



Te Kawa Mataaho
Public Service Commission

Performance Improvement Review Programme

Guide to the Performance Improvement Model

October 2025

<https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/system/system-architecture-and-design/performance-improvement-review-programme>

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Purpose of this Guide

This guide provides information on the Performance Improvement Model and Performance Improvement Reviews

The guide covers:

- the purpose of Performance Improvement Reviews and the role they play in lifting Public Sector performance
- the Performance Improvement Model and how it is applied
- Performance Improvement Reviews and the key steps in the review process.

The guide will be particularly useful for:

- Lead Reviewers (the external experts who lead Performance Improvement Reviews)
- agencies considering or participating in a review
- agencies wanting to undertake a Self-Review for their own purposes
- agencies seeking to understand their performance and identify insights for improvement, for example to refresh their strategic direction and organisational priorities, or to understand their capability and readiness to deliver in the future.

Part One

Purpose of Performance Improvement Reviews

This part of the guide introduces the context for Performance Improvement Reviews and the role they play in lifting the performance of the Public Sector.

The Performance Improvement Review Programme aims to lift performance across the Public Sector

New Zealanders expect effective, efficient, and responsive services from the Public Sector. Meeting these expectations requires high-performing agencies who use the resources they have to deliver the best outcomes for New Zealanders.

Performance Improvement Reviews are an investment in lifting agency performance

The Performance Improvement Review Programme (the Programme) is an initiative to lift agency performance across the Public Sector, advance the Government's priorities, drive value for money, and achieve better results and outcomes for New Zealanders.

The key feature of the Programme is the independent future-focused reviews that inform the direction and performance of public sector agencies and drive a culture of continuous improvement. These reviews are sequenced to complement other performance initiatives, and to support chief executives when they are relatively new to an agency. As more reviews are completed, the Programme will also provide robust insights on opportunities for system-level improvements.

Performance Improvement Reviews are undertaken by experienced independent Lead Reviewers (mostly former chief executives and governance experts), who bring a deep understanding of the Public Service operating environment and expertise in building high-performing organisations.

Reviews drive discussions on an agency's desired future state, identify delivery challenges and capability gaps impacting on its performance, and highlight opportunities to address these gaps over the medium term. They also provide a lever for Ministers to shape the long-term direction, focus, and performance of their agencies.

The Performance Improvement Review Programme builds on experience and international best practice

The Programme draws on lessons from similar initiatives overseas including those in Australia and the United Kingdom. It also builds from the success of the Performance Improvement Framework (PIF) which was introduced in 2009 as a core tool for lifting the performance of the New Zealand Public Service.

The PIF has evolved over the many years since it started, reflecting the changing Public Service context and needs, and incorporating lessons from similar programmes overseas. Previous evaluations of the PIF highlighted the value of the reviews in supporting agencies' efforts to shape their strategic direction and improve their capability – this is a key benefit we have continued to reinforce in the development of the current Programme.

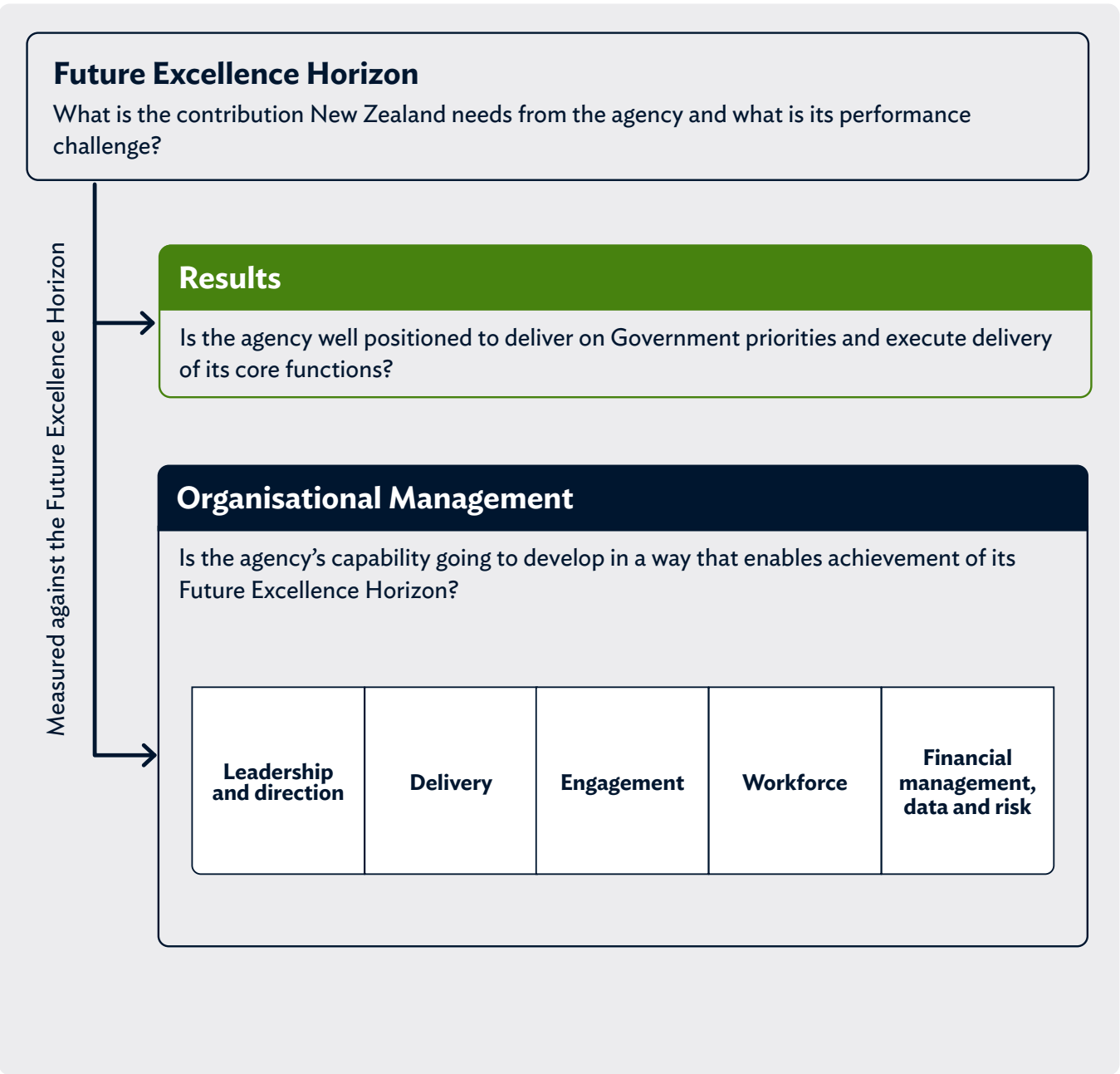
Part Two

Performance Improvement Model

This part of the guide describes the Performance Improvement Model. It provides an overview of the Model, and a further detailed guide for reviewers.

Overview of the Model

The Performance Improvement Model (the Model) is a tool to comprehensively assess an agency’s ability to meet the needs and expectations of New Zealanders, and to respond to future opportunities and challenges. The main elements of the Model are shown below, with more detail on the next page.



Performance Improvement Model

Future Excellence Horizon

What is the contribution that New Zealand needs from the agency and what is its performance challenge?

Results

Government priorities

How well positioned is the agency to deliver on the Government's priorities?

