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Joined up Government in the Regions report back: Strengthening a regional system
leadership framework for the public service

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Strengthening a regional system leadership framework for the public
service (including appendices 1-4)

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This is a suite of documents released in part by the Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister for the Public Service that has informed the Government's proactive release of information policy.

The paper discusses strengthening the regional leadership framework for the public service to support collaboration across agencies in the regions. This is through an expanded Cabinet mandate and scope to convene, resolve and escalate issues as appropriate across social, skills, economic and environmental agencies.

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act that would apply have been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it. This is the key to the redaction codes used for this release:

- Section 9(2)(f)(iv) - the confidentiality of advice under active consideration
- Out of scope – material unrelated to the information released.

In Confidence

Office of the Minister for the Public Service

Office of the Minister for Social Development and Employment

Office of the Minister for Economic and Regional Development

Cabinet Government Administration and Expenditure Committee

Joined-up Government in the Regions report-back: strengthening a regional system leadership framework for the public service

Proposal

- 1 This paper fulfils the Committee's request that the Minister for the Public Service reports back on the detailed mandate, scope of role, decision rights and accountabilities of Regional Public Service Leads [GOV-19-MIN-0063 refers].
- 2 The paper also outlines and notes the implementation of a regional system leadership framework for the public service to better respond to the needs of communities and support enhanced regional wellbeing.

Relation to government priorities

- 3 This work aligns with the following government priorities:
 - 3.1 It will enable government in the regions to contribute to delivering better wellbeing outcomes in light of COVID-19 and with a long-term view to the future.
 - 3.2 It aims to support the Crown to act reasonably, honourably and in good faith as partner with iwi and other Māori groups to meet the needs of Māori and the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations.

Executive Summary

- 4 Our vision of a modern, agile public service requires a joined-up government at the regional level focused on delivering for and with communities and working in partnership with regional leaders.
- 5 As part of the Joined-up Government in the Regions work, there is an opportunity to strengthen the regional system leadership framework by expanding the scope of the Regional Public Service Lead (Regional Leads) role and by strengthening mandate and accountability arrangements.
- 6 The fundamental problem the framework is trying to address is continued fragmentation and duplication across agencies on cross-cutting issues. While the public service collaborates well on some issues in some regions, there are opportunities to embed new ways of working to better align how agencies

invest and deliver services, and engage in the region. As each region organises itself differently, the public service is likely to engage differently across regions under the framework.

- 7 Better alignment and coordination between public service agencies would enable:
 - 7.1 better coordination of services and processes, resulting in reduced duplication of work programmes and services, fewer gaps in service delivery and improved opportunities to maximise benefit of public service investment in the regions;
 - 7.2 a well-connected regional and national public service that works cohesively and credibly with iwi, Māori organisations, local government and regional stakeholders, resulting in reduced engagement fatigue and more effective and sustained relationships with these regional partners and stakeholders;
 - 7.3 agencies to share information around priorities and jointly oversee investments in the regions that align with shared priorities.
- 8 Key changes proposed for the framework include:
 - 8.1 **Expanded scope of role for Regional Leads:** the expanded scope of the Regional Lead role would include social, economic, skills and workforce, and environmental sectors. Individual agencies would remain responsible for their core work programmes and delivery of portfolio areas.
 - 8.2 **Expanded mandate for Regional Leads:** in addition to convening public service decision-makers across agencies in the region, Regional Leads would have a role in working collaboratively with other officials to resolve issues in their regions and to seek support from and escalate issues to senior public service decision makers where necessary. Existing decision rights that sit with government agencies and Ministers remain unchanged.
- 9 The Public Service Commissioner also intends to designate the Secretary for Social Development as the System Leader for regional alignment. The system leader model under the Public Service Act 2020 is used to designate a leader for a cross-cutting area where responsibilities extend across a large number of agencies. When acting in a system leader role, Chief Executives are expected to lead with a system perspective as distinct from their substantive agency leadership role.
- 10 Strengthening the framework will add impetus to ongoing work to build alignment across government agencies, nationally and regionally, and to work with regional partners and stakeholders to support agreed plans and strategies to achieve outcomes for communities. The framework will also provide an enduring mechanism for the public service to engage effectively with iwi and other Māori groups, local government and regional stakeholders.

- 11 As a key next step, officials will work collaboratively across agencies to develop a plan for delivering the strengthened framework. How the framework is delivered, and over what period, will differ across regions, as each region's context, relationships between leaders and groups, and current public service presence differs.

The work to join up government in the regions and strengthen regional leadership is progressing...

- 12 Initiated through the Public Service Reforms, the Joined-up Government in the Regions work programme established a regional system leadership framework (the framework) (see Appendix 1). In 2019, Cabinet agreed to strengthening regional public service leadership through the designation of eleven Regional Leads across fifteen regions [CAB-19-MIN-0290 and GOV-19-MIN-0063 refer].
- 13 The fundamental problem the framework is trying to address is continued fragmentation and duplication across agencies on cross-cutting issues, such as child wellbeing and housing. While the public service collaborates well on some issues in some regions, there are opportunities to embed new ways of working to better align how agencies invest and deliver services, and engage with stakeholders and partners in the region.
- 14 Regional Leads were active during the initial government response to COVID-19, working with officials in the regions to respond effectively to the pandemic. They have been able to build on good existing structures and relationships, although some have required more support. Appendix 2 provides some examples of how Regional Leads are making a difference in the way the public service works and partners in the regions.
- 15 They have also been working with officials in the regions to agree regional public service priorities based on a shared understanding of what is important to communities. Some Regional Leads have also worked with other regional leaders to understand what's important to them and align regional public service priorities wherever possible with the region's broader plans. The Minister for the Public Service will update Ministers on the progress of this work more fully in September 2021.
- 16 On other parts of the work programme, moving to common boundaries based on communities of interest rather than administrative need is an ongoing process. We expect this to continue over time when there are significant functional changes underway. On shared property and IT, work is ongoing to support the operation of regional offices and the greater integration of services for communities.

