



# SSC REPORT

## Appointment: Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Chief Executive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Date: 5 December 2018

Report No: SSC2018/1103

Contact: Juanita Te Kani, Director, Chief Executive Development, Appointment and Remuneration

Telephone: 9(2)(a) privacy

	Action Sought	Deadline
Hon Chris Hipkins Minister of State Services	Sign and lodge the attached Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee (APH) papers	By Friday 7 December 2018

Enclosure: Yes

### Executive Summary

- 1 The State Services Commissioner intends to appoint Mr Chris Seed as Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Chief Executive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
- 2 The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Rt Hon Winston Peters, has been briefed and is supportive of the proposal to appoint Mr Seed to the role.
- 3 In accordance with section 38 of the State Sector Act 1988, the State Services Commissioner is required to consult with you and the Prime Minister before finalising the terms and conditions of employment for Mr Seed.
- 4 Your office will receive a letter on Monday 10 December the relevant terms and conditions agreed with Mr Seed to be signed by you and the Prime Minister ahead of APH.

### Recommended Action

We recommend that you:

- a **sign and lodge** the attached APH paper regarding the appointment of Mr Seed as Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Chief Executive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, for consideration by APH on 12 December 2018.

Lodged / not lodged

- b **note** you will receive the agreed terms and conditions with Mr Seed as part of our consultation on Monday 10 December.

Note / not noted

Hon Chris Hipkins  
Minister of State Services

Office of the Minister of State Services

Chair  
Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee

**Appointment: Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Chief Executive,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

- 1 The State Services Commissioner (the Commissioner) has forwarded to me, as the Minister of State Services, a recommendation for the appointment of Mr Christopher John Seed to the position of Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Chief Executive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, under section 35 of the State Sector Act 1988 (the Act).
- 2 I now submit the Commissioner's recommendation, attached under this coversheet, to the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee for consideration and referral to the Governor-General in Council, via Cabinet.
- 3 The Responsible Minister and I have been consulted by the Commissioner about this appointment.
- 4 The Commissioner will consult the Prime Minister and I before finalising conditions of employment for Mr Seed, including his term of appointment, as required under section 38 of the Act.

**Recommendations**

- 5 I recommend that Cabinet:
  - 1 **accept** the recommendation of the Commissioner to appoint Mr Christopher John **SEED** to the position of Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Chief Executive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade;
  - 2 **refer** the recommendation and the attached curriculum vitae to the Governor-General in Council;
  - 3 **note** that the Commissioner is consulting with the Prime Minister and the Minister of State Services before finalising terms and conditions of employment with Mr Seed;
  - 4 **note** that under the State Sector Act 1988, the Commissioner is required to publicly announce appointments; and
  - 5 **note** that, subject to the Governor-General's acceptance of the Commissioner's recommendation, the Commissioner intends to:
    - 5.1 publicly announce the appointment of Mr Seed; and
    - 5.2 proactively release associated documents on the State Services Commission's website.



Hon Chris Hipkins

**Minister of State Services**

5.12.18



12 December 2018

Hon Chris Hipkins

Minister of State Services

**Appointment: Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Chief Executive,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

***Proposal***

- 1 I recommend that Mr Christopher John Seed be appointed to the position of Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Chief Executive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for a term of five years from 1 February 2019 to 31 January 2024.
- 2 Mr Seed is currently the New Zealand High Commissioner to Australia, a role he has held since November 2013. He has previously served as the High Commissioner in Port Moresby. Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry), he has held the role of Deputy Secretary of Australia, Pacific, Middle East and Africa and Europe Group, where he led a large extended team of over 400 staff across 13 international locations.
- 3 Mr Seed is an experienced diplomat and a committed and dedicated public servant, with a broad career background with the Ministry. His values and beliefs align strongly with the foreign service goals of the sector, Government and the Ministry.
- 4 I consider that Mr Seed has the necessary skills and experience to successfully lead the Ministry. A copy of his summarised curriculum vitae is attached.
- 5 I propose that you forward my recommendation to Cabinet for referral to the Governor-General in Council. A warrant for execution by the Governor-General is attached.