Core functions

For each of the agency's core functions, in the context of the aspirations of the Future Excellence Horizon:

- How well positioned is the agency to effectively deliver the contributions expected of it?
- How well positioned is the agency to be able to efficiently deliver those contributions?

Organisational management

Element		Lead question	
Leadership and direction	Purpose, vision and strategy	1	How well do the agency's staff and stakeholders understand and support its purpose, vision and strategy?
		2	How well does the agency use long-term thinking and its strategy to plan and drive delivery?
	Leadership	3	How well does the senior leadership team collectively lead the agency and implement change?
		4	How well does the agency take accountability for and lead the improvement of relevant system or sector level results?
	Values, behaviour and culture	5	How well does the agency develop and promote the organisational culture it needs to achieve its strategic direction?
	Governance	6	How well does the agency use governance arrangements to drive performance and deliver value-for-money?
Delivery	Services to customers, clients and citizens	7	How well does the agency understand the needs of customers, clients, and citizens, and use these to innovate and deliver better services and outcomes?
		8	How well does the agency integrate services with its partners and providers to deliver value to customers, clients and citizens?
	Performance and accountability	9	How well does the agency use performance information to drive continuous improvement and accountability for results?

Engagement	Engagement with Ministers	10	How well does the agency provide advice and services to Ministers?
	Māori-Crown relationship	11	How well does the agency develop and maintain the capability to engage with Māori and to understand Māori perspectives to drive better outcomes?
	Engagement with stakeholders	12	How well does the agency engage with stakeholders, in ways that are effective, open, transparent and accessible?
Workforce	Talent management and workforce development	13	How well does the agency identify, develop and manage its talent?
		14	How well does the agency anticipate and respond to future workforce capacity and capability requirements?
	Workforce Performance	15	How well does the agency encourage and drive high performance and continuous improvement in its workforce?
		16	How well does the agency address performance that is not meeting expectations?
	Staff engagement	17	How well does the agency develop and maintain a highly committed and engaged workforce?
		18	How well does the agency manage its employee relations?
Financial management, data and risk	Investment and asset management	19	How well does the agency manage its assets and balance sheet, to support service delivery, reduce operational risks and drive performance management?
	Strategic financial management and accountability	20	How well does the agency plan, direct, and control financial resources to drive efficient and effective delivery?
		21	How well does the agency integrate financial information into its decision making and manage its cost drivers to achieve fiscal sustainability?
	Data, analytics and digital technologies	22	How well does the agency manage and use data, analytics and digital technologies to drive decision making and effective delivery?
	Risk and assurance	23	How well does the agency identify and manage agency, Crown, and system risks to integrate risk awareness into its current operations and future opportunities?
		24	How well does the agency use assurance to effectively manage organisational risks and prioritise improvements to the internal control environment?

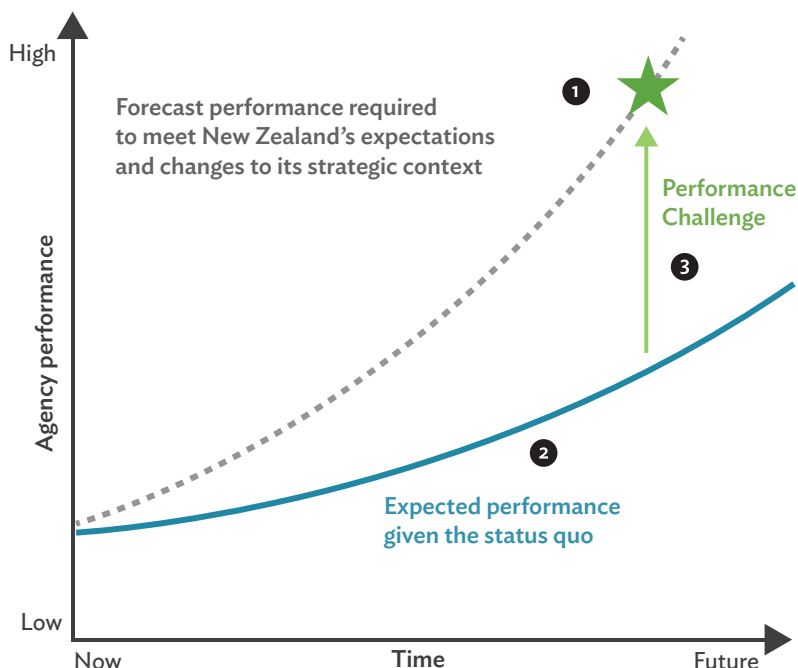
How to use the Performance Improvement Model

This part of the guide describes the three high-level components of the Model: the Future Excellence Horizon, Results, and Organisational Management. It also describes how these high-level components are supported by further layers of detail through Lead Questions and Lines of Enquiry. The most detailed elements of the model are used as and when required. For example, in its practical application, the Lines of Enquiry are mostly used as prompts to help shape analysis, including identifying other aspects of performance to consider, or in deciding where in the model an aspect of performance is covered. They are not responded to individually.

The Model is focused on achieving exceptional future success

The Model looks at an agency's future under two scenarios: a future state where the agency adapts to its strategic context and is successful in providing the contribution New Zealand needs from it, and an agency's expected performance and capability that is built from the status quo. A review identifies the gap between these two future scenarios and describes the actions needed to bridge it (the Performance Challenge). The graphic below illustrates these key concepts.

The key concepts in applying the Performance Improvement Model



1. Understand the agency's strategic context and determine the expected future contributions that will be required of it.
2. Based on evidence, estimate how agency performance will develop in the status quo. Ratings measure the gap between expected status quo, and the performance required in the Future Excellence Horizon.
3. Recommend actions for the agency to overcome the Performance Challenge (i.e. improve its performance to a level that can deliver the Future Excellence Horizon).

Section 1

Future Excellence Horizon

The Future Excellence Horizon confirms the future aims and expectations of the agency, describes how the agency's operating context might change and what it means for the agency to succeed within this changing context. The Future Excellence Horizon is the first part of the Model and its most important because it situates all other elements. It is also likely to be the most challenging to develop. It needs to be aspirational, future-focused, and able to be achieved by the agency.

This guide sets out a structured, linear process to developing the Future Excellence Horizon, however it is more likely to be iterative, and revisited as new insights come to light. The structured process involves analysing the agency's strategic context, identifying the contribution New Zealand needs from the agency in the future, and finally identifying what the agency needs to do to be able to make that contribution and what success will look like when it gets there.

What is the agency's strategic context and the contribution New Zealand needs from it in the future?

The process starts by analysing and identifying the critical aspects of the agency's strategic context. This can include expected changes and trends in the following areas:

- the agency's delivery context (for example if the broader system is developing in a way that requires the agency to assume greater responsibility for a service)
- the economy, demography, fiscal situation, and international environment
- the agency's customers, clients and citizens' needs, preferences, and expectations
- the stakeholders/partners/relationships it needs to work with
- emerging technologies.

The strategic context is the basis to help identify the contribution that New Zealand needs from the agency in the future. The key elements of that contribution can be set out through a series of statements that will also help to crystallise the future aspirations of the agency. The agency is reviewed against its expected ability to deliver this contribution, so that it is clear what shifts in capability and performance are needed. The process of identifying the shifts required should also consider existing strategies and plans.

What is the agency's Performance Challenge?

The Performance Challenge is the gap between the agency's expected performance and capability under current conditions, and that required to deliver on the future contribution needed from it. The Performance Challenge can be described using a set of themes and should also include clear and actionable steps or recommendations for the agency to consider.