... but there are opportunities to further strengthen the regional system leadership framework to better support a unified public service in the regions

- 17 While the public service collaborates well on some issues in some regions, there are opportunities to further strengthen the current framework to better align how agencies invest in and deliver services, and engage in the region.
- 18 The framework is essentially a way of working that builds on existing relationships and partnerships of agencies and the good work already being undertaken by officials and Regional Leads in regions. It provides an enduring mechanism to support consistent delivery of joined-up government in the regions.
- 19 Some agencies and officials have already adopted this way of working, resulting in strong interagency collaboration within some regions. Appendix 3 provides some examples of how components of the framework are working well. The intention is to continue to evolve this approach and to continue to learn our way forward.
- 20 We propose to strengthen the framework by expanding the scope of the role and mandate of Regional Leads. A strengthened framework would promote better alignment and coordination across agencies on cross-cutting issues.
- 21 Under the strengthened framework, the Regional Lead title will change to Regional Public Service Commissioner (Regional Commissioner). Regional Commissioners will continue to be the currently designated senior public servants in each region (11 Regional Commissioners across 15 regions), supported by appropriate senior and advisory staff.
- 22 The role of Regional Commissioners involves aligning and coordinating public service agencies in the regions, while also promoting unified public service engagement with regional partners and external stakeholders.

Expanding the scope of the role for Regional Leads would support better alignment across agencies on key issues

- 23 Communities and regional stakeholders want to see progress in areas they consider important regardless of which central government department is responsible. Joining up across the social sector alone excludes agencies which may have important levers to address key issues, and undermines efforts to simplify engagement with government for regional stakeholders.
- 24 While some Regional Leads are working informally with economic and environment agencies, formally including these sectors in the scope would increase buy-in from within the public sector and promote opportunities for alignment across agencies on key issues.
- 25 We propose that Cabinet agree that the scope of the Regional Commissioner role includes the social, economic, skills and workforce, and environmental sectors. Expanding the scope would support a more unified and effective approach to addressing the needs of communities.

- 26 Issues affecting the wellbeing of people and communities are often long-standing, complex and contextual. Communities and regional stakeholders want to see progress in areas they consider important regardless of which central government department is 'responsible'. They also expect the public service to be joined-up in the way they engage with and support communities.
- 27 The framework aims to support strong alignment and collaboration across agencies where it is needed to respond to complex needs, increasing the opportunities for early intervention to better meet community needs.
- 28 Expanding the scope would reinforce this by bringing together agencies that may have important levers and perspectives relevant to the issues that matter to communities. It would also streamline engagement with central government for communities and regional leaders, including iwi, other Māori organisations, and local government.
- 29 Many officials present in regions have existing relationships with other regional partners and stakeholders in-line with their business areas. For example, there are strong existing relationships and partnerships within the economic sector in regions.
- 30 It will be important for Regional Commissioners to continue working closely with officials and leverage their colleagues' existing relationships to improve alignment and impact for communities where there is the opportunity. These officials, working within their agency business lines with their respective levers and relationships, therefore will not be supplanted by the expanded role.

Expanding the mandate of Regional Leads would strengthen regional public service leadership and improve coordination and alignment

- 31 The role of Regional Leads is to support coordination and alignment across public service in the regions on important community issues that cut across domains. Having a mandate to convene may help to reach a shared set of priorities, improve consistency of communication and engagement, and generate coordinated or collective action. However, where there are conflicting priorities or where the resources or decision-rights necessary to achieve a priority does not sit at a regional level, a convening mandate is unlikely to be sufficient.
- 32 We therefore propose that Cabinet agree that the Regional Commissioner mandate is to:
- 32.1 **convene:** bring together, coordinate and align central government decision makers (supporting and building on existing groups) across the social, economic, skills and workforce, and environmental sectors, as it relates to regional leadership, planning and delivery of wellbeing outcomes for communities in their regions. If requested, act as a central government representative for other public service agencies (in consultation with agencies) on issues that cut across domains;