***Background***

- 6 The position of Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Chief Executive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade) will become vacant on 1 February 2019 when Mr Brook Barrington will transfer to the position of Chief Executive, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- 7 The Ministry acts in the world to make New Zealanders safer and more prosperous. It contributes directly to the prosperity and security of all New Zealanders, delivers New Zealand's international development co-operation programme and advances the interests and reputation of New Zealand overseas.
- 8 The Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade leads a department of approximately 1,500 staff which includes a network of 58 posts in 51 countries, engaging with international agencies, non-governmental organisations, businesses and the wider international public. In 2018/19, Vote Foreign Affairs and Trade's total budget was \$1.3 billion.
- 9 The position description was considered by the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee on 4 July 2018 and confirmed as the basis for the recruitment to the role.

***Requirements of the Position***

- 10 The Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade will be responsible for delivering on the Government's foreign policy, international trade policy, international development policy

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and international climate change policy objectives as well as contributing to New Zealand's broader security, economic and environmental objectives, through:

- providing high quality advice on foreign policy and advancing the Government's international security, economic development and environmental interests;
- conducting relations with other countries and international organisations, and in that context advocating for and representing New Zealand's view;
- negotiating agreements on behalf of New Zealand; and
- delivering protocol and consular services and contributing to humanitarian assistance and disaster responses.

**Selection Process**

- 11 I have undertaken a comprehensive search for the next Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade, including the engagement of external search and assessment consultants.
- 12 The vacancy was advertised online and in newspapers from 13 July 2018. Applications closed on 8 August 2018.
- 13 9(2)(a) privacy candidates applied for the position. 9(2)(a) privacy applicants were shortlisted for panel interview.
- 14 The shortlisted candidates were interviewed on Thursday, 11 October 2018 by a panel comprising of:
  - Mr Peter Hughes, State Services Commissioner (Chair);
  - myself, Deputy State Services Commissioner;
  - Dame Fran Wilde, DNZM, QSO, JP; and
  - Mr Simon Murdoch, CNZM.

**Recommended Appointee**

- 15 I recommend the appointment of Mr Chris Seed to the position of Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade for a five year term.
- 16 Mr Seed is an experienced and well-respected senior foreign policy leader. He has deep institutional knowledge and experience of the Ministry's role domestically and internationally, and he is recognised as a highly capable tactician, with excellent geo-political analysis and judgment.
- 17 In both his international postings and senior leadership roles at the Ministry, Mr Seed has led the management, mitigation and contextualising of a number of geo-political issues, to represent and protect New Zealand's interests overseas. He is conscious of the challenges inherent in connecting across a large organisation and is effective at motivating a disparate group onshore and offshore to deliver on key priorities.
- 18 As High Commissioner to Australia, he has proven to be adept at managing New Zealand's important and complex diplomatic relationship with Australia, able to effectively navigate the political interface, balancing competing interests and optimising opportunities.
- 19 Mr Seed has led a number of significant initiatives to further New Zealand's Foreign Affairs and Trade agenda. Some key successes include improving opportunities for New Zealand industry in the Australian market and working to raise New Zealand's profile in the Pacific region.



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- 20 Alongside his diplomatic career, Mr Seed spent some time working as the Deputy Secretary of Defence, Policy and Planning at the Ministry of Defence.
- 21 Mr Seed holds a Bachelor of Arts (First Class Honours) and a Master of Arts in History both from Massey University.
- 22 Mr Seed's referees all state that he is well-qualified for the role and would be a good fit for the Ministry. He is down-to-earth and genuine. He has excellent interpersonal skills that people respond to, he earns respect and trust and staff are always happy to take their lead from him. He is an effective communicator and is articulate. Mr Seed's referees note his unflappable demeanour when under pressure. Referees acknowledge that the role of High Commissioner to Australia is a challenging post, but that Mr Seed was calm and professional when dealing with complex and demanding priorities and when under scrutiny.
- 23 Mr Seed's referees state that he is sharply focused on the issues that matter most – not only the Ministry's interests, but the wider interests of New Zealand. His decision-making is thoughtful, considered and well-executed to achieve high quality outcomes. He is tactical in his approach, able to read situations and people well, recognise risks and opportunities, and exercise very good judgment. People value his insight and navigation on issues.
- 24 In summary, I am of the view that Mr Chris Seed meets the requirements outlined in the attached position description.