The Performance Challenge will need to be revisited throughout the review process, as further information and insights are developed on what the agency needs to do in the future, and its current performance and capability. One approach is to develop the key aspects of the agency's Performance Challenge early in the review process, as a 'strawperson', which can be used to test and refine with stakeholders through the remainder of the review process.

The last part of the Performance Challenge is to identify what success looks like when it has been achieved, so that the agency, and others, can monitor its progress.

The following factors need to be considered in developing the Future Excellence Horizon

The aspects below need to be considered in the process of developing a Future Excellence Horizon, and should be consistent across its different elements:

- **Timeframe** – the timeframes should be clear and consistent across all parts of the Future Excellence Horizon. A standard timeframe is four years, but this can be longer (for example, an agency involved in infrastructure may benefit from a 10-year timeframe reflecting the long-term nature of infrastructure).
- **Level of resourcing** – what is the assumed level of capability and resources to deliver the Future Excellence Horizon? How does this differ from current resources?
- **Scope and responsibilities** – aspects of the Future Excellence Horizon will rely on the input and efforts of others from across government, as well as non-government stakeholders and organisations. The agency should either have a significant or unique role in the contribution, or the reviewers consider it should have a greater role for it in the future.
- **System configuration** – the system(s) that the agency operates in will significantly impact an agency's ability to deliver. Is the agency's system context expected to be the same across the period of the Future Excellence Horizon? Are changes expected, and if so, what are these changes likely to be?

Section 2

Results

The Results section looks across the agency to see how it is using its capabilities and resources to deliver impacts and results for New Zealanders. Government priorities and Core Functions are rated using the Performance Ratings in Appendix Two.

Government priorities

High-performing agencies effectively drive progress on current Government priorities, while having the systems, flexibility and agility to adapt to a changing operating context and future priorities.

Lead Questions

- 1 How well positioned is the agency to deliver on the Government's priorities?

Potential Lines of Enquiry

Defining and identifying

How does the agency identify and define (at an appropriate level) the critical Government priorities the agency is responsible for delivering?

Funding and resourcing

How does the agency understand the funding and resource implications to address changing priorities, including identifying trade-offs and any wider funding implications?

Execution

How does the agency turn priorities into the actions that will progress and achieve them, and then execute and deliver those actions with pace and purpose?

Monitoring and tracking

How does the agency develop robust indicators for tracking and reporting progress against its critical priorities?

How does the agency have assurance that critical priorities are being progressed and will be achieved or where changes will need to be made?

Risk

How does the agency identify and mitigate significant delivery risks?

Core functions

Core functions are the key operations of the agency. What is required of each core function will be based on the overall contributions expected from the agency as set out in the Future Excellence Horizon. In a review, each core function will receive two performance ratings (see Appendix Two of this guide). These ratings are based on assessing the size of the performance gap between where the agency is and where it needs to be as set out in the Future Excellence Horizon.

Defining the set of core functions needs to be done carefully and deliberately

The agency's core functions need to be defined before the start of the review. In a review led by the Public Service Commission (the Commission), agreement on the core functions is made through a process that is shared between the reviewed agency, the Lead Reviewers and the Commission.

The set of core functions for a reviewed agency will need to:

- **Cover the key operations of the agency** – the specific wording of each core function will depend on the agency's activities and context. In many cases, an exhaustive list of core functions will be impractical and it is important to focus on those core functions that are critical to the future success of the agency. Two specific core functions are described in Table One.
- **Be meaningful to its stakeholders and customers** – Ministers, customers, and clients of the agency should be able to recognise the logic behind the set of core functions.
- **Support an effective review process** – the set of core functions should be practical and avoid overlaps. We recommend between three to five core functions for most small to medium agencies, although large agencies with diverse responsibilities might consider more.

A variety of sources should be used to identify and describe the core functions for a review. The key sources and their particular strengths are listed below.

- **Organisational chart/structure** – helps to link core functions to interviews, and to understand workforce resources
- **Legislation** – helps clarify the agency's essential activities and functions
- **Funding and appropriation structure** – helps for looking at costs and value-for-money, and linking to performance reporting
- **Ministerial portfolio allocations** – helps for looking at priorities and in talking to Ministers
- **Performance plans, in particular Key Impact Areas** – helps to understand expenditure and performance
- **Accountability documents (e.g. annual report, strategic intentions or statement of intent)** – helps for using external performance reporting in the review
- **Other strategies and reports e.g. output plans, quarterly Ministerial reports** – helps in using this reporting in the review
- **The agency's website** – alignment helps ensure core functions are commonly understood.

An agency's operations will often be set out differently in these sources. It is useful to list out and compare the different ways the agencies operations are described to help decide what approach (or mix of approaches) will work best.

There are two specific types of core functions (Regulatory and Crown entity monitoring) that are expected to be included if they are relevant to the agency. Table One describes the factors to consider in deciding whether these core functions should be included.

Table One: Criteria for determining if two specific core functions are expected

Type of core function	Criteria to decide if this type of core function is included
Regulatory	The agency being reviewed: • has responsibility for a regulatory system as specified in legislation • is required to produce a regulatory stewardship plan • describes itself as a regulatory steward in its corporate documents.
Crown entity monitoring	The agency being reviewed monitors a Crown entity, or other agencies or government bodies.

Approach to assessing core functions in a review

This section provides an overview on the two Lead Questions for each Core Function and supports the detailed Lines of Enquiry provided in the next section of the guide. The aspirations in the Future Excellence Horizon provide the context for the ratings and recommendations for both Lead Questions.

How well positioned is the agency to effectively deliver the contributions expected of it?

The review process can involve considering where the core function is currently (what it does well and what it doesn't do well) and looking out to what is needed for the Future Excellence Horizon (including the capabilities, behaviours, competencies, and ways of working). It can also help to consider examples of agencies doing a similar core function well and describing the factors for their success and how these might be emulated.

How well positioned is the agency to be able to efficiently deliver those contributions?

With clarity on what is needed to effectively deliver the aspirations of the Future Excellence Horizon, the next step is to understand how well positioned the agency is to efficiently deliver that contribution. This should consider the agencies existing programmes for understanding and improving value-for-money, and whether alternative delivery options might enable greater efficiency.

Avoiding duplication when presenting findings

The findings for core functions can often overlap with areas covered in the Organisational Management section of the Model. Some common examples include where there are staffing issues impacting on the performance of a core function (e.g. high turnover) and what is covered in the Workforce Engagement element, or the findings for an advice or engagement core function and what is covered under the Engagement element.

To avoid repetition, where such overlaps occur, it should be decided where to cover the analysis in depth, and then just reference that section in other parts of the report.

Lead Questions	Potential Lines of Enquiry applicable to all core functions:
2 How well positioned is the agency to effectively deliver the contributions expected of it?	Outcomes, outputs, and indicators How well does the agency define the outcomes it is trying to achieve through each of its core functions? How clear is the agency's intervention logic? How does the intervention logic drive prioritisation and decision making, and support meaningful reporting and monitoring? Effectiveness How does the agency monitor its results over time? Are current expectations for delivery of its core functions appropriate or could they be improved in a sustainable way? How well does the agency take an approach to the long-term achievement of impacts (e.g. early intervention for long-term payoff where appropriate)? Customers, clients and citizens How does the agency design and innovate its services to meet the interests and motivations of their direct clients and customers, alongside broader citizens' interests? How does the agency consider differentiation of its services provided by each core function to meet different client and customer needs?
How well positioned is the agency to be able to efficiently deliver those contributions?	Efficiency How does the agency ensure results are being achieved in a way that balances costs, impact, and value-for-money? How well does the agency understand its cost drivers and seek to identify and act on opportunities to improve value-for-money? Innovation and continuous improvement Does the agency use evaluation and feedback mechanisms to continuously learn from and improve its delivery performance? Does the agency understand the changing environment for its services (e.g. technology developments) and the opportunities and risks this may create? How does the agency understand the changing needs and interests of those it provides services to, as well as the wider group of citizens and stakeholders? Does the agency consider alternative delivery/intervention options to achieve the intended impact?