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- 32.2 **resolve:** coordinate with officials to resolve barriers to achieving outcomes for communities. This coordination may include working collaboratively with existing groups, including with iwi/Māori, local government and regional stakeholders as necessary; and
- 32.3 **escalate:** working with officials to identify barriers to achieving action/outcomes for communities and raise with the relevant Chief Executives group where resolution cannot be achieved at a regional, work programme or single agency level. As a last resort, Regional Commissioners may escalate directly to the system leader for regional alignment.
- 33 Working in-line with the principles of the framework, individual agencies would remain responsible for their core work programmes and delivery of portfolio areas. The framework does not alter existing decision rights that sit with Ministers and government agencies. For example:
- 33.1 The framework would not alter the decision-making process for the Regional Strategic Partnership Fund. RED Senior Officials will continue to coordinate and lead all-of-government regional economic development activity and will continue to connect in and align with Regional Commissioners on relevant issues.
- 33.2 The framework would not change the role of the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) Board on approving tertiary education providers' investment plans or the role of the Minister of Education in setting the general rules of these plans. However, TEC is expected by the Minister of Education and the Cabinet to take account of the advice from the Regional Skills Leadership Groups (RSLGs) on local skill needs [SWC-19-MIN-0087 refers]. Regional Commissioners, alongside other officials, will be members of the RSLGs.
- 34 It is not proposed that Regional Commissioners would direct other agencies or impose a solution to an issue, but rather would bring together agencies and external stakeholders to achieve a common understanding of the problems they are facing. They would work to address these problems within the bounds of the decision rights and funding that the relevant agency representatives have available to them. In the event that issues cannot be resolved within these constraints, the escalate mandate provides an avenue to advise relevant Chief Executives and/or Ministers and seek support or decisions.
- 35 The Public Service Commissioner intends to designate the Secretary for Social Development as system leader for regional public service alignment under section 56 of the Public Service Act 2020.
- 36 The system leader model under the Public Service Act 2020 is used to designate a leader for a cross-cutting area where responsibilities extend across a large number of agencies. A system leader leads and coordinates best practice in a particular subject matter area across agencies and is responsible to the appropriate Minister for achieving agreed outcomes in this

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area. When acting in a system leader role, Chief Executives are expected to lead with a system perspective as distinct from their substantive agency leadership role.

- 37 In this case, the system leader for regional alignment would lead on the coordination of public service activity at a regional level through the framework and would be responsible to the appropriate Minister for the effectiveness of this coordination.
- 38 The system leader will oversee the governance of the framework. Designation of Regional Commissioners will be done by the system leader through expressions of interest to all agencies and occur as vacancies arise. With their focus on coordination and alignment, Regional Commissioners will need relationship-focused capabilities and be recognised as having the respect and trust of partners in the region, within and outside government. It is our expectation that, over time, we will increasingly see a spread of Regional Commissioners that reflects agencies across social, economic, skills and environmental sectors.
- 39 The Public Service Commissioner, in conjunction with the Public Service Leadership Team, will ensure alignment of the public service around the framework.

A strengthened framework would also better support collaboration with regional leadership and contribution to regional plans

- 40 Through operating under the framework and in-line with the Public Service Act 2020, the public service is expected to follow these core principles:
 - 40.1 **Spirit of service:** putting whānau and communities at the heart of our work and our purpose as the public service;
 - 40.2 **Partnering with Māori:** Support the Crown in its partnership with Māori under the Treaty/Te Tiriti, and act reasonably, honourably and in good faith when engaging with iwi and other Māori groups; and
 - 40.3 **Unified public service:** being informed, organised and bringing together our levers as agencies and officials to enable better shared outcomes.
- 41 The framework acknowledges that each region has different strategic and delivery arrangements across (and sometimes between) sectors to collaborate and coordinate responses for the wellbeing of their communities. Each region organises itself differently and, because of this, the public service is likely to engage differently across regions under the framework.
- 42 Regional Commissioners will continue to promote public service working collaboratively with iwi, Māori, local government, and regional stakeholders. Over time, we expect that the Regional Commissioners will be able to achieve greater alignment and coordination among the public service with these partners and regional groups.

- 43 The framework also acknowledges that the regions' leadership group(s) may develop and collectively own an agreed overarching plan that sets out a shared vision for regional wellbeing. Where these plans are in place and are consistent with central government initiatives and strategies, Regional Commissioners will help ensure the alignment of public service contributions to those plans and/or that the plans are appropriately considered when formulating central government initiatives and strategies.
- 44 Improving coordination among regional public service and local decision-makers would help facilitate a unified perspective from the region to central government that could ensure alignment and delivery of national priorities and strategies in a coordinated manner.

Engagement with local government

- 45 An independent review into the Future for Local Government commenced on 3 May 2021 and will run until April 2023. The review will identify how New Zealand's system of local democracy and governance needs to evolve over the next 30 years, to improve the wellbeing of New Zealand communities and the environment, and actively embody the Treaty partnership.
- 46 The framework enables the public service to further engage with local government in a more coordinated way. Local government develops a stronger role in promoting social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing resulting from amendments to the Local Government Act 2002 and the Future review. Through these processes, the alignment and line of sight between central and local government will continue to increase in support of wellbeing outcomes.
- 47 The role of the Regional Leads has recently been included in the revised MOU between central government and the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs to support facilitation of cross-agency participation in initiatives that support the MOU.

We expect a strengthened framework for public service leadership would have a number of benefits for New Zealanders

- 48 Over time, we expect that the benefits of the framework for New Zealanders would be:
- 48.1 More effective public service leadership on issues that require local collaboration;
 - 48.2 Better tailored initiatives and programmes to communities;
 - 48.3 Improved opportunities to maximise the impact of public service investment in the regions;
 - 48.4 Communities have better access to, and engagement with, public service agencies;

- 48.5 Complex local realities are better reflected in decision-making.
- 49 It is expected that the broader scope and stronger mandate for the Regional Commissioner role would support the achievement of these outcomes by:
- 49.1 Improving collaboration between public service decision-makers and regional partners and stakeholders;
 - 49.2 Increasing alignment across social, economic, skills and workforce, and environmental sectors;
 - 49.3 Increasing alignment between national and regional planning, priorities and investment.