**Conditions of Employment**

- 25 I have consulted the Rt Hon Winston Peters, Minister of Foreign Affairs on the proposed appointment.
- 26 In accordance with section 38 of the State Sector Act 1988 (the Act), I will consult with you and the Prime Minister before finalising the terms and conditions of employment for Mr Seed, including a proposed five year term of appointment.
- 27 The Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade must be able to obtain and maintain a Top Secret Special security clearance.

**Publicity**

- 28 Subject to the Governor-General's acceptance of my recommendation above, I intend to publicly announce the appointment of Mr Seed on Tuesday 18 December 2018. This will meet my obligation under the Act to publicly notify appointments.
- 29 It is also my intention to publicly release associated documents, including this paper, on the State Services Commission's website, as is our standard practice for Chief Executive appointment recommendations. The documents will have any necessary redactions in accordance with the Official Information Act 1982. You will be consulted on the communications plan and material to be released.

**Recommendations**

- 30 I recommend that you:
- 1 **forward** my recommendation to **appoint** Mr Christopher John **SEED** to the position of Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Chief Executive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee for referral to the Governor-General in Council;
  - 2 **note** that a warrant for appointment is attached for execution by the Governor-General in due course;

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- 3 **note** that I will consult with the Prime Minister and you, as Minister of State Services, before finalising terms and conditions of employment for Mr Chris Seed, including his term of appointment;
- 4 **note** that Mr Seed's employment is subject to him obtaining and maintaining a Top Secret Special security clearance;
- 5 **note** that subject to the Governor-General's acceptance of my recommendation, I intend to;
  - 5.1 Publicly announce the appointment of Mr Seed on Tuesday 18 December 2018; and
  - 5.2 Proactively release associated documents on the State Services Commission's website.



Debbie Power

Deputy State Services Commissioner

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## In Executive Council

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*Her Excellency the Governor-General is recommended to*

accept the recommendation of the State Services Commissioner that

**Christopher John Seed**

be appointed, pursuant to section 35 of the State Sector Act 1988,  
as the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Chief Executive,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Hon Chris Hipkins  
Minister of State Services

*Approved in Council*

*Clerk of the Executive Council*

Date: 17th December 2018

## CURRICULUM VITAE

Chris Seed

### **Employment History**

2013 – present **New Zealand High Commission**  
*New Zealand High Commissioner to Australia (Canberra)*

2008 – 2013 **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade**  
*Deputy Secretary, Australia, Pacific, Middle East and Africa, and Europe Group (Wellington)*

2004 – 2008 **Ministry of Defence**  
*Deputy Secretary of Defence, Policy and Planning (Wellington)*

2003 – 2004 **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade**  
*Director, Organisational Planning and Performance (Wellington)*

2001 – 2003 **New Zealand High Commission**  
*High Commissioner (Port Moresby)*

2000 – 2001 **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade**  
*Deputy Leader and New Zealand Senior National Officer, International Peace Monitoring Team (Solomon Islands)*

1998 – 2000 **New Zealand High Commission**  
*Deputy High Commissioner (London)*

1994 – 1997 **New Zealand High Commission**  
*Counsellor (Canberra)*

1992 – 1993 **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade**  
*Senior Policy Officer (Multilateral Institutions), Development Cooperation Division (Wellington)*

1989 – 1991 **New Zealand Embassy**  
*Second, then First, Secretary (Tehran with concurrent accreditations to Turkey and Pakistan)*

1988 **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade**  
*Member, New Zealand Delegation to 43rd United Nations General Assembly (New York)*

1988 **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade**  
*Desk Officer, South East Asia Division (Wellington)*

1987 **Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**  
*Exchange Officer, Russia and East Europe Section (Canberra)*

1986 **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade**  
*Russia and East Europe Desk Officer (Wellington)*

1985 **Joined Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Wellington)**

1984 **Ministry of Defence**  
*Graduate Recruit (Wellington)*



***Academic Qualifications***

1985	Master of History, Massey University, Palmerston North
1984	Bachelor of Arts, First Class Honours, Massey University, Palmerston North
1982	Bachelor of Arts, Massey University, Palmerston North