Potential lines of enquiry for regulatory core functions:

Good regulatory practice

How does the agency provide simple and straightforward ways to engage with users of regulation and hear and respond to their views?

How does the agency maintain and publish up-to-date information about their regulatory decision-making processes, and compliance and enforcement strategies?

How does the agency ensure it identifies and manages risks with the regulatory systems it manages?

Monitoring, review and reporting on existing regulatory systems

How does the agency understand and report on the health and performance of the system(s) it leads?

How does the agency collaborate with its partner agencies to undertake strategic planning for the system(s) in which it participates?

How does the agency ensure there are clear, whole-of-system descriptions of the purpose and scope of systems that it participates in, that are agreed with the other agencies in that system, and that cover the immediate as well as the long-term?

Robust analysis and implementation support for changes to regulatory systems

How does the agency consider changes in the wider environment (e.g. technology or societal changes) and how they impact on its regulatory responsibilities?

How does the agency identify and address practical design, resourcing and timing issues required for effective implementation and operation, in conjunction with the regulator(s) who will be expected to deliver and administer the changes?

For more guidance on these three areas see [Government expectations for good regulatory practice](#) part B

Arrangements to support these activities (Regulatory stewardship)

How does the agency assign resources to promote, support and co-ordinate its stewardship responsibilities?

How are internal expectations and responsibilities for stewardship defined and made accessible?

How does the agency ensure staff feel safe to raise possible system issues or risks?

Lead Questions

Potential lines of enquiry for Crown entity monitoring core functions:

Clear roles and responsibilities

How does the agency ensure there is clarity in the roles and responsibilities between it, the Minister and the agencies it monitors?

Foundation for an effective monitoring approach

How does the agency ensure it has a robust framework underpinning its monitoring and providing clear expectations for both parties?

How well does the agency ensure planned and systematic engagement that is risk-based and proportional?

How does the agency ensure it provides quality advice on Crown entity and system performance?

Trusted relationships and constructive engagement

How does the agency ensure it maintains trusted relationships with the agencies it monitors, that is based on authenticity, clarity of roles and responsibilities, and a shared interest in the entity's success?

Meaningful reporting and sharing of information

How does the agency ensure its monitoring function connects with other parts of the organisation, so it better understands the agency's context and can bring wider insights (e.g. policy) to its engagement?

How does the agency ensure it manages the impact of information requests on the agencies it monitors to ensure it is effective and efficient?

How well does the agency facilitate information flows between Ministers and Crown entity boards?

Section 3

Organisational Management

The Organisational Management section of the Performance Improvement Model looks at the various interconnected functions that determine an agency's ability to achieve high performance now and in the future.

Leadership and direction

How well an agency is governed and led underpins its ability to serve the Government of the day and meet the needs of New Zealanders now and in future. Strong performance in leadership and direction is one of the key drivers of successful delivery.

There are four elements in the Leadership and Direction area:

- Purpose, vision and strategy
- Leadership
- Values, behaviour and culture
- Governance.

Element: Purpose, vision and strategy

Staff and stakeholders need to understand and support the agency's purpose, its role and strategy, and what it seeks to contribute to the delivery of public services for customers, clients and citizens. In setting its strategy, the agency needs to be alert to possible changes in its operating environment and how its capabilities may need to change.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
1	How well do the agency's staff and stakeholders understand and support its purpose, vision and strategy?	Alignment How does the agency ensure its vision and strategy align to wider Government priorities and long-term objectives? Defining purpose, articulating vision, and setting strategy How well has the agency defined its purpose, set out its long-term direction and strategic objectives, and articulated its vision? How does it ensure staff and stakeholders are engaged in this process? Understanding and connecting How does it seek to ensure staff identify and connect with its purpose and vision? Are staff able to articulate how their work contributes to that purpose and vision?

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
2	How well does the agency use long-term thinking and its strategy to plan and drive delivery?	Impact and outcomes How effectively does the agency leverage long-term thinking in its strategy process? How does the agency identify and articulate the impacts it seeks, as well as the interlinkages with other sector and agencies' strategies? Distilling strategic objectives into actions How does the agency link its strategic objectives into tangible actions that drive its role and function in the future? Adapting to changing context How does the agency adapt its strategies and plans to changing priorities and context, including building in resilience for unexpected events? Planning How does the agency ensure its strategic, business and action plans remain dynamic, serviceable, and appropriate to deliver value for customers and New Zealanders? Does it have internal multi-year business plans to show how it will improve and change its operating model over time?

Element: Leadership

Every agency needs effective, cohesive, future-focused leadership. This means leadership agreeing and acting upon the strategically important issues and required actions, leading by example and affecting change. Leadership needs to own its own capability, performance and improvement.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
3	How well does the senior leadership team collectively lead the agency and implement change?	Strategic focus How does the leadership team ensure it is effective in prioritising the strategically important issues and matters for the agency? Common purpose To what extent do members of the leadership team share a common and coherent vision for the future of the agency and the critical issues it faces? Quality of interaction To what extent does the leadership team engage in effective discussion and debate and agree actions on strategically important issues? How does the agency ensure it supports its leadership team to provide collective and effective governance (including the rhythm of meetings, meeting disciplines and documentation)? How well does the leadership team work together in leading the agency? Role modelling How does the leadership team show it is 'walking the talk'? How does the leadership team assess its own performance? Implementation and change How does the leadership team identify where and how the agency must change to meet current and future challenges, remain fit-for-purpose and deliver increased value over time? How well is change communicated and led?

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
4	How well does the agency take accountability for and lead the improvement of relevant system or sector level results?	Clarity of roles and leadership What are the system and sector leadership roles the agency has (formally, informally, agency-related, and person-specific) and what is their mandate for those roles? How does the agency ensure that others working in the system and sector have clarity on their role and contribution? How does the agency support others who are system or sector leaders, for example sharing resources or providing support for critical work? Leadership and purpose How does the agency support the creation of a clear vision for the system that is supported by other agencies and stakeholders? Relationships and resources How does the agency ensure they lead in ways that bring others along with them, and that activities are well-coordinated, suitably resourced and deliver value for money? Progress How does the agency monitor the progress of the system(s) they lead and use that information for decision making and prioritisation?

Element: Values, behaviour, and culture

Values, behaviour, and culture should align with the purpose and role of the agency and what it aims to achieve. The desired values and behaviour are clear and integrated into the way the agency is managed and services delivered.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
5	How well does the agency develop and promote the organisational culture it needs to achieve its strategic direction?	Public service values How does the agency ensure its culture is aligned to Public Service values and the expectations New Zealanders have of their public services? Defining values and developing culture How does the agency define and promote the specific values and culture needed to drive performance and results for New Zealanders? Aligning behaviour How does the agency ensure that behaviours are in line with its stated values and culture? How is the agency explicit about the behaviours it expects of its staff when they interact with its clients, customers, and other stakeholders? How does the agency embed the behaviours it expects? How does the agency measure and monitor customer, client, and citizen experiences of staff behaviour?