An implementation plan for the strengthened framework is being developed

- 50 Officials are working to explore how stronger public service leadership and coordinated ways of working in regions on certain issues can reinforce agency priorities. Officials are also working collaboratively across agencies to develop a plan for delivering the framework.
- 51 How the framework is delivered, and over what period, will differ across regions, as each region's context, relationships between leaders and groups, and current public service presence differs.
- 52 In Auckland, there are a number of programmes that involve central government because they deliver broader benefits to the rest of New Zealand. Many of these programmes are being managed by the agencies of the Auckland Policy Office, often in close partnership with regional stakeholders.
- 53 The Regional Commissioner role and mandate will align with the function of the Auckland Policy Office. The Auckland Policy Office provides advice on policies and programmes of strategic national interest being delivered in Auckland, whereas the Regional Commissioner will focus on how public service coordinates within Auckland on key issues for local communities. The framework, therefore, is not intended to take on the responsibility for the existing programmes or the policy outputs of the Auckland Policy Office.
- 54 The framework is expected to reinforce alignment across national level work programmes and mechanisms being delivered in regions, where alignment is needed to achieve improved outcomes. Where needed, it will also promote alignment with national direction and strategies, including broader industry and sector strategies. This will be important to sustain effort on outcomes over time. Appendix 4 outlines some of the different strategies, programmes and leadership arrangements in the regions that are relevant to each sector.
- 55 It will be important as the framework evolves to work through how support for the Regional Commissioner role is resourced and how regional groups are supported to engage effectively with the public service. These aspects will be a key focus of cross-agency implementation work, with options to be developed with senior officials on how best to redeploy existing resources in a

more coordinated way. Where resourcing is needed, this can be managed by Chief Executives and relevant agencies contributing to the work.

- 56 It will also be important for the Regional Commissioners, when supporting coordination and alignment across domains, to continue to leverage the existing relationships of the officials who they work with. For example, the Regional Commissioners will continue to work with MBIE officials, such as the Regional Economic Development Senior Officials who will lead and coordinate the all-of-government regional economic development activity in the relevant regions. Regional Commissioners will align with the role of Regional Economic Development Senior Officials by focusing on coordination across sectors where necessary, not specifically within the economic sector.
- 57 However, as not all agencies have a strong regional presence in line with the framework, the Regional Commissioner can support agencies to identify gaps and work through how to best engage relevant officials in these agencies.
- 58 In addition, the framework provides an opportunity to further consider how effective partnerships with Māori can be supported at a regional level, including options for strengthening collaborative leadership arrangements that better support Māori to participate in the partnership.

Financial Implications

- 59 There are no additional financial implications resulting from the decisions in this paper. Where resourcing is needed, this will be managed by Chief Executives and relevant agencies contributing to the work. This may include identifying options for deploying existing resources in a more coordinated way. Chief Executives will manage this collectively and will report back on progress.

Legislative Implications

- 60 There are no legislative implications.

Population Implications

- 61 The framework would enable the public service to work in a more unified and collaborative way to achieve better outcomes for communities and the different population groups within them, including Māori, Pacific Peoples, young people and children, disabled people and older people. In order to monitor improved outcomes, officials, including from MSD, are working with regions to identify relevant indicators and measures for reporting.
- 62 Officials from MSD, Te Puni Kōkiri, Ministry for Pacific Peoples, the Office for Disability Issues, the Office of Ethnic Communities and the Office for Seniors will also be working with regions to ensure a priority population lens and culturally-sensitive engagement approaches are applied under the framework.

Human Rights

- 63 There are no human rights implications.

Consultation

64 The following agencies were consulted in the development of this paper: the Child and Youth Wellbeing Unit in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), Department of Conservation, Department of Corrections, Department of Internal Affairs, Inland Revenue Department, Kāinga Ora, Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Ministry for Primary Industries, Ministry for the Environment, Ministry for Women, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Transport, New Zealand Transport Agency – Waka Kotahi, Office for Disability Issues, Office for Seniors, Office of Ethnic Communities, Oranga Tamariki, Statistics New Zealand, Te Kawa Mataaho, Te Puni Kōkiri, Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Toitū Te Whenua – Land Information New Zealand, and Treasury.

65 DPMC have been informed.

66 Regional Leads were consulted in the development of this paper.

Communications

67 No publicity is required or expected at this stage.

Proactive Release

68 I intend to proactively release this Cabinet paper, with redactions as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982, within 30 business days of decisions being confirmed by Cabinet.