RELEASED BY SSC UNDER OUR COMMITMENT TO OPEN GOVERNMENT



#### Position description

Position	Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Chief Executive
Department	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Position Purpose	<p>The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) acts in the world to make New Zealanders safer and more prosperous. It contributes directly to the prosperity and security of all New Zealanders, delivers New Zealand's international development co-operation programme and advances the interests and reputation of New Zealand overseas. The Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade will be responsible for delivering on the Government's foreign policy, international trade policy, international development policy and international climate change policy objectives as well as contributing to New Zealand's broader security, economic and environmental objectives, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• providing high quality advice on foreign policy and advancing the Government's international security, economic development and environment interests;</li><li>• conducting relations with other countries and international organisations, and in that context advocating for and representing New Zealand's view;</li><li>• negotiating agreements on behalf of New Zealand and;</li><li>• delivering protocol and consular services, and contributing to humanitarian assistance and disaster responses.</li></ul>

#### Key external relationships

##### Government and Parliament:

- Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Minister for Trade and Export Growth
- Minister for Climate Change
- Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control
- Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth
- Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control

#### Sector:

- The Ministry works closely with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, the Ministry of Defence, the New Zealand Defence Force, the New Zealand Intelligence Community, the New Zealand Police, the New Zealand Customs Service, the Ministry of Primary Industries, the Department of Conservation, the Ministry for the Environment, the Department of Internal Affairs, Tourism New Zealand, and Education New Zealand.
- The Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade is a member of the Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination and is an ex officio member of the New Zealand Trade and Enterprise Board, the Pacific Co-operation Foundation Board, the Asia New Zealand Foundation Board, and is special advisor to the Education New Zealand Board. The Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade or representative is also an ex officio member of the National Commission for UNESCO.
- MFAT operates a network of 58 posts in 51 countries, engaging with international agencies, non-governmental organisations, businesses, and the wider international public. MFAT leads the majority of the Government's bilateral and multilateral negotiations with other governments.

#### Communities and the public:

- Māori
- The New Zealand Public
- New Zealanders abroad
- Civil society
- The private sector and business organisations
- Academia
- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- Interest groups.

#### Performance profile

##### Critical success priorities

The Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade will have strong institutional knowledge of foreign affairs and trade issues and over the next three to five years will be required to build on past achievements by:

- Protecting and strengthening the international rules-based system.
- Improving and diversifying market access; growing trade and investment that is sustainable and benefits all sectors of New Zealand society; and strengthening international connections in the global economy.
- Supporting existing Asia-Pacific architecture and ensuring New Zealand is included in emerging regional and sub-regional architecture; and supporting integration and engagement with ASEAN.
- Improving economic and social well-being, and promoting a more stable, secure, resilient and well-governed Pacific; and influencing the strategic environment in the Pacific to reflect New Zealand's interests and values.
- Utilising skills in and understanding of trade to meet the growing challenges to international trade.



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- Contributing responsibly to an effective global response to climate change; protecting Antarctica; improving international stewardship of the world's oceans; and better international stewardship of biodiversity.
  - Reducing the threat to New Zealand from terrorism, cyber-actors, illegal immigration, transnational crime, WMD and arms proliferation, and other trans-border security issues; optimising New Zealand's participation in international military and peace-support operations; enhancing New Zealand's security partnerships; and making New Zealanders safer overseas.
  - Aligning our international diplomacy with changing global realities improving the quality of our international relationships and remaining adaptive to create impactful connections.
  - Continuing the existing organisational improvement programme to deliver organisational objectives for Our People, Operational Excellence, New Zealand Connections, and Enterprise Performance, including implementing: refreshed organisational values, the 'One Ministry' people strategy, the diversity and inclusion strategy and the Māori engagement strategy; and completing the programme to close the gender-pay gap.

#### Accountabilities

The Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade is accountable to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Trade. The Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade must perform the duties as set out in the State Sector Act 1988, the Public Finance Act 1989 and other relevant statutes and legislation.

The Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade is also accountable for:

- providing high quality advice to the Government on New Zealand's foreign affairs, security, international trade, environment, climate change and economic interests and international obligations;
  - protecting, advancing and maximising New Zealand's trade relationships including multilateral trade negotiations and intensifying deep and wide engagement and outreach on New Zealand's international trade and economic interests and objectives;
  - leading an integrated approach in conjunction with the NZ Inc. agencies and business partners to strengthen New Zealand's international political, security, trade, economic, and environment relationships;
  - engaging effectively with the commercial sector, including major exporters;
  - providing diplomatic and consular services and advice;
  - providing effective International Development Assistance programmes in line with New Zealand's national interests;
  - administering 30 pieces of legislation, with the International Crimes and International Criminal Court Act 2000 and the Terrorism Suppression Act 2002 jointly administered with the Ministry of Justice;
  - ensuring that the Ministry's resources are effectively managed including through prudent fiscal management;
  - establishing and maintaining effective relationships and networks with business, iwi and interest groups including in the environment sector; and
  - providing leadership, effective management and development of the Ministry, so that it can contribute to the achievement of agreed outcomes now and in the future.
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Person profile	
Leadership and Stewardship	<p>Excellent leadership by Public Service Chief Executives is essential for a high performing, professional and world class State sector. Underpinning chief executive leadership is the requirement to adhere to the Standards of Integrity and Conduct and the higher bar expected of chief executive behaviour.</p> <p>Chief executive stewardship responsibilities reinforce that chief executives administer their departments on behalf of others; serving current and future Ministers and meeting the needs of all New Zealanders.</p> <p>The stewardship responsibility requires chief executives to plan and actively manage for the medium term and long term interests. This applies to all aspects of the department including capability; information and privacy stewardship; legislation administered; and managing the assets and liabilities of the Crown.</p> <p>Chief executives are also stewards of the system and are required to achieve cross-agency, sector and system results by leading, collaborating and exerting their influence in a cohesive way across boundaries and ensuring their staff have both the authority and motivation to do likewise.</p>
Position specific competencies	<p><i>The competencies outlined below are the specific requirements of the role at this time. To see the full range of capabilities required go to: <a href="https://www.ssc.govt.nz/leadership-success-profile">https://www.ssc.govt.nz/leadership-success-profile</a></i></p>
Leading strategically	Think, plan, and act strategically; to engage others in the vision, and position teams, organisations, and sectors to meet customer and future needs.
Leading with influence	Lead and communicate in a clear, persuasive, and impactful way; to convince others to embrace change and take action.
Engaging Others	Connect with and inspire people; to build a highly motivated and engaged workforce.
Enhancing System Performance	Work collectively across boundaries; to deliver sustainable and long-term improvements to system and customer outcomes.
Leading at the political interface	Bridge the interface between Government and the Public Sector; to engage political representatives and shape and implement the Government's policy priorities.
Achieving ambitious goals	Demonstrate achievement, drive, ambition, optimism, and delivery-focus; to make things happen and achieve ambitious outcomes.
Achieving through others	Effectively delegate and maintain oversight of work responsibilities; to leverage the capability of direct reports and staff to deliver outcomes for customers.
Developing Talent	Coach and develop diverse talent; to build the people capability required to deliver outcomes.
Honest and courageous	Delivers the hard messages, and makes unpopular decisions in a timely manner; to advance the longer-term best interests of customers and New Zealand.
Resilient	Show composure, grit, and a sense of perspective when the going gets tough; to help others maintain optimism and focus.

Security  
Clearance

*The appointee must be a New Zealand citizen. Appointment will be subject to a New Zealand Government **Top Secret Special** security clearance.*

Up to date information on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's outcomes, organisational structure, dimensions and appropriations can be found on the website <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/> with this and other useful information also available in the form of Briefings to the Incoming Ministers (Foreign Affairs, Trade and Climate Change) released following the 2017 Election. These can be found through the following link: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/media-and-resources/news/briefing-to-incoming-ministers/>

Or specifically via the below:

<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/MFAT-Corporate-publications/briefing-for-incoming-minister-of-foreign-affairs-2017.pdf>