Element: Governance

Good governance provides the platform for effective decision-making and for driving performance. It enables effective agency leadership, accountability and transparency, and the allocation of resources toward delivery and results.

Lead Questions	Potential Lines of Enquiry
6 How well does the agency use governance arrangements to drive performance and deliver value-for-money?	Clarity and purpose What are the governance arrangements across the agency and are roles well defined? Decision-making agility How does the agency ensure agility in decision making to drive performance? Accountability What processes does the agency use to ensure governance policies and management accountabilities and responsibilities are appropriate, transparent, well understood (internally and externally), and applied consistently? Internal alignment How does the agency ensure its governance arrangements support its vision, align to its priorities, and support improved delivery? For Crown entity boards, the following areas apply: Relationship How does the Chair effectively lead the Board? How does the Board (through the Chair) maintain relevant and timely engagement with the leadership team through the chief executive? Strategic management How does the Board undertake strategy setting and performance monitoring? Governance assurance How does the Board ensure quality in its governance and assurance of the agency? Self-review How does the Board periodically assess its own performance and that of individual members?

Delivery

A wide range of capabilities are necessary for agencies to achieve the outcomes valued by customers, clients and citizens. Agencies need to be able to understand customers, clients and citizens' needs to design the interventions they are looking for and assess the value for money from the services they deliver.

Customers, clients and citizens are the people, groups, and businesses that the agency provides services to, whose behaviour is to be influenced, and/or have a wider interest in the agency. There must always be clarity about those affected by policy decisions, whether those decisions result in regulation or in services to be delivered.

The two elements in the delivery area are:

- Services to customers, clients and citizens
- Performance and accountability

Element: Services to customers, clients and citizens

A deep understanding of customers, clients and citizens' needs and expectations is critical to delivering better services and achieving better outcomes. This understanding must drive improvement in the way agencies go about the ongoing design and delivery of the services they provide.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
7	How well does the agency understand the needs of customers, clients and citizens, and use these to innovate and deliver better services and outcomes?	Identification How does the agency identify and distinguish the needs of the people it serves (customers, clients and citizens), including who they are and what they want to achieve now and in the future? How does the agency engage and partner with communities to develop services they want and that work for them? Needs How does the agency develop an understanding of client, customer, and citizens' aspirations, motivations and expectations (now and in the future)? What does it do to anticipate their changing needs and behaviours and adjust its services accordingly? How does the agency consider segmentation of its services based on client, customer, and citizens' needs?

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
8	How well does the agency integrate services with its partners and providers to deliver value to customers, clients and citizens?	Options How does the agency investigate alternative ways of delivery with its partners that enhance value to its intended clients and customers? Relevance How does the agency consider and align the delivery of value to citizens and stakeholders with its purpose? Emerging issues How does the agency keep itself up to date with emerging policy issues for those most affected by and/or interested in its work? Achieving innovations How does the agency trial and test innovation so it can scale up on successes and make adjustments when things go less well?

Element: Performance and accountability

To achieve sustained performance, agencies need to use performance and evaluation information to understand what is/is not working, and why, so that it can focus its improvement efforts to make the most difference. Insights through performance reporting, monitoring and evaluation enable agencies to enhance the way they deliver services that better support the needs of customers, clients, and citizens.

Lead Questions	Potential Lines of Enquiry
9 How well does the agency use performance information to drive continuous improvement and accountability for results?	Intervention logic What are the outcomes the agency is trying to achieve and how do these connect to its operations and to its strategic priorities? How does the agency use an intervention logic to help ensure meaningful reporting on the funding it receives, the activities it undertakes and how it links to the impacts it is seeking to make? How does the agency use performance information linking activities and impact to support better prioritisation and decision making? Use of evaluation in decision making How does the agency ensure it uses evaluative activity to engage people to learn, innovate and continuously improve? How does the agency encourage evaluative activity across the organisation? How does the agency maintain what works, while seeking and evaluating new ways of delivering results? Evaluating and taking action on results How does the agency ensure it uses evaluation and performance information to assess its achievements and understand whether it is providing value-for-money? How does the agency ensure evaluations and reports are followed up with action plans that are agreed to by senior leadership and have progress tracked?

Engagement

Engagement capabilities are essential to agencies being able to achieve the outcomes sought by customers, clients and citizens. Agencies need to be able to engage in ways that work for their key stakeholders and be willing to use stakeholder input to help design interventions and set themselves up to deliver on their purpose.

There are three elements in the Engagement area:

- Engagement with Ministers
- Māori-Crown relationship
- Engagement with stakeholders.

Element: Engagement with Ministers

A strong relationship with Ministers needs to be based on clarity of roles, openness, trust and respect. The agency's focus should include relationships with its portfolio Minister(s) and other Ministers. Good decisions are based on sound advice grounded in an understanding of the Government's vision and priorities, how to get things done and are informed by the agency's stewardship obligations.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
10	How well does the agency provide advice and services to Ministers?	Engagement How does the agency maintain a culture of 'no surprises' with Ministers, including managing the context of any possible issues? How does the agency work with other agencies to facilitate alignment and give joined-up outcome-focused advice? Quality systems How does the agency ensure it offers good advice in a timely manner? How well are the agency's stewardship obligations reflected in advice to Ministers? How does the agency build the systems and processes required to deliver quality policy advice (including those relating to commissioning, planning, research, quality assurance and evaluation)? Implementation How does the agency ensure successful policy implementation, including engaging with relevant stakeholders and monitoring and reviewing progress?

Element: Māori-Crown relationship

The Public Service's role includes supporting the Crown in its relationships with Māori. This requires agency staff having the capability to engage with Māori and developing approaches to improve Māori participation. These are enablers for the Crown to fulfil its aspirations for relationships with Māori under the Treaty.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
11	How well does the agency develop and maintain the capability to engage with Māori and to understand Māori perspectives to drive better outcomes?	Participation in activities and functions to drive better outcomes How does the agency enable Māori participation in developing policy, service design and delivery? Engagement capability How does the agency seek to improve its capability to engage with Māori and understand Māori perspectives?

Element: Engagement with stakeholders

Effective partnerships and external engagement are at the heart of agencies' ability to make things happen. All agencies need the capability to develop and maintain partnerships and external engagement with stakeholders to achieve their purpose and deliver value to New Zealanders.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
12	How well does the agency engage with stakeholders, in ways that are effective, open, transparent, and accessible?	Open government How does the agency ensure it proactively releases information and data in ways that make it easy for people to access, navigate and use? How does the agency ensure sustained performance with the purpose, principle, and spirit of open government? Active citizenship How does the agency ensure increasing communication, co-design and engagement with the communities and citizens it serves? How does the agency ensure those they engage in co-design have clarity about why and when they are being involved? Proactive public engagement How does the agency ensure that the public understand its role and operations and that issues are proactively managed?

Workforce

People are at the heart of the Public Service and the organisations that form it. These are the people who are in the job to make a difference for their communities by providing trusted and responsive services. Agencies need to have the workforce capability that enables them to deliver high quality services effectively and efficiently.

Three elements form the Workforce area:

- Talent management and workforce development
- Workforce performance
- Staff engagement.