Recommendations

The Minister for the Public Service recommends that the Committee:

- 1 **note** that Cabinet has previously considered and agreed actions to establish a regional system leadership framework and strengthen regional public service leadership through the designation of senior public servants as Regional Public Service Leads [CAB-19-MIN-0290 and GOV-19-MIN-0063 refer];
- 2 **note** that Regional Public Service Leads have been delivering their Cabinet agreed mandate to convene public service decision makers in the social sector, while strengthening connections to the skills and economic sectors, and to support other leaders in the regions to navigate the public service [CAB-19-MIN-0290 and GOV-19-MIN-0063 refer];
- 3 **note** that there are opportunities to further strengthen the regional system leadership framework to better align how agencies invest and deliver services, and engage in the region;
- 4 **note** that, under a strengthened regional system leadership framework, the role of Regional Public Service Lead is renamed Regional Public Service Commissioner;

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- 5 **agree** that the scope of the Regional Public Service Commissioner role includes the social, economic, skills and workforce, and environmental sectors;
- 6 **agree** that the Regional Public Service Commissioners' detailed mandate is to:
- 6.1 convene: bring together, coordinate and align central government decision makers (supporting and building on existing groups) across the social, economic, skills and workforce, and environmental sectors, as it relates to regional leadership, planning and delivery of wellbeing outcomes for communities in their regions. If requested, act as a central government representative for other public service agencies (in consultation with agencies) on issues that cut across domains;
 - 6.2 resolve: coordinate with officials to resolve barriers to achieving outcomes for communities. This coordination may include working collaboratively with existing groups, including with iwi/Māori, local government and regional stakeholders as necessary; and
 - 6.3 escalate: working with officials to identify barriers to achieving action/outcomes for communities and raise with the relevant Chief Executives group where resolution cannot be achieved at a regional, work programme or single agency level; as a last resort, Regional Commissioners may escalate direct to the system leader for regional alignment.
- 7 **note** that the Public Service Commissioner, in conjunction with the Public Service Leadership Team, will ensure alignment of the public service around the regional system leadership framework;
- 8 **note** that the Public Service Commissioner intends to designate the Secretary for Social Development as system leader for regional alignment under section 56 of the Public Service Act 2020;
- 9 **note** that the appropriate Minister, in terms of section 56 of the Public Service Act 2020, will be the Minister for the Public Service;
- 10 **note** that officials will work collaboratively across agencies to develop a plan for delivering the strengthened regional system leadership framework;
- 11 **note** that the regional system leadership framework will reinforce alignment across national level work programmes and mechanisms being delivered in regions, such as the Regional Skills Leadership Groups, Regional Economic Development Partnerships, Just Transition Partnerships and Jobs for Nature;
- 12 **note** that in Auckland the Regional Public Service Commissioner's role and mandate will focus on issues that are at the local and regional level and the Government's Auckland Policy Office will continue to focus on programmes that have a broader national context;

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- 13 **note** that, as the framework is implemented, Chief Executives and agencies may identify options for deploying existing resources in a more coordinated way. Chief Executives will manage this collectively and will report back on progress;
- 14 **invite** the Minister for the Public Service, Minister for Social Development and Employment and Minister for Economic and Regional Development to report back to Cabinet on implementation progress, and reviewing implementation against objectives, by June 2022;
- 15 **note** that the Minister for the Public Service will update Ministers on the development of regional public service priorities in September 2021.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Chris Hipkins

Minister for the Public Service

Hon Carmel Sepuloni

Minister for Social Development and Employment

Hon Stuart Nash

Minister for Economic and Regional Development

PROACTIVELY RELEASED BY TE KŌHĀ MĀTAHAHO PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Appendix 1 – Regional System Leadership Framework

PROACTIVELY RELEASED BY TE KAWA MATAAHO PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Why do we need joined up government in the regions?

- Working as a **unified public service** and **acting collaboratively** around communities' needs and strengths will help to achieve better wellbeing outcomes, including by reducing duplication in the way public service agencies engage, invest and deliver services in regions.
- It is an important part of the **Public Service reform** process. The mandate to convene and collaborate at the regional level aims to improve how the public service works in regions to improve the **wellbeing of New Zealanders**.
- Iwi and other Māori groups, and regional stakeholders (including local government, business and community groups) know the realities of their communities and hold valuable insights on what can work to improve their wellbeing. Central government agencies work better with stakeholders to **define priorities with their communities and partner** to achieve outcomes.

CORE PRINCIPLES

Spirit of Service

Putting whānau and communities at the heart of our work and our purpose

Partnering with Māori

Support the Crown in its partnership with Māori under the Treaty/Te Tiriti, and act reasonably, honourably and in good faith when engaging with iwi and other Māori groups

A Unified Public Service

Being informed, organised and bringing together our collective levers as a unified public service to support better outcomes for our communities

Joining up in the regions through stronger mandated leadership

A Framework for Mandated Public Service Leadership

A senior Public Servant in each region is appointed as a Regional Public Service Commissioner (RPSC). RPSCs operate with a **mandate** to:

- **convene:** bring together, coordinate and align central government decision makers (supporting and building on existing groups) across the social, economic, skills and workforce, and environmental sectors, as it relates to regional leadership, planning and delivery of wellbeing outcomes for communities in their regions. If requested, act as a central government representative for other public service agencies (in consultation with agencies) on issues that cut across domains
- **resolve:** coordinate with officials to resolve barriers to achieving outcomes for communities. This coordination may include working collaboratively with officials and existing groups, including with iwi/Māori, local government and regional stakeholders as necessary, to resolve coordination barriers to achieving outcomes
- **escalate:** working with officials to identify barriers to achieving action/outcomes for communities and raise with the relevant Chief Executives group where resolution cannot be achieved at a regional, work programme or single agency level. As a last resort, RPSC may escalate directly to the system leader for regional alignment.

