

Open Government Partnership: Developing New Zealand’s Fifth National Action Plan

This table captures key discussion points from *Workshop 2*, held online on 23 September 2025 from 1:00pm – 3:30pm.

If you have feedback on this record, including additions or corrections, please contact us at ogpnz@publicservice.govt.nz

Theme	Key issues	Potential commitments
Improving complaint handling	• Lack of consistency around complaint handling across agencies. • Hard for people to know which agency should manage their complaint. • Difficult for agencies to ‘handover’ complaints they receive but cannot investigate. • Lack of insight on the experience of members of the public reporting complaints, and what they need from the process	• Develop a “no wrong door” complaints approach. • Standardise complaints processes and data collection. • Investigate the barriers to agencies sharing information about complaints. • Share examples of good complaint handling processes, through a community of practice
Reviewing protected disclosure management	• People do not feel safe reporting serious wrongdoing. • The protected disclosure threshold may discourage people from coming forward to report serious wrongdoing. More clarity needed over what is serious, what is reasonable grounds. • Lack of support and guidance for disclosers. • Lack of understanding around what happens when organisations retaliate against whistleblowers. • Lack of data/insight on how many protected disclosures are made, and what the outcomes are.	• Establish a protected disclosure forum (like OIA forum) to share best practice. • Research improvements that could be made to the Protected Disclosures (Protection of Whistleblowers) Act 2022 (e.g. broader discloser class, removing ‘bad faith’ bar). • Publish information on the tools available to address retaliation against whistleblowers. • Research on how to encourage the use of protected disclosure channels, such as removing barriers and making it ‘safer’ for people to disclose.
Improving system cohesion on corruption	• Difficulty in recognising foreign bribery and corruption in New Zealand’s context. • Changing demographics in New Zealand introduce new corruption risks. • Transnational organised crime can create corruption risks in New Zealand.	• Research and develop an assessment on corruption risks in New Zealand. • Continuing focus on foreign bribery for Serious Fraud Office. Develop next steps. • Investigate links between transnational organised crime and corruption. • Use assessments from other agencies (e.g. Customs, Police, NZSIS) to grow understanding of corruption risk in NZ. • Investigate the effectiveness of Australia's Anti-Corruption Commissions to reduce corruption and fraud.
Improving transparency around ‘revolving door’ and lobbying	• Few controls or guidelines for people moving between public and private sectors. • Difficult for members of the public to access information about who is influencing policymaking. • Industry capture and selective consultation.	• Create a centralised register of public sector advisory committees and similar bodies who have influence over policy making. • Increase transparency on policy consultations, especially when consultation is selective or ‘handpicked’. • Research project on the views and expectations of people entering the public service from the private sector.

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	• Consultation is done inconsistently and doesn't use tools or platforms to make it easier for the public to see what is out for consultation.	• Introduce stand-down periods for departing officials. • Develop PSC standards on consultation. • Improve use of DIA's consultation platform. • Run a participatory process to understand how New Zealand's values should be reflected in policymaking. • Assessment of the ethical risks associated with lobbying and movement of people from public to private sector employment. • Research project on restrictions around lobbying for certain sectors such as the tobacco industry.
Protecting access to information	• Compliance with the OIA is not consistent. • Perception that Ministers can be overly involved in agency decisions on information releases. • Limited proactive release and transparency. • Few standards on how AI may be used in decision-making (s.23 of OA Act). • Generic submission inboxes hinder civil society engagement. • Growing expectation that government agencies will share personal information to improve service delivery efficiency, but corresponding concerns about how information is handled and shared.	• Introduce sanctions for OIA non-compliance. • Create clearer boundaries around Ministerial influence over agency OIAs. • Establish an 'OIA officer' role. • Improve proactive release practice. Refresh guidance on proactive release; consider guidelines for regular proactive release of briefing titles. • Research compliance with NZ's proactive disclosure of official information policy, including Ministerial Diaries and Cabinet Papers. • Address AI risks in decision-making transparency (s.23 of OIA Act). • Require officials' names to be available publicly. • Review how AI is being used to both make and respond to OIA requests. • Investigate data sharing between agencies to ensure data captured is not being used for different purposes. • Engage publicly to test public expectations around how their personal information is used or shared.
Upholding political neutrality and improving conflict of interest management	• Misunderstanding of conflicts of interest and lack of meaningful management. • No centralised conflict of interest data available for senior public servants. • Lack of leadership culture promoting integrity. • Community links are important for public servants but can also create conflicts of interest.	• Review conflict of interest guidance and training. • Develop scenarios to support understanding of political neutrality. • Create a central register of declared conflicts of interest for senior public servants. • Promote integrity culture through leadership development. • Review political neutrality guidance to ensure it upholds public servant's rights to freedom of speech and political opinion

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