Element: Talent management and workforce development

High performing agencies effectively manage their talent pipeline to ensure they are prepared for the future. An agency that is prepared for the medium-term will be able to articulate the skills it will need, its current skills gap, and how it is building the leadership and workforce needed to deliver results in the future.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
13	How well does the agency identify, develop and manage its talent?	Identifying talent How does the agency identify its talent, for both itself and the system? Building leadership capability To what extent does the agency actively manage and invest in its talent at all levels? Leadership opportunities What approaches does the agency take to create opportunities for its talent to grow and develop? How does the agency look to build talent for the system, including providing external growth opportunities for its talent, and providing opportunities for talent from other agencies?
14	How well does the agency anticipate and respond to future workforce capacity and capability requirements?	Alignment with strategy How does the agency align its people development strategy and practices with its organisational strategy? Building capability To what extent does the agency actively manage investment in people capability, taking into account any wider implications such as workforce growth and organisational costs? Leadership capability What approaches does the agency take to build its overall management and leadership capability? How effective are these approaches? Targeting development What approaches does the agency take to enhance the capability of its workforce and how effective are these approaches? How well does the agency prioritise and manage its people development investment? Engaging with communities How does the agency ensure its workforce is able to understand and engage with the diverse communities it serves, including at the leadership level?

Element: Workforce performance

Agency staff should know what is expected of them, how their role contributes to their team's (and the agency's) results, and what high performance looks like. They should appreciate the importance of improving their own performance and be confident that poor performance is addressed.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
15	How well does the agency encourage and drive high performance and continuous improvement in its workforce?	Reinforcing a performance culture How does the agency identify, articulate, and reinforce what it wants to recognise, celebrate, and reward? Supporting process How does the agency set expectations, track progress, and provide feedback to individual staff members? How does the agency ensure that its performance management processes are consistent, timely, fair, and relevant? Alignment How does the agency ensure that individual objectives are aligned with team, business unit, and agency objectives and values? High performance How does the agency encourage and support high performance and continuous improvement in both individuals and teams?
16	How well does the agency address performance that is not meeting expectations?	Identification What systems does the agency have in place to identify performance that is not meeting expectations? Managerial capability How capable and willing are managers to address performance issues within their teams? How does the agency support its managers to help them address performance issues within their teams?

Element: Staff Engagement

The agency's employee relations strategy should be clearly aligned to the overall business strategy, with staff willingly supporting that strategy. Constructive engagement with employee representative groups and individuals is essential to delivering effective services.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
17	How well does the agency develop and maintain a highly committed and engaged workforce?	Employee engagement What processes does the agency have in place to understand the views and monitor the commitment and engagement levels of its employees and their representatives? What approach does the agency take to enhance the commitment and engagement levels of its workforce? Safety How does the agency ensure that it creates and maintains a safe and healthy working environment for all staff? How does the agency promote a safety culture among its staff? Positive workplace culture How does the agency promote a culture of respect, inclusion, trust and productivity? How well does the agency encourage constructive challenge and enable different perspectives to drive performance?
18	How well does the agency manage its employee relations?	Relationships How effectively does the agency engage with union(s), other employee representative groups, and individuals? Strategic alignment How does the employment relations strategy align with the wider people strategy and business strategy, including identifying and managing financial implications? System and sector How does the agency ensure that its bargaining strategies and approaches to employment conditions reflect wider sector priorities, including consistency with wider sector employment relations expectations and Government Workforce Policy Statements?

Financial management, data and risk

An agency that is well-positioned for the future will be ensuring effective, strategic management of all its resources, including its finances, assets and investments, data and digital information, and how it manages risk.

There are four elements in the financial management, data and risk area:

- Investment and asset management
- Strategic financial management and accountability
- Data, analytics and digital technologies
- Risk and assurance.

Element: Investment and asset management

An agency that is well positioned for the future will ensure effective use, protection, maintenance, and ‘right-sizing’ of agency and Crown assets and investments to meet future needs.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
19	How well does the agency manage its assets and balance sheet, to support service delivery, reduce operational risks and drive performance management?	Understand and define requirements How well does the agency understand the current and future types and levels of service required, and the options (including non-asset based and common) for providing that service? Lifecycle decision-making How does the agency ensure it has an effective lifecycle approach to managing its investment? Are assets sufficiently resilient for business continuity needs, both now and in the future? Asset management enablers Does the agency have fit-for-purpose performance information, systems, and structures to support effective decision making around strategic investment and the maintenance of assets?

Element: Strategic financial management and accountability

High-performing agencies are good stewards of public resources. They have robust systems, processes, and practices for managing finances and resources that deliver results for customers, clients and citizens. They are also transparent and prudent in the use of finances and resources, and actively demonstrate good value-for-money through what they deliver and achieve.

Lead Questions	Potential Lines of Enquiry
20 How well does the agency plan, direct and control financial resources to drive efficient and effective delivery?	Delivering strategic priorities How does the agency align its investment and resourcing decisions with its organisational vision and priorities? How do Government and Ministerial priorities inform resourcing decisions within the agency? How does the agency adapt and shift resources to manage organisational demands and pressures? How does the agency align and integrate its strategy development, business planning, and budgeting processes? Executing financial analysis and advice How does the agency use financial management information and advice for operational and strategic purposes, including service delivery improvement? Does this financial advice demonstrate a good understanding of the main organisational risks, their potential cost, and the strategies needed to avoid or mitigate them? How does the agency ensure cost drivers and cost pressures are well understood by management? How does the agency ensure trade-offs and choices are clear? Future focus How well does the agency consider its medium to long-term needs when making investment and financial decisions? Supporting good governance – management How does the agency manage its expenditure throughout the year as planned, including capital depreciation? How does the agency deal with issues of probity? How does the agency ensure its procurement systems are aligned to government priorities, deliver value-for-money and meet Public Service standards? Supporting good governance – reporting How does the agency ensure all its external reporting is consistent, timely and accurate, and complies with the reporting expectations set for Public Service agencies? How does the agency's external reporting ensure transparency and accountability for the use of public funds? Are internal controls appropriate, documented, understood and adhered to?

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
21	How well does the agency integrate financial information into its decision making and manage its cost drivers to achieve fiscal sustainability?	Link between spending and intended outcomes How well does the agency link spending on programmes and initiatives with the reporting on the intended outcomes it is seeking from those programmes and initiatives? How accurate are the agency's forecasts of future expenditure? Do they identify and quantify likely cost pressures? Fiscal risks and reporting How are fiscal risks identified, reported and reflected in decision making? How are trade-offs between expenditure surfaced and supported by long-term information to ensure informed strategic decision making?

Element: Data, analytics and digital technologies

An agency that is well-positioned for the future will be unlocking the value of the information it collects and ensuring non-personal government data and information is widely available, discoverable, and easy to use. Technology will help leverage information and insights to innovate and improve the way agencies deliver services to meet the changing needs of customers, clients and citizens.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
22	How well does the agency manage and use data, analytics and digital technologies to drive decision making and effective delivery?	Robust data for decision making How does the agency ensure that information that it holds and uses is up to date and fit-for-purpose (e.g., accurate, complete, and based on valid assumptions)? System alignment How does the agency demonstrate alignment of their investment in technology programmes with all-of-government strategies, roadmaps and requirements? Trust and confidence How does the agency ensure personal information is kept confidential and is protected when it provides public services? How does the agency consider all the issues related to open data publication and reuse? How does the agency prevent and respond to unacceptable use of information and unauthorised disclosures? Security How does the agency make itself aware of potential security risks? How does the agency protect classified information, particularly as it relates to processes, people, and places? Governance and capability How does the agency understand the strategic value of the information it collects and uses, including any whole-of-system opportunities? Realising value How does the agency use data, including integrating data from other agencies, to unlock insights into New Zealand's society and economy that improve the ways services are offered and delivered? How does the agency use technology to drive innovation in the way it offers services and how it manages its internal operations?

