

## **RELEASE OF THE 2012 REPORT ON AGENCY ADOPTION OF THE DECLARATION ON OPEN AND TRANSPARENT GOVERNMENT**

### **Purpose**

1. I propose that Cabinet notes the 2012 Report on Agency Adoption of the Declaration on Open and Transparent Government and approves its public release. The report and the accompanying raw report data will be released by the Chair of the Data and Information Re-use Chief Executives' Steering Group.

### **Executive summary**

2. The 2012 Report on Agency Adoption of the Declaration on Open and Transparent Government was completed in April 2012. It shows that government departments have made good progress in adopting the Declaration on Open and Transparent Government since its release by the Ministers of Finance and Internal Affairs in August 2011. The report presents a benchmark for annual measurement of the adoption and impact of re-use of high value public data.
3. Businesses are starting to re-use government's public data innovatively by creating new smartphone applications, mashing up<sup>1</sup> open government data from multiple departments and the private sector, and using open data web services to reduce cost and processing. They are also partnering with government to host and deliver government data.
4. Government departments and businesses are also working in new ways to share public data; for example, the land zone and technical category data released publicly by the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority is assisting with the Canterbury earthquake recovery.
5. All government departments are moving to incorporate the Declaration on Open and Transparent Government into their core business. All have assigned senior staff to lead this work and none reported insurmountable barriers to adopting the Declaration. These moves are promising signs of a change in the culture of public service departments and a new "business as usual" model of actively releasing public data for re-use.

### **Background**

6. The Declaration on Open and Transparent Government (the Declaration), approved by Cabinet in August 2011 [Cab Min (11) 29/12 refers] requires agencies<sup>2</sup> to proactively release their public data for re-use in accordance with the New Zealand Government Open Access and Licensing Framework (NZGOAL). It

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<sup>1</sup> A mash up is a creative combination or mixing of content from different sources, e.g. a web mash-up that overlays digital maps with crime statistics.

<sup>2</sup> Public service departments are directed, state services and state sector agencies encouraged and local government agencies invited to adopt the Declaration

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”.

7. Public service departments were selected as the first stage, as their data is generally fully taxpayer funded, and Cabinet directed them to adopt the Declaration by releasing high value public data for re-use. Other agencies across the public sector were encouraged or invited to adopt the Declaration. Cabinet noted that an aggregated progress report would be presented to the Ministerial Committee on Government Information and Communications Technology annually.
8. The 2012 Report on Agency Adoption of the Declaration on Open and Transparent Government (the 2012 report-back) was presented to the State Sector Reform Ministerial Group (replacing the Ministerial Committee on Government Information and Communications Technology (ICT)) on 1 May 2012. The Ministerial Group noted its relevance to the Better Public Services programme and referred it on to the Cabinet Committee for State Sector Reform and Expenditure Control for further discussion.

## Comment

### *Contribution to Better Public Services results areas*

9. The skills, competencies and agility that departments are gaining as they release public data for re-use will also contribute to achieving the *Improving Interaction with Government* result areas (9 and 10)<sup>3</sup> through:
  - a) maintaining trust in government services by focusing on releasing for re-use public data which users demand;
  - b) demonstrating how the release of public data is improving economic, social, transparency and efficiency outcomes;
  - c) releasing data in machine-readable formats that make it easier for citizens to interact with government via the internet; and
  - d) enabling departments to gain experience in successfully releasing datasets which have been aggregated, anonymised and confidentialised. This will include assessing policy issues to ensure compliance with the Privacy Act 1993.

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<sup>3</sup> 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](http://beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/The_Prime_Minister%27s_results_for_New_Zealanders.pdf)

### *Departmental adoption of the Declaration*

10. A survey was sent to all public service departments' Data Champions, seeking feedback on their progress adopting the Declaration and, in particular, asking for evidence of innovative re-use by third parties.

11. The key findings are:

- a) each department has assigned a Data Champion from their senior or executive leadership teams to lead their adoption of the Declaration;
- b) all but two Data Champions reported on their work to adopt the Declaration<sup>4</sup>;
- c) two departments, Statistics New Zealand and Land Information New Zealand, are leading the full adoption of the Declaration, (i.e. licensing in accordance with NZGOAL, exposure on [data.govt.nz](http://data.govt.nz)<sup>5</sup> and release in re-usable formats);
- d) four other departments (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA), Ministry of Education, Department of Conservation and the Ministry for the Environment) are releasing much of their public data in accordance with the Declaration;
- e) all but four departments intend to incorporate data release for re-use in their core business planning; and
- f) no departments reported insurmountable barriers to the release of data for re-use.

### *Achievement of outcomes*

12. Responses indicated progress towards achieving economic and social outcomes from releasing high-value public data for re-use:

- a) smartphone applications utilising open government data are being developed;
- b) industry is using open data web services to reduce cost and processing time;
- c) businesses are using open government data to support and grow their core business;
- d) businesses are partnering with government; and
- e) businesses are mashing up open government data from multiple departments and the private sector.

