



Te whakapakari i te hononga i waenga i te Māori me te Karauna Strengthening the Māori Crown relationship

Ngā whakataunga matua | Major decisions

The Government is committed to improving services and outcomes for Māori and strengthening the Crown's relationships with Māori.

The Public Service Act 2020 (the Act) section 14 explicitly recognises the role of the public service to support the Crown in its relationships with Māori under Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi.

To this end, the new Act includes provisions that put explicit responsibilities on:

- Public service leaders for developing and maintaining the capability of the Public Service to engage with Māori and to understand Māori perspectives.
- The Public Service Commissioner, when developing and implementing the newly required leadership strategy, to recognise the aims, aspirations and employment requirements of Māori, and the need for greater involvement of Māori in the Public Service.

The new Act also carries over the current requirements on public service employers to operate an employment policy that recognises the aims, aspirations and employment requirements of Māori, and the need for greater involvement of Māori in the public service.

The Commissioner and chief executives are accountable to their Minister for upholding their responsibilities to support the Crown's relationships with Māori.

Ka pēhea mō ngā kaimahi tūmatanui | What it means for public servants

The reforms aim to unify the Public Service to fulfil its stewardship responsibility to support the Crown's relationships with Māori. In practice this will mean:

- Improving the Public Service's relationships with Māori by creating and continuing collaborative approaches that are mutually beneficial.
- Greater understanding of te ao Māori woven into the work and ethos of public service, including:
 - Te ao Māori concepts, knowledge, values and perspectives
 - Te reo Māori (Māori language)
 - Tikanga Māori (protocols and customs)
 - Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi and understanding how it applies day-to-day
- Exercise of individual and collective responsibility for a culturally competent public service that delivers with and for Māori and is committed to supporting Māori leadership and decision-making roles in the Public Service.

Ngā pātai me ngā whakautu | Questions and answers

What changes will public servants need to make in their routine work because of the reference in the Act to Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi?

Guidance will be issued to agencies on what it means to support and strengthen the relationships between Māori and the Crown under Te Tiriti/the Treaty. Te Arawhiti (the Office for Māori Crown Relations) has issued guidance to public servants on how they should consider Tiriti/Treaty implications in policy development and implementation, alongside a range of guidance, tools and training for agencies on how engagement with Māori should be approached.

Does this new clause require a big shift in thinking and practice for the Public Service?

There are already examples of good practice across the public service – however, we can do a lot more to strengthen the relationships between Māori and the Crown and ultimately improve outcomes for Māori. The Act supports the intent of other legislative documents that require the public sector to recognise the Māori Crown relationships.

How will public servants be supported to make these changes?

Public service chief executives will determine what their agency needs and support each other through the Public Service Leadership Team to implement these practices. Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission will provide leadership and advice to support a wider lift in capability across the system.

Te Arawhiti is responsible for supporting Māori Crown relationships, building public sector capability to engage with Māori, ensuring Crown agencies meet their Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi settlement commitments and administering the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011.



Te Puni Kōkiri is the principal policy advisor to Government on Māori wellbeing and development. Their role includes building Māori capability and capacity, monitoring the effectiveness of public services for Māori, and leading policy advice on specific issues of importance to Māori.

Who is responsible for making sure public servants can deliver these expectations?

The Public Service Commissioner and public service chief executives will be responsible to their Minister for delivering on these expectations.

Do the new responsibilities apply to Crown agents and the boards of the Crown agents?

No. However, many Crown agents already recognise special relationships with Māori. For example, district health boards have specific obligations and responsibilities set out in their governing legislation.

How does this fit with the Maihi Karauna work already underway?

Maihi Karauna is the Crown's Māori Language Revitalisation Strategy that outlines a vision for the future of te reo Māori in New Zealand. Maihi Karauna is for all New Zealanders. The strategy puts specific emphasis on three particular groups that will benefit from revitalising te reo Māori, one of which is the public service.

The public service reforms to strengthen and enhance Māori Crown relationships complement the work of Maihi Karauna by extending beyond language revitalisation and broadly setting out both system and agency baseline capability expectations.