹ in adopting the Declaration in 2015 follows (as at 31 March 2015):



20. Almost three quarters of central government agencies now have a formal position with responsibility for adoption of the Declaration, and two-thirds are releasing public data in open formats, allowing more automated handling of data. This progress over four years confirms Ministers' view when the Declaration was released that adoption would require a cultural change.

21. Most agencies (80%) are now adopting the NZGOAL licensing framework and applying the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand licence (CC-BY) to their copyright works, including datasets, which provides a strong level of consistency across government.

⁹

The progress criteria (totalling 30 points) include: Business as usual (undertaken a stocktake of datasets; engaged with stakeholders/data users; open formats; notified on data.govt.nz; Declaration in business planning; have policies and procedures; procurement contracts; position with formal responsibility; having these things in current work plans. NZGOAL compliant statements on websites and publications, and NZGOAL incorporated in publishing policies, these are weighted more as important foundations. Data released in 2014/15 and plans for future releases notified on data.govt.nz, in open formats and licensed for re-use.

22. Five agencies (13%) experienced a decrease in requests for public data that is now available online in re-useable formats.
23. More release of open data is required, particularly by those agencies yet to establish open data publishing policies and procedures. Fifteen agencies (47%) stated they will not be releasing new data in 2015. The Programme has identified potential datasets which could be listed on data.govt.nz and is working with individual agencies to encourage their release in 2015.
24. Agencies yet to release open data on data.govt.nz (other than Chief Executive expenses) include Ministry for Women, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Te Puni Kokiri, Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, and the Crown Law Office.
25. Agencies not listing data on data.govt.nz make it difficult for public users to find the data. Only half of agencies work closely with stakeholders to find out what open data they want to use, or how it is re-used, indicating slow progress in prioritising public data release based on user demand.
26. Agencies still in the 'readiness' phase¹⁰ have immature data management processes, open data formats that are not consistent, manual publishing processes, and some data still only released in proprietary formats such as Microsoft Excel. These agencies reported challenges including prioritising internal resourcing, blurred understanding between open and shared data, aggregating restricted data to allow its release as open data, restricted data concerns about aggregated data and the long-term costs of sustaining public data release.
27. Four CRIs recently joined the programme. They are all releasing data, but not consistently applying NZGOAL or notifying data.govt.nz. There is a willingness to release data where possible, but there is a commercial tension to be worked through for some of their datasets.

Progress by the targeted data-intensive agencies (as at 31 March 2015)

28. The five targeted departments scored across the adoption criteria as follows:

	Business as usual	Work programme	Listing of public data	Adoption of NZGOAL
Ministry for the Environment	100%	100%	100%	100%
Ministry for Primary Industries	88%	77%	66%	100%
Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment	66%	66%	100%	100%
Ministry of Health	55%	66%	33%	0%
Ministry of Social Development	55%	33%	33%	50%

¹⁰ The Global Open Data Barometer measures open data across three phases: readiness, implementation and impact

29. Local government's key results are:

Progress towards Business as Usual	
Data Champion at senior executive level	71%
Open data incorporated in current plan	29%
Open data will be in future plans	17%

30. As expected at this early stage, local government awareness is low regarding listing datasets on data.govt.nz and licensing their data for re-use using NZGOAL. This is expected to improve with the engagement with their Data Champions.

Evidence of Re-use of Public Information and Data

31. With open information and data, value comes from the ability to share it and make it available to third parties for re-use. While the number of datasets released by agencies is a positive indicator of success, data re-use by external parties amplifies its true value.

32. Evidence of social benefits self-reported by agencies includes:

- increased availability and accessibility of resources e.g. schools and teachers using DIA's DigitalNZ to access resources for their classrooms;
- allowing independent monitoring of government services e.g. the Salvation Army's use of Statistics NZ and NZ Police open government data sources to inform their annual 'State of the Nation' report;
- and a reduction of risk or increased level of safety e.g. health and safety alerts produced by Thundermaps with data from Environment Canterbury, NZTA, EQC, GNS Science, LINZ and Wellington City Council.