Element: Risk and Assurance

Capable agencies proactively use fit-for-purpose risk management and assurance processes and functions to improve their long-term performance. When done well, agencies are able to dynamically understand and manage risk, both within their organisation and wider operating environment. Insights through good enterprise risk and assurance also help senior leaders understand the performance of their agencies and help prioritise areas for improvement.

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
23	How well does the agency identify and manage agency, Crown and system risks to integrate risk awareness into its current operations and future opportunities?	Risk landscape How does the agency understand its strategic and operating environment and establish its risk appetite? Aligned and embedded How are risk management processes aligned to business objectives and strategy, and used to create a collective responsibility for risk management that is integrated into decision making? How does the agency enable and support risk management to be an enabler for success? Tolerance How does the agency communicate its risk tolerance and risk appetite? How well-aligned is that tolerance to Crown risks and opportunities? Crown risk How well does the agency understand, identify, and manage risk in relation to its agency and wider Crown interests, including legal and integrity risk? Do the agency's legal, audit, and other integrity functions support the achievement of agency objectives, along with identification and management of agency and wider Crown risk?

Lead Questions		Potential Lines of Enquiry
24	How well does the agency use assurance to effectively manage organisational risks and prioritise improvements to the internal control environment?	Arrangements How does the agency organise and use its risk and assurance capability to support senior leadership in proactively identifying and managing risks and opportunities for improvement across the organisation? How does the agency ensure that assurance is fit-for-purpose and undertaken with the capability (technical and interpersonal) and capacity required? Alignment and value How does the agency ensure its assurance programme and activities align with the agency's context, risks, priorities and operating environment? How does the agency ensure that assurance is used to drive delivery and performance? To what extent are assurance insights actively shared and discussed with agency leadership and governance bodies? Follow-up How are assurance findings shared and how are key issues identified and remediated? How are assurance reports appropriately followed up, and actions identified and implemented to remedy issues identified?

Part Three

Performance Improvement Reviews

This part of the guide describes the process and steps in a Performance Improvement Review run by the Public Service Commission, and a Performance Improvement Self-Review run by an agency.

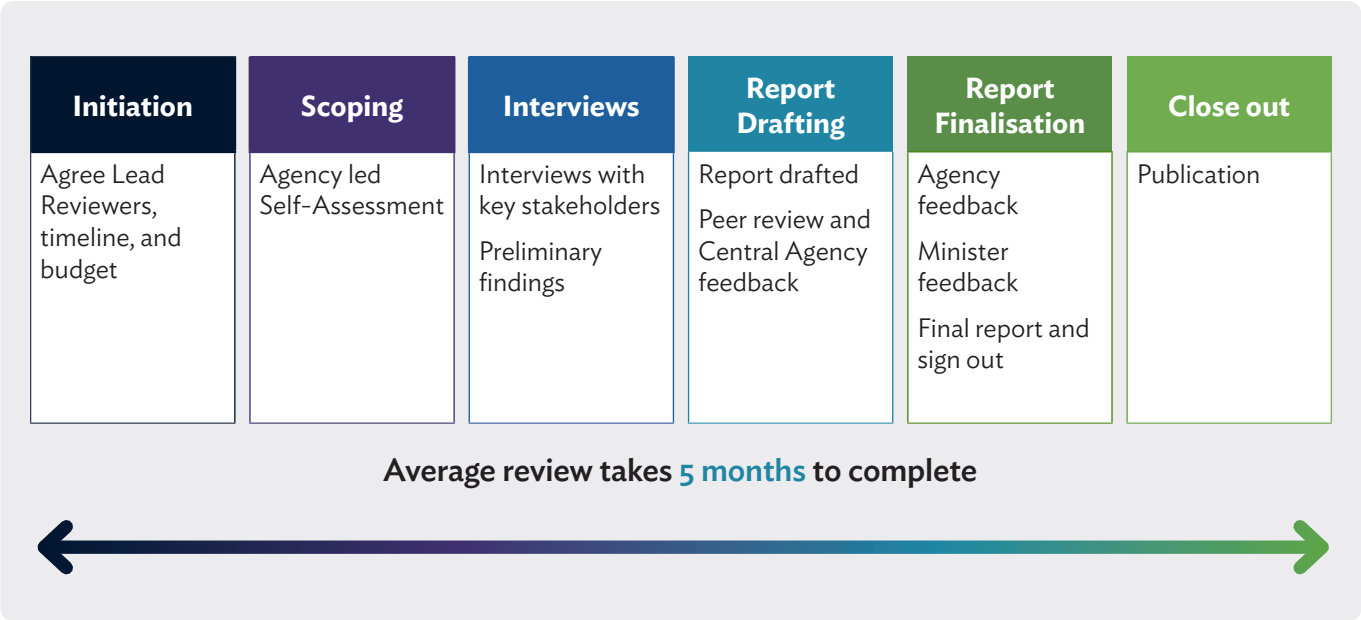
The Performance Improvement Model is used for two main types of Review

The Performance Improvement Model can be used in the two ways described below:

Use	Owner	Description
Performance Improvement Review	Public Service Commission	This is a comprehensive, external application of the Performance Improvement Model. The review is led by two independent Lead Reviewers (selected in collaboration with the reviewed agency and the Commission). The substantive analysis is completed within three months. At the end of the process, a report is published on the Commission's website which includes the ratings and summarises the insights generated.
Performance Improvement Self-Review	Agency	This is agency initiated, led, and owned, using the Performance Improvement Model as the basis. The agency has full control over how the Model is applied, and who they use to conduct their review (whether they use an external reviewer or reviewers, or an internal team). There is no expectation for Lead Reviewer or the Commission's involvement in an agency initiated Self-Review. The Commission does not publish the report at the end of a Self-Review, although the agency may wish to publish it through its own channels. The Commission may be able to provide advice and initial training.

If you want to see how the Performance Improvement Model can help your agency, please contact the Public Service Commission at performanceimprovement@publicservice.govt.nz

Performance Improvement Reviews progress in six stages



Initiation – Setting a strong foundation

In the initiation phase, the Commission, in consultation with the Treasury, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the agency consider whether a Performance Improvement Review is the best tool for the agency at this time. If these initial discussions progress, the agency and the Commission will work through and agree on the key elements of a successful review including timing, cost, and the combination of Lead Reviewers.

Selecting the best combination of Lead Reviewers helps drive a successful Review

Performance Improvement Reviews are led by two external Lead Reviewers. They are selected from a panel of individuals with depth and experience in organisational management and public sector leadership. Choosing Lead Reviewers who complement each other, bring the skills and

experience that best respond to the agency’s context, and who will work well with the agency’s senior leadership is key to ensuring a useful and insightful review.

An initiation letter kicks off the review

The Commission will send an initiation letter to the agency chief executive outlining the expected budget, timeline, Lead Reviewers, and any other details that have been discussed and agreed (including any identified areas of focus for the review, and the set of core functions).