Mandate is clearly communicated by CEs through their agencies.

Fifteen regions have been defined based on Regional Council boundaries, for the purpose of establishing RPSCs.

Resourcing

Depending on regional need, RPSCs are supported by **ongoing, dedicated resource** to support the role and deliver its mandate. This will be managed by agencies deploying existing resources in a more coordinated way.

This will enable more coordinated public service engagement with other leaders in the region

Improve collaboration with other regional leaders

Key stakeholders and partners in the social, economic, skills and workforce, and environmental sectors, work collectively through their preferred leadership group/s. The desired outcome is that in all regions the leadership group includes iwi, Māori, local government, and central government regional leaders.

Where there are no existing leadership arrangements in a region, the RPSC may convene a group or groups that can provide strategic oversight for the region's wellbeing priorities.

The Public Service:

- works **cohesively and credibly** with regional leaders,
- is **joined-up in its contributions** to the leadership group(s), and
- **collaborates** with the region's leaders to **reduce duplication** and **maximise the impact** of its engagement, investments and service delivery to support the region's plan and priorities.

Strengthen contributions to broader regional plans

The region's leadership group(s) may develop and collectively own an agreed overarching plan that sets out a shared vision for regional wellbeing.

Where these plans are in place, the public service is aligned in its contribution to that plan through the RPSC, and it helps ensure alignment with national direction and strategies, including industry and sector strategies.

The plan's delivery is overseen through the region's agreed leadership group, which is connected to service delivery to communities.

Enablers of the Framework

Reporting and Accountability

The System Leader for regional alignment works with relevant CE group on behalf of the Public Service Leadership Team (PSLT). System Leader leads on the coordination of public service activity at a regional level through the framework and is responsible to the Minister for the Public Service for the effectiveness of this coordination.

Reporting is through System Leader to the appropriate CE group, with the option of involving PSLT.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation supports ongoing learning and adaptation, and ensures line of sight between local, regional and national-level outcomes-focused action.

Appendix 2: Examples of the work Regional Public Service Leads have been doing since their appointment

Te Taitokerau

In Te Taitokerau, the Regional Lead used his convening mandate to bring together key stakeholders and establish the Whai Kainga steering group. The purpose of this group centres around enabling Māori home ownership, and addressing the affordability, quality and adequacy of housing in Te Taiktokerau, which has been a significant challenge for many years; hindered by a lack of local decision rights and a co-ordinated plan. Although only established in late-2020, the group has already made significant progress, including:

- 1 Creating a partnership framework that reflects the Crown-Māori relationship, local government perspectives and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Māori and Iwi Housing Innovation framework.
- 2 Developing a single housing plan for Te Taitokerau that builds on the Public Housing Plan.

Bay of Plenty

The Regional Lead convened the Rotorua Collective Impact Group (RCIG) in response to Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC) requesting central government support to collectively address social issues in the region through an inter-agency working group. The RCIG includes representatives from the Ministries of Social Development (MSD), HUD, Education (MOE), Oranga Tamariki, RLC, and the Midlands District Health Board. The RCIG identified that an initial priority group to focus on was children/tamariki living in emergency housing. In Rotorua, there are approximately 380 children/tamariki living in emergency housing, and many of these whānau need to travel a significant distance each day to enable their children/tamariki to continue attending the school they are enrolled with, which is an additional cost that most cannot afford.

Under the RCIG, a joined-up approach was agreed. MOE was able to advise the schools to join together (rather have separate applications) and submit a joined-up funding application to MOEs Urgent Response Fund. The application was approved, under a Kahui Ako model – Community of Learning approach which involved multiple schools – coming together for their communities of interest.

\$80,000 was provided to support the transportation of approximately 108 children from Emergency Housing to schools, for two school terms, until 30 June 2021.

Top of the South – Te Taihu (Nelson, Tasman, Marlborough)

During the COVID lockdown the eight iwi of Te Taihu banded together to provide whānau with access to kai, essential items and support. The collective identified early on that whānau well-being would be impacted post COVID, and that there would be an ongoing need for the provision of support. The eight iwi developed an action plan to provide ongoing support, *Te Kotahi te Hoe*, outlining the key aspects of wellbeing that would be addressed, and the resources that would be required for implementation and delivery.

IN CONFIDENCE

In response, the Regional Lead convened a hui in Nelson and presented the idea of seeking putea from across agencies. MSD and Te Puni Kōkiri offered to assist with further development of the action plan to support funding bids.

In addition, the Regional Lead co-ordinated sources of funding that might fit with the intentions of the iwi action plan, escalating the issue through to the MSD Māori and Community Partnerships team. MSD subsequently confirmed a funding package of \$1.535m.

This funding is catalyst to something of great significance in Te Taihupo. Initial funding enabled the collective to carry out a self-assessment and to develop a set of actions to build organisational capability and capacity.

An iwi collective entity has now been established to receive and administer funding, Te Kotahi o Te Taihupo Charitable Trust. An Operations Manager was appointed and commenced on 22 March 2021. A programme of activity has been developed for the next six months and a secondary two-year programme will be developed shortly which will address whānau well-being under five key elements:

- Whāngai – Feeding our People: Whānau will not go hungry on our watch.
- Tāwharautia – Shelter and Support: Shelter the homeless and keep a roof over the heads of whānau.
- Whiwhi Mahi – Work and Training: Whānau will have access to meaningful work and or training.
- Whai Oranga – Holistic Wellbeing: Enhance whānau wellbeing through mental, emotional and spiritual support.
- Whakawhiti: Communications, co-ordination and advocacy. Our collective voice will be heard and will help guide decision making in Te Taihupo.

Iwi will design and deliver services to whānau with iwi-based Community Connectors, work brokers, and the development of a sustainable and resilient food supply strategy.

Appendix 3 – How the framework is currently working in Taranaki (draft)

Just Transitions Partnerships

Regional Public Service Leadership

The Regional Public Service Lead convenes a cross-agency group in Taranaki that includes agencies from the economic, social, environment and cultural sectors. MBIE's Kānoa – Regional Economic Development and Investment Unit (Kānoa), Just Transitions and RSLG teams are working closely with the RPSL and her adviser to support a joined-up approach to engagement on regional strategy.

Taranaki Regional Public Service Leadership group is mapping central government's work programmes, initiatives and investments to the integrated plan's Whānau Ora outcomes.

As part of the development of the regional plan, there is an opportunity for the Taranaki Public Service to work together to:

- understand gaps and overlaps
- help shape Taranaki's priorities and actions, and
- identify collectively how to progress them including through funding options and decision making.

Collaboration with other regional leaders

Post-COVID-19, Taranaki has established a Regional Leadership Group (RLG) of iwi and local government to provide consensus view of the long-term aspirations for this region. The Regional Leadership Group comprises Mayors, Chairs of Regional Council and the three waka representing Taranaki's eight iwi. The RLG has a holistic focus and is using a Whānau Ora kaupapa to guide its focus across economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing outcomes. This group is a significant step forward for the region and is strongly supported by Public Service agencies.

To support cohesive regional development, Taranaki established a strategic working group, Ngā Kaiwhakare o Taranaki (NKoT). Membership of NKoT includes leaders from iwi, business, unions, community groups, and central and local government.

The Regional Public Service Lead (RPSL) is a member of NKoT.

Contribution to broader regional plans

Ngā Kaiwhakare o Taranaki has embraced the Whānau Ora kaupapa as Taranaki's Regional Planning Framework and is working to create an integrated Taranaki Plan that incorporates Taranaki Recovery Plan, Taranaki's Tapuae Roa strategy, the Taranaki 2050 Roadmap and other relevant strategies and action plans.

The Taranaki Plan will enable greater visibility of the collective work and impact for Taranaki of initiatives and investment by iwi, business, unions, community groups, and central and local government and identification of gaps and overlaps.

We envisage the final plan could be a test case for the “regional plan” under the regional system leadership framework.

Evaluation and monitoring

The Taranaki Plan is using the Whānau Ora outcomes to measure its progress, with indicators that draw on:

- the Taranaki 2050 Metrics and Evaluation framework,
- Indicators Aotearoa and the Living Standards Framework;
- MSD, Kānoa, MfE and other agency regional measures

This will support the Region to monitor, evaluate and review progress.

PROACTIVELY RELEASED BY TE KAWA MATAAHO PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Appendix 4 – Strategies, programmes and leadership arrangements in the regions that are relevant to each sector

Social sector

- 1 Officials are working with a number of agencies in the social sector to ensure there is alignment with the framework. These agencies include MSD, Oranga Tamariki, the Child and Youth Wellbeing Unit in DPMC, Ministry of Health, Te Puni Kōkiri, Ministry of Education, Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, and Kāinga Ora. The framework can contribute to the delivery of several strategies and directions. These include:
 - 1.1 The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy and other initiatives and strategies in the children’s system¹
 - 1.2 The New Zealand Disability Strategy and the strategy for our ageing population Better Later Life – He Oranga Kaumātua 2019 to 2034
 - 1.3 Kāinga Ora’s distributed leadership model
 - 1.4 Whānau Ora future expansion
 - 1.5 s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Economic, skills and workforce sectors

- 2 The framework can support and aligns with existing programmes and leadership arrangements in the economic, skills and workforce sectors, including regional economic development. MSD, TKM, Kāinga Ora (under their urban development role), the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), the Department of Conservation (DoC), and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) are working closely to ensure there continues to be alignment across this work as it is implemented in regions.
 - 2.1 **Regional Economic Development Partnerships (REDPs)** – regional economic development priorities developed through REDPs are expected to be part of the coordinated contribution from public service into the collective priority-setting process undertaken by regions. These priorities would inform investment decisions. RED Senior Officials continue to coordinate and lead all-of-government regional economic development activity and will continue to connect in and align with Regional Leads on relevant issues.
 - 2.2 **Just Transitions Partnerships (JTPs)** – the JTP Team is working closely to support Regional Leads in Taranaki and Southland regions and intends to use both processes as an opportunity to help progress the framework.

¹ The Minister for Children has directed officials to develop a strategy for the children’s system, and the regional groups may be able to play a role in supporting a shift in resources and decision making to Māori, iwi and communities.