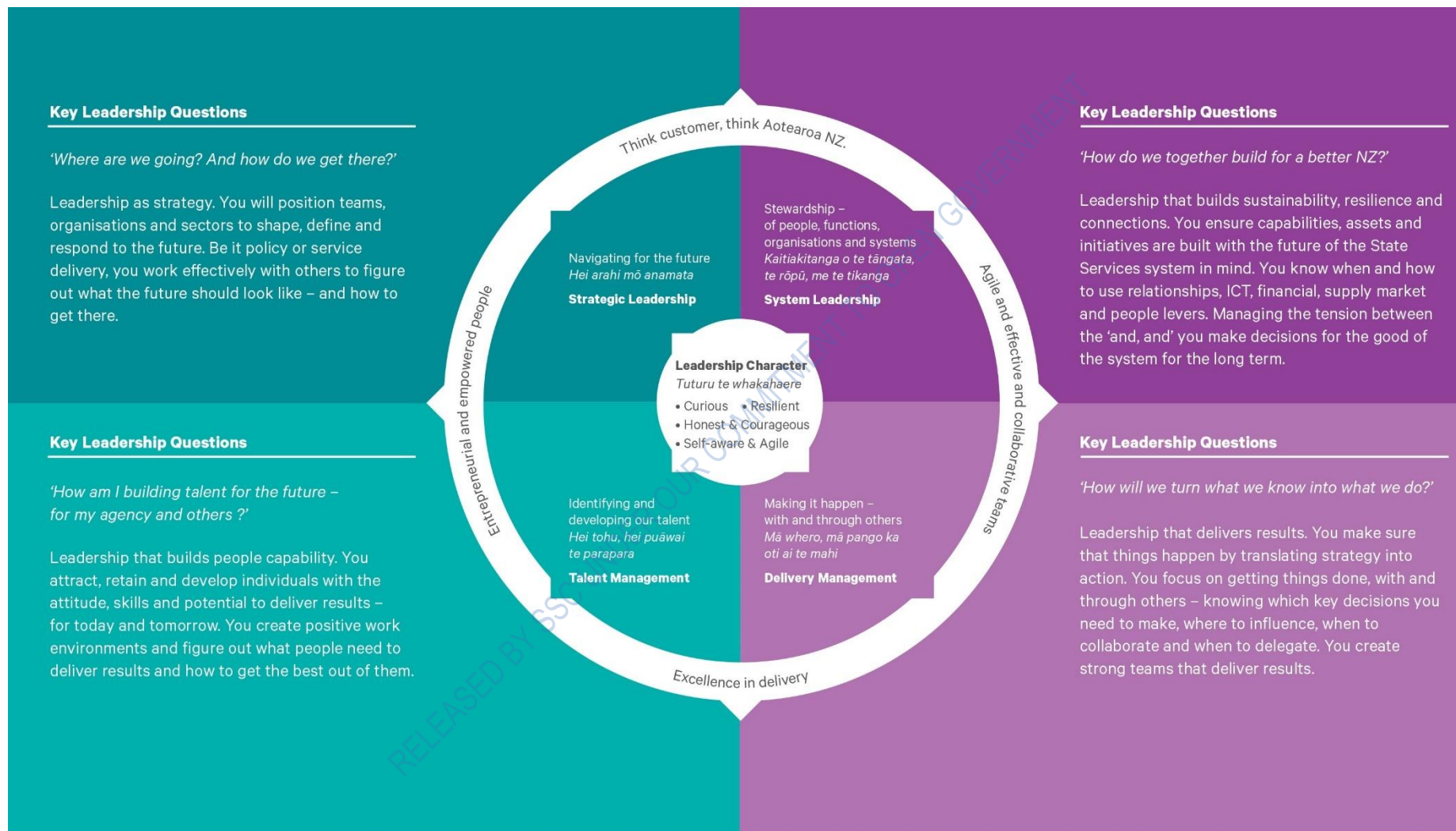
<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/MFAT-Corporate-publications/briefing-for-incoming-minister-for-trade-and-export-2017.pdf>

<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/MFAT-Corporate-publications/briefing-for-incoming-minister-for-climate-change-2017.pdf>

A list of the Acts and regulations administered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade can be found on the Ministry's website at: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/who-we-are/legislation-we-administer/>



## Leadership Success Profile



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