Scoping – Focusing the review on the critical elements

The scoping phase determines the areas the review should focus on based on insights from key stakeholders, including Central Agencies and relevant Ministers. Further planning and document collection to support the review also occurs.

Self-Assessment prepares the agency to engage in the review process

The first substantive exercise of a Performance Improvement Review is a Self-Assessment, where the agency forms its own views about its performance. The Self-Assessment process is focused on capturing the insights and reflections of the chief executive and the senior leadership team.

A Self-Assessment results in a short report which provides insights to Lead Reviewers and helps guide their efforts.

Interviews – Generating insights

The interview phase involves a wide range of interviews and is key to the Lead Reviewers developing insights on the agency's challenges and opportunities.

On-site interviews provide an opportunity for Lead Reviewers to form their own view of the agency

The agency hosts the Lead Reviewers and the Commission's Review Manager on site for around two weeks in the review phase while they interview agency senior leadership, staff, and key stakeholders. Throughout the on-site period, the Lead Reviewers meet with the chief executive and senior leaders to share their insights as they develop.

Preliminary findings provide an outline of the review to the chief executive

Approximately one week after interviews are completed, the Lead Reviewers present their preliminary findings to the agency's chief executive, who can choose to share these with the agency's senior leadership. The preliminary findings provide

a high-level outline of the key themes, analysis, and ratings. The findings are developed and refined further during the report drafting stage. The chief executive's feedback on the preliminary findings helps in shaping the report drafted in the following weeks.

Report drafting – Shaping insights into a report

Informed by the preliminary findings, the Lead Reviewers lead the drafting of a report on the agency covering all the elements of the Performance Improvement Model. This draft is peer reviewed by a panel of experts (mostly drawn from the Commission's Lead Reviewer panel). The Central Agencies also engage with this first draft and provide their feedback to the Lead Reviewers.

The Lead Reviewers incorporate the feedback from peer review and Central Agency review into their report and then send it to the reviewed agency for their comment.

Report Finalisation – Incorporating agency and Ministerial feedback

During report finalisation, the agency considers the draft report and provides comments to the Lead Reviewers. The Lead Reviewers consider these comments and look to incorporate them into a near final draft which is sent to relevant portfolio Ministers for their comments, as well as to Central Agencies and the reviewed agency for a second round of comments.

Central Agency and reviewed agency responses demonstrate commitment to performance improvement

As the draft review report is being considered, responses to the report are drafted for inclusion in the final report – one from the reviewed agency, and the other from the Central Agencies. These responses provide a public acknowledgement of the findings in the report and include commitments on how to carry forward the findings of the review.

Close out – the final stages of the review

During close out, the final report goes through a design and publication process, and a communications plan is prepared to support the reviewed agency, Lead Reviewers, Central Agencies and Ministers through the release process. The final report is published on the Commission's website.

Once published, the review is complete. Central Agencies continue to work with the reviewed agency to help it act on the opportunities identified through the review. The agency shapes review findings into an implementation plan that the Commission uses to inform chief executive and agency performance management and monitoring. The Treasury and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet will look to incorporate insights and findings into their own agency performance processes.

Appendices

Appendix One – Evidence Sources

The following list sets out some of the key documents that are useful in a Performance Improvement Review, where they are relevant and available.

General – Results

- Government Targets – quarterly reports and Delivery Plans
- Priorities – letters from Minister(s)
- Most recent Briefing to the Incoming Minister(s)
- Relevant legislation, in particular roles or functions
- Regulatory stewardship reporting e.g., strategy
- Statement of Intent/Strategic Intentions
- Annual Report
- Statement of Performance Expectations (Crown entities)
- Estimates appropriations information/data
- Reports and assessments of the quality of policy advice
- Strategies and plans relating to functional leadership roles (if relevant)
- Long-Term Insights Briefing

General – Organisational Management

- Reports/benchmarking from Functional Leads/System Leads

General – External reviews

- Any recent reviews or evaluations
- Any recent Office of the Auditor-General performance audits

Leadership and direction

- Senior leadership team and other leadership committees' terms of reference or charters

- Agenda and minutes from recent senior leadership team meetings
- Organisational chart – Tier 3 level (with indicative size of Tier 2 business units)
- Strategy and Accountability Documents (including Strategic Intentions, Annual Reports)
- Organisation strategy/key papers
- Business model/strategy description
- Agency level business plan, if relevant
- Values/culture/behaviour description and any reporting
- Recent 'quarterly' reports to the Minister(s)
- Recent Board reports (where relevant, including key advisory boards, Risk and Assurance Committee)
- Recent agency performance reports for senior leadership

Delivery

- Customer and stakeholder insights
- Continuous improvement programmes
- Research and evaluation programme/plans
- Papers from significant reviews on core business areas/role of agency
- Agency Communication and Engagement plan

Engagement

- Reports and assessments of the quality of policy advice
- Ministerial surveys and reporting
- Treaty settlement-based and other relationship agreements with iwi and Māori
- Sector strategy/key papers

- Stakeholder engagement strategy
- Stakeholder insights
- Agency Communication and Engagement plan

Workforce

- Views of staff/staff engagement survey, including the Public Service Census
- Workforce reports and statistical information
- Public Service workforce comparative data
- Bargaining and remuneration strategy
- Union relationship agreement(s)
- Workforce strategy and/or People strategy

Financial management, data and risk

- Output plan
- Performance Plan
- Asset management strategy/plans/reports
- Recent Gateway reviews or other independent quality reviews
- Investment Management strategy/plans/reporting
- Finance Strategy/reports
- Information on business and financial planning processes

- Information management strategy/plan
- Digital strategy/Information Systems Strategic Plan
- Privacy Maturity Assessment Framework report (if available)
- Audit management letter
- Internal audit and assurance programme, including list of internal audit and assurance reports for last two years
- Risk management strategy/policies
- Privacy Maturity Assessment Framework Self-assessment
- Protective Security Requirements Self-assessment
- Risk register or reports

Appendix Two – Performance Ratings

Ratings help to clarify the agency's relative strengths and highlight the priority areas given the challenges, risks, and opportunities in the medium term. Ratings are applied in terms of the future the agency is preparing for and how well it is positioned to deliver this over the medium term.

Indicator/level	What it indicates
Leading 	Best practice/excellent • High level of capability and sustained and consistently high levels of performance • Systems in place to monitor, forecast and build capability to meet future demands • Organisational learning and external benchmarking used to continuously evaluate and improve performance • Strong capability to deliver on the Future Excellence Horizon.
Embedding 	Capable • Delivering to expectations with examples of high levels of performance • Comprehensive and consistently good organisational practices and systems in place to support effective management • Evidence of attention given to identifying and addressing current and future demands and capability needs • Mostly aligned to delivering the Future Excellence Horizon.
Developing 	Needing development • Adequate current performance but concerns about future performance • Areas where there is underperformance and/or capability gaps are recognised by the agency • Some current and future capability gaps are not clearly identified • Concerns for the agency having the ability to deliver on the future state.
Weak 	Unaware or limited capability • Significant area(s) of critical weakness or concern in terms of delivery and/or current capability • Agency has limited or no awareness of critical weaknesses or concerns • Strategies or plans to respond to areas of weakness are either not in place or not likely to have sufficient impact • Very limited or no view of future opportunities and challenges for the agency.
Unable to rate/ Not rated 	There is either • No evidence on which a judgement can be made; or • The evidence available does not enable a credible judgement to be made.



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