33. Evidence of economic benefits includes:

- fuelling economic activity through generation of new business or the expansion of current business e.g. Critchlow's VisualCensus2013 creating data visualisation and analysis from demographic census data from Statistics New Zealand, which is then bundled and on-sold to customers;
- building marketable paid applications e.g. the Nest Finder mobile app provides information for travellers and tourists in New Zealand. The paid premium version provides topographic maps from LINZ, increasing safety for users, particularly while travelling in remote areas; and
- a reduction in resourcing or processing time e.g. Kamo Place Race by Whangarei District Council. Open demographic data, maps and stocktake data were used for public analysis as part of their new regulatory Town Planning process, resulting in an estimated saving of \$40,000.

34. Evidence of government's performance is regularly illustrated on the New Zealand Herald's data site and regular data blog (since 2014). The election web application displayed real-time election results and census data from Statistics New Zealand. This set new records for visitors to the NZ Herald website and won an award at the 2015 Canon Media Awards. Herald journalist, Harkanwal Singh, also won an award for his Deprivation Index Map at the awards. Both of

these achievements were made possible by government providing public data in open formats.

35. Evidence of efficiencies from data re-use includes almost two-thirds of government agencies noting they were using other agencies' existing public data rather than collecting it themselves. Eight agencies also receive other agencies' relevant machine-readable public data directly rather than needing to manipulate it to load into their own systems.

Updates to Programme Policies and Tools

36. In 2015 the Programme developed and released NZGOAL, Version 2, adopting the Creative Commons 4.0 International licenses. This, and other incremental changes, makes NZGOAL more succinct, user-friendly and up-to-date.
37. Data.govt.nz is a national online directory, making NZ open data discoverable in one place. Recent improvements to the site include new reporting and transparency features, a refreshed look, and tracking user behaviour to inform improvements. Ongoing work will see improved dataset listings and requesting processes.

Next steps

38. There is still work to do. Not all high value public data is routinely released. When released it is not always visible or published in fully open formats or licensed. Users expect timely responses to their requests for data on data.govt.nz. Some highly-sought data is only partially government-funded.
39. Adoption of the Declaration and NZGOAL is not yet self-sustaining across government. We are not yet 'open by default'¹¹. Broader state sector uptake is embryonic. Only four Crown Research Institutes (CRIs) and the NZ Transport Agency have engaged so far. Many local councils are at an early stage of open data readiness.
40. Options for the next steps are set out in the accompanying paper "Open Government Information and Data Programme Next Steps".

Financial implications

41. There are no financial implications in the presentation of this paper.

Human rights, legislative implications, regulatory impact analysis, gender, disability and Treaty of Waitangi implications

42. There are no human rights, Bill of Rights, legislative, regulatory, gender, disability or Treaty of Waitangi implications arising from the recommendations in this paper.

¹¹ An 'open by default' principle for managing data and information held by the NZ Government is mandated in the NZ Data and Information Management Principles

Publicity

43. The Chair of the Open Government Data Chief Executives' Governance Group will release the 2015 progress report and the raw report data on the ict.govt.nz website following Cabinet approval.

Recommendations

44. I recommend that the Committee:
1. **note** that the *New Zealand Open Government Information and Data 2015 Progress Report* describes agencies' progress in releasing public information and data for re-use, and the known impacts of the re-use;
 2. **note** that increased use of public data by the private sector and civil society is contributing to increased business activity and public engagement;
 3. **note** that the regular release of public data is not yet business as usual across central government and that work across the broader public sector is embryonic;
 4. **note** that the Chair of the Open Government Data Chief Executives' Governance Group will release the 2015 New Zealand Open Government Information and Data: 2015 Progress Report and the raw report data.
 5. **note** that I propose to release this Cabinet paper and Cabinet minute publicly.

Hon Louise Upston
Minister for Land Information
____/____/2015

Attachment:

NZ Open Government Information and Data: 2015 Progress Report