13. Similarly, responses indicated progress towards achieving the anticipated transparency and efficiency outcomes:

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<sup>4</sup> The SIS, GCSB, and the Ministry of Defence as security agencies, did not provide a return. Note that the New Zealand Defence Force did provide a return. The Department of Building and Housing and the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs did not provide a return.

<sup>5</sup> [www.data.govt.nz](http://www.data.govt.nz) is the cross-government directory of government's public data

- a) land zone and technical category data released publicly by CERA is being re-used widely to assist with the Canterbury earthquake recovery;
- b) The Treasury is regularly releasing public data to data.govt.nz using an automated feed<sup>6</sup>; and
- c) there is strong interest in the regular release of Chief Executives' expense data.

#### *Departmental adoption challenges*

14. Whilst no departments reported insurmountable barriers to releasing high value public data, they identified issues they needed to address, including:
- a) restrictive licensing terms imposed by third parties;
  - b) issues with data quality and inconsistent data;
  - c) a lack of data standards, which causes confusion with data formats;
  - d) a lack of resources to address the above barriers;
  - e) a shift in culture is required;
  - f) considerable time is required to analyse the risks of releasing data for re-use;
  - g) a perceived lack of data to release; and
  - h) a lack of analysis of what information is of interest to consumers.

#### **Next steps**

15. The 2012 report-back has informed further development of the Open Government Information and Data Re-use work programme. Based on this experience, the Steering Group will oversee activities in 2012 to:
- a) work directly with all departmental Data Champions, ensuring a focus on providing the high value public data that users demand;
  - b) provide direct and practical assistance, particularly for the departments which are only beginning to understand the intent of the Declaration;
  - c) actively search out innovative examples of re-use in the public and private sectors, and publish case studies illustrating the impact of this;
  - d) showcase these results at Open Government Data and other public events;
  - e) continue to work with industry and communities, particularly OpenNZ<sup>7</sup>, to meet their requirements;

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<sup>6</sup> A web feed (or news feed) is a data format used for providing users or other websites with frequently updated content from a parent website.

- f) support the development of a business case to test the feasibility of the concept of a Shared Data Service and explore the costs and benefits of such a service;
- g) extend adoption across the wider public sector; and
- h) report back in April 2013.

## Consultation

16. The recommendations in this paper were prepared in consultation with all public service departments, as well as New Zealand Police, New Zealand Defence Force and the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service. The Parliamentary Counsel Office, the Offices of the Privacy Commissioner and Ombudsmen and the Law Commission have been informed. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has also been informed.
17. This paper was prepared by the Open Government Information and Data Programme Secretariat and overseen by the Chair of the Government Data and Information Re-use Chief Executives Steering Group. It is being sponsored by the Minister of Internal Affairs.

## Financial implications

18. As set out in the Open Government Cabinet Paper<sup>8</sup>, each department has autonomy in applying the direction and factoring compliance costs into their business priorities. Business cases will be submitted when additional expenditure is required, based on the test of high value.

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

19. These proposals give rise to no human rights issues, under either the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 or the Human Rights Act 1993, nor do they have legislative, regulatory impact analysis, gender, disability or Treaty of Waitangi implications.

## Publicity

20. The Chair of the Government Data and Information Re-use Chief Executives' Steering Group will release the 2012 report-back and the raw report data on the [ict.govt.nz](http://www.ict.govt.nz) website immediately following Cabinet approval. I also intend to release this Cabinet paper and accompanying Cabinet minute. Publicity material prepared for the Steering Group will target key end user and stakeholder groups.

<sup>7</sup> OpenNZ develops and hosts projects around transparency, participatory democracy, and generally making central and local government useful to citizens and businesses; see [http://wiki.open.org.nz/Main\\_Page](http://wiki.open.org.nz/Main_Page)

<sup>8</sup> Cab Min (11) 29/12 refers. <http://www.ict.govt.nz/library/Public-version-of-Open-Government%20-Cabinet-paper.pdf>

## Recommendations

21.1 I recommend that the State Sector Reform and Expenditure Control Committee:

1. **Note** that the Data and Information Re-use Chief Executives' Steering Group is required to report annually to the Ministerial Committee on Government ICT on agency progress in adopting the Declaration on Open and Transparent Government [Cab Min (11) 29/12 refers];
2. **Note** that the State Sector Reform Ministerial Group (replacing the Ministerial Committee on Government ICT) referred the 2012 report-back to the Cabinet Committee on State Sector Reform and Expenditure Control;
3. **Note** that the skills, competencies and agility that departments are gaining as they release public data for re-use will contribute to achieving the *Improving Interaction with Government* result areas (9 and 10);
4. **Agree** to the immediate release of the 2012 report-back and the raw report data by the Chair of the Government Data and Information Re-use Chief Executives' Steering Group; and
5. **Agree** that this Cabinet paper and accompanying Cabinet Minute be released publicly.

Hon Chris Tremain  
**Minister of Internal Affairs**  
/ /2012

Attachment:

*2012 Report on Agency Adoption of Declaration on Open and Transparent Government*

RELEASED BY THE MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS