

He Whakamārama mō te Tūranga Position Description



Te Kawa Mataaho
Public Service Commission



Position	Government Statistician and Chief Executive Te Tumu Whakarae mō Tatauranga Aotearoa
Agency	Statistics New Zealand Tatauranga Aotearoa
This position is a member of the Public Service Leadership Team	

Position purpose

Robust, impartial, trusted data and statistics and the insights they generate are critical to the development and implementation of new policies and in informing effective and high performing service delivery across the public service. The data that is gathered must be treated in the utmost confidence and with the highest degree of care and safeguards in order to ensure that it is protected on behalf of all New Zealanders.

Statistics New Zealand (Stats NZ) is New Zealand's primary data and statistics agency. Its work is an integral component of the data and evidence infrastructure required to support social investment and drive economic growth. It is critical to the delivery of government and constitutional functions, for example education system funding, the allocation of electoral boundaries, health system funding, infrastructure planning, and more. It is increasingly important for government and businesses to be able to access relevant population data quickly to inform decisions. Stats NZ must be seen to be beyond reproach in terms of its protection of the privacy of individuals who provide it with data. Ensuring that robust rules and safeguards are defined and implemented is critical so that public trust and confidence in the handling of private data is maintained and enhanced.

The Government Statistician and Chief Executive (Government Statistician) has a threefold leadership role in ensuring New Zealand has sustainable access to robust, independent, timely and trustworthy data and statistics for decision-making and analytical purposes:

1. **As Government Statistician:** leads New Zealand's national statistics office, the Official Statistics System (OSS), and is the Government's principal adviser on statistical matters and measuring what matters for New Zealand. This involves being the official authority on statistical standards; the coordinator of statistical activities of government departments; and a major collector, guardian and producer of official statistics, including through the use of administrative data. The Government Statistician is responsible for the design and delivery of the Census. The Government Statistician also has responsibility for the provision of data services – including providing access to integrated data for critical strategic and operational policy decisions, research and statistical purposes and leading and championing the Government's open data programme.

The Government Statistician’s role is to provide excellent leadership and management of the department to ensure it has the necessary capability to perform its role, including:

- aligning the culture of the organisation with the shift to how the Census is conducted, as the first stage of a wider shift in how the organisation collects data and constantly improves and strengthens its privacy and confidentiality practices in relation to that data
 - ensuring the privacy of the data collected by the organisation is presented in a form that is readily accessible and useful, to enable government agencies and other organisations to deliver better economic and social outcomes
 - ensuring the right capability and relationships to deliver the outcomes needed
 - stewarding a responsive, customer-focused organisation that effectively influences across the public sector and supports agencies to adapt and expand their data collection activities, and
 - ensuring a long-term view is maintained so that Stats NZ remains current and reliable.
2. **As Chief Executive:** leads and manages an organisation that is responsible for leading the OSS and for providing high quality and trusted data, official statistics and insights that inform the Government and the community about economic, environmental, population and social matters. This leadership role includes:
- ensuring essential assurance functions (privacy, legal and risk management) are constantly improved and strengthened, and
 - enhancing contract management practices, monitoring and conflicts of interest policies in the delivery of functions and the contracting of any third party providers.
3. **As Government Chief Data Steward:** provides functional leadership for data and analytics, as delegated by the Public Service Commissioner. The purpose of this role is to support the public sector to realise the full potential of data as a system asset while maintaining and building public trust and confidence, particularly with regard to the handling and protection of such data. This requires a networked approach that supports, encourages and builds on innovative data and analytics expertise and trusted data use approaches at sector, sub-sector and agency levels. The Chief Data Steward will need to work with sector and agency leads to support effective data stewardship, including where services are provided by third parties.

Accountabilities	
Critical success priorities	<p>The Government Statistician is expected to set a clear direction for the future and deliver results in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement options to modernise and transform the next census so the information provided by New Zealanders is more secure, sustainable, efficient, responsive to changing data needs and drives better value and outcomes for New Zealanders. • Consult effectively with the public to understand views and public sentiment for the proposed change to how censuses are conducted. • Ensure the privacy and delivery of timely high-quality accessible data, insights and statistics about New Zealand, including a suite of economic, environmental, population and social data that enables the public sector to develop and implement new policies and inform service delivery. • Strategically improve economic datasets and access to data to grow the economy and support NZ households and businesses, including focussing on approaches to build and sustain public trust and confidence in how data is protected, managed and used.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the social investment approach through Integrated Data Infrastructure investment and setting expectations for government agencies to protect and safely share appropriate data through deliberate and purposeful strengthening of the administrative pipe-line. • Make data more open, accessible and easy to use in the development of new tools and business models to allow New Zealanders to interact differently with government. • Support improvements in the quality of admin data, and the protection and sharing of data, to support a modernised approach to the 2028 Census and future censuses. • Ensure stakeholder confidence is maintained and strengthened. • Deliver strong system leadership and use available levers to ensure the system is better placed to deliver data and insights that enable and support the priorities of the Government and the needs of New Zealand. • Timely delivery of all child poverty measures required under the Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018. • Timely delivery, with Ministry for the Environment, of all reporting requirements of the Environmental Reporting Act 2015. • Build and strengthen partnerships with Māori and iwi and drive greater collaboration with Māori and Pacific groups, particularly in the development of data collection strategies. • Proactively provide assistance to government agencies to better use data and insights to inform their policies and service delivery. • Deliver on agreed action plan to reduce the survey burden on businesses. • Drive collaboration across the OSS and engage stakeholders in contributing to maximising the benefits from Government's investment in official statistics and administrative data.
Agency	<p>The Government Statistician is required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drive the overall performance of the wider data system to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ensure official data and statistics are high-quality, open, accessible, private and trustworthy ○ ensure New Zealand gets the information it needs, and that this is sustainable – value-for-money at the lowest possible cost to government, the community and suppliers of data ○ provide direction to the wider data system and engage other government departments to build shared ownership, minimise duplication, identify relevant conflicts of interest, protect the integrity of, and maximise trust and reuse of data ○ define and agree on the results that agencies will focus on together ○ promote and uphold the principles and protocols for official statistics ○ compile, analyse, abstract and publish, with or without comments, official statistics ○ define, promote and, where necessary, mandate the use of standard statistical concepts, procedures, definitions and classifications, and ○ examine and comment on the interpretation and validity of published and unpublished statistics.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordinate data and statistical activities across government, including setting statistical and data standards, reviewing and commenting on the validity of statistics, monitoring progress and performance, and ensuring that action is taken if expected results are not achieved • advise the Minister of Statistics, and other Ministers as appropriate, on data policies, priorities, the costs and benefits of data governance activities, and ensuring New Zealand increases the return on investment from Stats NZ and the Government's investment in data • give effect to whole of government requirements on matters such as procurement, property management, ICT, security and privacy • exercise responsibility for the efficient and economical delivery of the services provided by the Department and how effectively those services contribute to the intended outcomes.
System	<p>As a Public Service chief executive, the Government Statistician has the responsibilities, functions and duties as set out in the Public Service Act 2020, the Public Finance Act 1989, the Data and Statistics Act 2022, and other relevant statutes and legislation.</p> <p>As a member of the Public Service Leadership Team, the Government Statistician is responsible for providing strategic leadership that contributes to an effective and cohesive Public Service; working together to model leadership behaviours; and assisting the other members to fulfil their responsibilities.</p> <p>As a Public Service leader, the Government Statistician will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uphold the Public Service principles of political neutrality, free and frank advice, merit-based appointments, open government, and stewardship, and ensure that the agency also does so • promote diversity and inclusiveness and have regard to the principle that, in order to achieve fairness in employment and a more flexible effective Public Service, it is desirable for the group comprising all public service employees to, as far as practicable, reflect the makeup of society • preserve, protect and nurture the spirit of service to the community that public service employees bring to their work • demonstrate and uphold the values of the Public Service and general responsibilities to the appropriate Minister as set out in the Public Service Act 2020, including ensuring the integrity and conduct of the agency's employees, and • support the Crown in its relationships with Māori under te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Treaty of Waitangi by developing and maintaining the capability of the agency and the wider Public Service to engage with Māori and to understand Māori perspectives.

Leadership Roadmap

The Government Statistician must demonstrate applied experience to deliver across the following priority areas set out below based on the government's priorities:

Organisational Leadership	Sector Experience	System Leadership	Context Management
Experience building organisational capability and culture to enable high performance across all functions of the agency and support a shift in how the Census has been historically conducted.	Credibility to engage New Zealanders and build trust to implement a modernised approach to future censuses.	Ability to deliver private, timely, high-quality, accessible data, insights and statistics, including a suite of economic, environmental, population and social data that informs policy, planning and service delivery across public sector agencies.	Ability to effectively engage with a broad range of stakeholders, to communicate the case for change and build support for, and confidence in, a new approach to conducting the Census and broader change in the way Stats NZ collects, shares and protects data across its survey suite.
Embed organisational shifts to give effect to a new approach to the Census and wider statistical delivery with robust systems and processes for obtaining high quality statistics from key data suppliers and ensuring the absolute protection of that data.	Ability to meet the evolving data needs of New Zealand, strategically lead and improve economic datasets and access to data to support and grow the economy, and aid decision-making for households and businesses.	Ability to lead at a system level and use available levers to ensure the system is better placed to deliver data and insights to support government priorities, including through the allocation of public spending and resources while maintaining a focus on fiscal sustainability.	Experience building effective relationships with Ministers, maintaining their trust and confidence and providing advice on complex situations.
Experience adjusting and resetting organisational culture and capabilities towards the future to ensure that changes in legislation and the findings and recommendations of inquiries and reviews are fully implemented.	Credibility within the sector to operate as the Government's principal adviser on statistical matters and measuring what matters for New Zealand.	Ability to maintain effective and influential relationships with a diverse group of stakeholders, agencies and chief executives across the system.	An understanding of the Crown's relationship with Māori, and an ability to engage with Māori and understand Māori perspectives.
Ability to develop and lead a strong, cohesive, leadership team and organisational culture, capable of actioning change.	Experience strengthening of the administrative data pipe-line and the protection of the data identified therein.		

Key relationships

Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minister of Statistics and other Ministers
Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers of Parliament - the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, the Privacy Commissioner, and the Ombudsman
Public Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the Public Service Leadership Team Government Chief Digital Officer Decision makers who rely on integrated administrative data for operational decisions, including those related to funding
Iwi and wider communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Māori communities, iwi and organisations representing Māori interests Other communities, and organisations who have particular data needs – including the Pacific and ethnic communities, LGBTQI and disabled The business community, academics, non-governmental organisations and the wider community
International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International statistical and data agencies and organisations

Statutory

The Office of Government Statistician is established under s 12 of the Data and Statistics Act 2022. Under the Act the Government Statistician is administrative head of, and controls, the department and performs the duties of Government Statistician as laid out in s 13 of the Act. The Government Statistician and Chief Executive is appointed under schedule 7 cl 5 of the Public Service Act 2020. The Government Statistician is appointed by the Public Service Commissioner who is responsible for managing the employment and reviewing the performance of Public Service chief executives. However, in the case of the Government Statistician the Public Service Commissioner alone confirms the appointment.

The relationship between the Minister of Statistics and the Government Statistician and Chief Executive parallels that between other Ministers and their departments in terms of the purchase of outputs by Government and the provision of advice. The Data and Statistics Act 2022 defines the independence of the Government Statistician in official statistics and ensures that the production and release of official statistics collected under this Act are not subject to external pressures. This is essential to give confidence in the impartiality of statistics produced. Section 16 of the Data and Statistics Act 2022 states that the Government Statistician has the sole responsibility for deciding on:

- the production of statistics by the Statistician, including the selection of data sources, concepts, definitions, methods, and classifications to be used; and
- the timing, manner, and content of the dissemination and communication of those statistics.

Increasingly the statutory independence of the Government Statistician is being leveraged to provide assurance of robust, independent and impartial reporting on matters of national significance. The Environmental Reporting Act 2015 requires the Government Statistician and the Secretary for the Environment to jointly produce and publish reports on the state of New Zealand's environment with the Ministry for the Environment. The Government Statistician has responsibility for the production of child poverty measurement statistics under the Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018.

The Government Statistician is required to be a member of the Representation Commission (s28 Electoral Act 1993). The Government Statistician is responsible for determining the number of general and Māori electorates based on calculations of the size of the general population and Maori electoral population (s 35 and s 77 of the Electoral Act 1993).

The Government Statistician is required to assist the Clerk of the House of Representatives to calculate whether the appropriate percentage of signatures of eligible electors have been collected as part of the process of certifying a citizen-initiated referenda (s 19 of the Citizens Initiated Referenda Act 1993).

The Government Statistician also complies with the requirements and intent of the Privacy Act 1993, which contains a number of principles on the privacy of individuals. Other legislation particularly affecting the Government Statistician includes the Official Information Act 1982 and the Local Electoral Act 2001.

Security Clearance	Appointment will be subject to a New Zealand Government Secret security clearance
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Up to date information on Stats NZ outcomes, organisational structure, dimensions and appropriations can be found on the website: <https://www.stats.govt.nz/about-us>

Other useful information is also available at the following links:

Annual Reports: [Corporate Publications - StatsNZ](#)

Strategic Intentions: [Corporate Publications - StatsNZ](#)