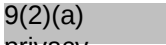




Report Title:	Public Service Amendment Bill – Potential revision of amendments to long-term insights briefings		
Report No:	MoSR 2025-0702		
Date:	6 October 2025		
To:	Hon Judith Collins KC, Minister for the Public Service		
Actions Sought:	Re-consider previous decisions on recommendations in the Departmental Report about Bill provisions on long-term insights briefings	Due Date	8 October 2025
Contact	Stephanie Wyse, Acting Manager – Strategy, Policy and Integrity		
Contact No:	9(2)(a) 		
Encl:	No	Priority	High (based on Select Committee timeline)
Security Level:	IN CONFIDENCE		

Purpose of this report

1. This report seeks reconsideration of recommendations you previously agreed for inclusion in the draft Departmental Report on the Public Service Amendment Bill (the Bill). They relate to the provisions that streamline the statutory process for long-term insights briefings and respond to concerns raised with us by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC).

Background

2. We presented our Initial Briefing on the Bill to the Governance and Administration Committee (the Committee) in August. We are due to provide our Departmental Report – including any recommendations in response to submitters' views – on Friday 17 October. The Committee will consider the Departmental Report on 22 October as part of its timeline to report back to the House by 1 December.

Context - previous decisions on long term insights briefings

3. The Bill as drafted would amend provisions for long-term insights briefings (LTIBs) and require that DPMC provide a single briefing at least once in a three-year period (as opposed to each department providing its own 'agency-specific' LTIB). These proposals respond to your objective of streamlining obligations on chief executives under the Public Service Act 2020 [MoSR 2025-0135 and 0160 refers].

Views of submitters, including the Clerk of the House of Representatives

4. We previously briefed you on submitters' views about the Bill, including how several major submissions expressed concern about the loss of agency specific LTIBs [MoSR 2025-0686 refers]. In particular, the Clerk of the House made a submission expressing his view that select committees have found agency-specific LTIBs a useful way of engaging with long-term issues,

and that the changes proposed would reduce opportunities for parliamentary scrutiny of the Executive. He recommended retaining agency-specific briefings plus a briefing by DPMC on ‘over-arching’ issues, while endorsing the idea of stronger central agency coordination of LTIBs.

Changes previously agreed for recommendation in the Departmental Report

5. Based on the above, and given that significant efficiency would already be realised by shifting from 34 agency briefings to one, we recommended (and you agreed) that the Departmental Report should recommend the Bill be amended. This amendment would provide that *“while the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet will determine the content of the long-term insights briefing, the Secretary will seek suggestions and/or specific proposed content from public service agencies before doing so”* [MoSR 2025-0686 refers].
6. We consider this additional ‘process step’ would respond to concerns raised in submissions, without compromising on the need for a streamlined mechanism. It may also help allay concerns about a lack of long-term focus in the Bill more generally, many of which are focused on the more substantive changes to your proposed purpose statement for the public service.
7. We also proposed (and you agreed) that *“DPMC will not be required to consult publicly on the proposed subject matter of the long-term insights briefing (but will still be required to consult on the draft)”* [MoSR-2025-0686 refers]. We saw this as justifiable to offset any additional transaction cost of engaging agencies on potential content (though we do not think this would be significant), and because a review of the first round of briefings had suggested that such open-ended consultation was not a productive part of the process.
8. At the time, we advised that we had consulted DPMC on these proposals and that they supported them. We understood that engaging specific agencies on potential content was consistent with how DPMC anticipated managing the LTIB process under the Bill. While we continue to recommend the approach we have proposed, we are concerned that we did not properly reflect DPMC’s views. We have shared this briefing with DPMC and asked them to insert their views to ensure they are accurately recorded (see below).

DPMC view

9. DPMC 9(2)(g)(i) free and frank do not support a specific process step in the Bill to engage agencies about the potential content of the LTIB.
10. They consider the Cabinet paper made it clear the LTIB process is over-specified in the Act. DPMC’s view is the Bill needs to streamline LTIBs in two ways: require a single LTIB coordinated by DPMC and address the process issues identified by a review of the first round of LTIBs.
11. DPMC conducted a thorough review of the first round of LTIBs. In this review agencies highlighted the two stages of consultation are unnecessarily burdensome, adding time and cost into the LTIB process. Currently the Bill includes both these steps (i.e. public consultation on both the subject matter and subsequent draft report). It was DPMC’s expectation that the first step (at a minimum) would be removed based on this information, however this was not the case and this clause remained in the introduced amendment bill.

12. DPMC's considers replacing this step with a new legislated requirement to seek agency suggestions does not address the original policy intent to streamline the Act. This does not mean that DPMC does not consider agency views important: seeking agency views is critical to the good function of government. However, this is regular practice and unnecessary to specify in legislation.
13. As such DPMC preferred approach is to streamline the LTIB requirements as intended by:
 - a. removing the requirement to publicly consult on the subject matter of an LTIB; and
 - b. not introducing a new requirement to seek suggestions from agencies.
14. This will leave the requirement for DPMC to publicly consult on the draft long-term insight briefing and issue guidance on long term thinking. They consider these meet the original policy intent to streamline the current requirements for LTIBs and support long-term thinking as a core function.

Analysis, next steps and risks

15. We seek a decision as to whether you wish to rescind the earlier decision for us to recommend a specific process step for engaging agencies in the development of the LTIB. We also seek confirmation as to whether you still wish for us to recommend removal of the requirement for public consultation on the subject matter of the LTIB.

16. 9(2)(g)(i) free and frank

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Recommended Action

We recommend you:

EITHER

- a) **agree** that the Departmental Report on the Public Service Amendment Bill should **not** recommend an additional process step for the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to seek suggestions and/or specific proposed content from public service agencies before determining the content of the long-term insights briefing; and
- b) **confirm** your earlier decision to remove public consultation on the subject matter (MoSR 2025-0686 refers).

[DPMC preferred option]

Agree/disagree

OR

- c) **confirm** your earlier decisions to
 - a. add the process step to require DPMC to seek suggestions and/or proposed content, and
 - b. remove public consultation on the subject matter (MoSR 2025-0686 refers).

[PSC preferred option]

Agree/disagree

Hon Judith Collins KC
Minister for the Public Service