- 2.3 **Regional Skills Leadership Groups (RSLGs)** – Regional Leads as Regional Commissioners would continue to be a central government representative on the independent RSLGs. Just as the priorities developed under REDPs, the labour market and skills planning undertaken by the RSLGs, with support from MBIE, would be part of the coordinated contribution from public service into the collective priority-setting process undertaken by regions.

Environmental sector

- 3 Officials from MSD, TKM, MPI, DoC, Ministry for the Environment, and Land Information New Zealand are working closely to ensure there is alignment across environment priorities and work programmes, including Jobs for Nature and the Resource Management reforms.
- 4 Under the current proposals for regional spatial strategies and (regional) combined plans, central government will be directly involved in the development, negotiation and implementation of the proposed regional spatial strategies via the proposed Strategic Planning Act.

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Cabinet Government Administration and Expenditure Review Committee

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Joined-up Government in the Regions: Strengthening a Regional System Leadership Framework for the Public Service

Portfolios **Public Service / Social Development and Employment / Economic and Regional Development**

On 8 July 2021, the Cabinet Government Administration and Expenditure Review Committee:

- 1 **noted** that in June 2019, Cabinet agreed to establish a regional system leadership framework and strengthen regional public service leadership through the designation of senior public servants as Regional Public Service Leads [CAB-19-MIN-0290];
- 2 **noted** that Regional Public Service Leads have been delivering their Cabinet agreed mandate to convene public service decision makers in the social sector, while strengthening connections to the skills and economic sectors, and to support other leaders in the regions to navigate the public service;
- 3 **noted** that there are opportunities to further strengthen the regional system leadership framework to better align how agencies invest and deliver services, and engage in the region;
- 4 **agreed** that, under a strengthened regional system leadership framework, the role of Regional Public Service Lead is renamed Regional Public Service Commissioner;
- 5 **agreed** that the scope of the Regional Public Service Commissioner role includes the social, economic, skills and workforce, and environmental sectors;
- 6 **agreed** that the Regional Public Service Commissioners' detailed mandate is to:
 - 6.1 convene: bring together, coordinate and align central government decision makers (supporting and building on existing groups) across the social, economic, skills and workforce, and environmental sectors, as it relates to regional leadership, planning and delivery of wellbeing outcomes for communities in their regions; and if requested, to act as a central government representative for other public service agencies (in consultation with agencies) on issues that cut across domains;
 - 6.2 resolve: coordinate with officials to resolve barriers to achieving outcomes for communities which may include working collaboratively with existing groups, including iwi/Māori, local government and regional stakeholders as necessary; and

- 6.3 escalate: working with officials to identify barriers to achieving action/outcomes for communities and raise with the relevant Chief Executives group where resolution cannot be achieved at a regional, work programme or single agency level and as a last resort, escalate direct to the system leader for regional alignment;
- 7 **noted** that the Public Service Commissioner, in conjunction with the Public Service Leadership Team, will ensure alignment of the public service around the regional system leadership framework;
- 8 **noted** that the Public Service Commissioner intends to designate the Chief Executive of Social Development as system leader for regional alignment under section 56 of the Public Service Act 2020;
- 9 **noted** that the appropriate Minister, in terms of section 56 of the Public Service Act 2020, will be the Minister for the Public Service;
- 10 **noted** that officials will work collaboratively across agencies to develop a plan for delivering the strengthened regional system leadership framework;
- 11 **noted** that the regional system leadership framework will reinforce alignment across national level work programmes and mechanisms being delivered in regions, such as the Regional Skills Leadership Groups, Regional Economic Development Partnerships, Just Transition Partnerships and Jobs for Nature;
- 12 **noted** that in Auckland the Regional Public Service Commissioner's role and mandate will focus on issues that are at the local and regional level and the Auckland Policy Office will continue to focus on programmes that have a broader national context;
- 13 **noted** that, as the framework is implemented, Chief Executives and agencies may identify options for deploying existing resources in a more coordinated way, and Chief Executives will manage this collectively and report back on progress to the relevant Ministers;
- 14 **invited** the Minister for the Public Service, Minister for Social Development and Employment and Minister for Economic and Regional Development to report back to the Cabinet Government Administration and Expenditure Review Committee on implementation progress, and reviewing implementation against objectives, by June 2022;
- 15 **noted** that the Minister for the Public Service will update Cabinet Government Administration and Expenditure Review Committee Ministers on the development of regional public service priorities in September 2021.

Rebecca Davies
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon Grant Robertson (Chair)
Hon Dr Megan Woods
Hon Carmel Sepuloni
Hon David Parker
Hon Stuart Nash
Hon Peeni Henare
Hon Michael Wood
Hon Kiri Allan
Hon Dr David Clark
Hon Aupito William Sio
Hon Meka Whaitiri
Deborah Russell, MP

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Officials Committee for GOV
Inland Revenue



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Report of the Cabinet Government Administration and Expenditure Review Committee: Period Ended 9 July 2021

On 12 July 2021, Cabinet made the following decisions on the work of the Cabinet Government Administration and Expenditure Review Committee for the period ended 9 July 2021:

Out of Scope



GOV-21-MIN-0023 **Joined-up Government in the Regions: Strengthening a Regional System Leadership Framework for the Public Service** CONFIRMED
Portfolios: Public Service / Social Development and
Employment / Economic and Regional Development

Out of Scope



Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet