Standards of Workforce Data

Issued by the Public Service Commissioner under the Public Service Act 2020 section 95(a)

Te Kawa Mataaho
Public Service Commission

Purpose

To help support the stewardship responsibilities of the Commissioner and the Public Service Leadership Team the Public Service should use common workforce standards.

The Commissioner and the wider Public Service Leadership Team have stewardship responsibilities to develop a highly capable Public Service workforce that reflects the diversity of the society it serves and to ensure fair and equitable employment. The Public Service Act section 75(1)(a) states that "A chief executive of a department and a board of an interdepartmental venture must be guided by the principle that the group comprising all public service employees should reflect the makeup of society".

High quality workforce data is important to meet these responsibilities. Since the early 2000s, Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission has collected, in the context of the Public Service Act and a Cabinet directive, a range of anonymised administrative payroll employee-level data from Public Service departments. This collection is known as Workforce Data.

Workforce Data provides evidence that the public service provides value for money and deploys resources to the most important areas. This evidence is critical to maintaining trust and confidence in the public service, by providing an understanding to the Commissioner, public service leaders, Ministers, and the public about the composition of the workforce. This helps to ensure that there is the right mix of knowledge and skills to meet Government priorities, provide trusted and responsive services, and deliver the best outcomes possible.

Workforce data is also important for agencies to be able to recruit, develop and deploy the people they need to serve New Zealand and deliver Government priorities. It enables them to better understand the make-up, diversity and needs of their workforce and develop workforce-related policies.

To support these needs, high quality workforce data needs to be collected and reported in a consistent way by agencies.

Expectations on agencies' workforce data

To promote high quality and consistent workforce data, the Commissioner expects agencies to do the following:

- Collect key workforce data on their staff, including their age, gender, and ethnicity, as well as their name, home address and start date.

- To periodically remind staff that they can complete or update the workforce data held about them in the system, and provide them guidance and time to do so. When doing this, explain the importance of the data and why it is collected.
- Follow the relevant Stats NZ standards, where they exist, when collecting and reporting this workforce data. This includes when reporting this data to the Commission's Workforce Data collection.
- If agencies are not following the relevant Stats NZ standards, to prioritise doing so when making changes to their systems for collecting and reporting workforce data.
- Apply their confidentiality rules when reporting workforce data to maintain privacy. This may be complicated where an individual has authorised disclosure of their data.

Implementation guidance

Stats NZ publishes a range of standards that are relevant to workforce data. To assist agencies in using these standards, the Commission has published the following guidance as part of this Standard:

- Guidance on age data
- Guidance on gender data
- Guidance on ethnicity data
- Guidance on occupation data

In addition, the Commission, Stats NZ and other relevant agencies have worked on other guidance related to workforce data. These are:

- [Collecting disability information on the State services workforce guidance](#)
- [Guidance: Collecting, measuring and reporting pay and representation in the Public Service](#)

Note that work by Stats NZ, the Commission and other stakeholders on collecting and measuring disability data and data on Rainbow communities is underway: this is a relatively new area of diversity measurement for the Commission and for Stats NZ. Our disability and rainbow guidance will be updated as measurement standards develop. This includes looking at the development of new guidance on sexual identity.

In the meantime, note that some types of diversity data, such as sexual identity, can be very personal. If this data needs to be collected for diversity purposes it is better collected anonymously, as was done in Te Taunaki - the Public Service Census. Te Taunaki questions should be used in any such data collection, as they have been reviewed by Stats NZ.

Scope of standards

These standards are expected of workforce data collected and reported by the following agencies:

a) public service agencies[1]
b) the New Zealand Police, the New Zealand Defence Force, and the Parliamentary Counsel Office
c) Crown agents and other Crown entities

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[1] As defined in s10(a) of the Public Service Act 2020.

Definitions of key terms

Workforce data

Data collected on, or reported about, the employees of an agency. This includes personal data about the individual, as well as data relating to their roles in the agency.

Stats NZ standards

Stats NZ's standards provide comprehensive guidelines for surveys and administrative sources collecting data on a particular topic. They provide guidance on how to collect, classify and report data on this topic. They are published in their Aria tool: https://aria.stats.govt.nz/aria/
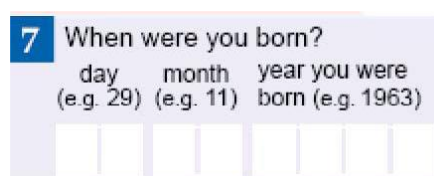
Guidance on age data

Why collect and report this data?

Age data is important as a measure of workforce diversity. It is also a key variable in understanding what our future workforce may look like.

Collect date of birth...

It is more accurate to ask for people's date of birth rather than their age in years. Here is how Stats NZ asks for date of birth:

7 When were you born?
day (e.g. 29)   month (e.g. 11)   year you were born (e.g. 1963)

... but report age in years

Age is the length of time a person has been alive measured in complete, elapsed years (i.e. always round age down as this is how people typically report their age). It is measured as the difference between 'date of birth' and 'reference date'.

Age should be stored in single years, but it is typically reported in five or ten-year age bands. Aggregate younger or older age groups if these have low counts and confidentiality is a concern.

Note when sharing age data with other agencies the date of birth mandated standard states that the the minimum required format for compliance when sharing date of birth information is YYYY-MM-DD (or YYYYMMDD).

Data issues

- Randomly assign a day and/or month if employee only provides year of birth. However, if year is missing, contact the employee to get missing data as age is a key piece of workforce data.

- Do a reasonable check on date of births – for example, for the Workforce Data collection the Commission has a validation rule that flags ages that are over 100, and under 10, years of age.

Further information

This guidance has summarised the key points for employers from the Stats NZ Standard for Age. The full Standard is available here:

http://aria.stats.govt.nz/aria/#StandardView:uri=http://stats.govt.nz/cms/StatisticalStandard/age

The Date of Birth Data Mandated Standard is available here:

https://data.govt.nz/toolkit/data-standards/mandated-standards-register/date-of-birth-standard/

Guidance on gender data

Why collect and report this data?

This data is a fundamental dimension of workforce diversity, used in combination with other variables, such as pay and type of employment, it can inform on issues around gender pay and flexible work.

Collecting gender data

The Commission first published guidance for collecting workforce gender data in 2018 and set the expectation that agencies would move to using gender (rather than sex), as this is more relevant in the context of workforce data, and more reflective of diversity. That guidance was based on the 2015 SNZ gender identity standard.

In 2021, Stats NZ produced an updated standard and classification for gender, providing an up-to-date approach for collecting gender data in an inclusive and consistent way. This standard has now been mandated for use across the Public Service.[2] This workforce data guidance has now been updated to reflect the new standard.

The Stats NZ Standard gives examples of how to ask for gender and what needs to be considered when asking a question. Here are the question examples it gives:

If able to process text responses:	If unable to process text responses:
What is your gender? □ male □ female □ another gender Please state: _____	**What is your gender?** □ male □ female □ another gender

Note that 'another gender' now replaces 'gender diverse', which was used in the previous 2015 Stats NZ Standard.

Agency/entity data systems should be able to store a minimum of 3 genders – male, female and another gender.

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[2] Mandated data standards must be used by Public Service Departments and Departmental Agencies when collecting, publishing, or sharing data on a particular topic.

Data issues

- This data can be sensitive. Not all staff may feel comfortable sharing this data with their employer. Not answering the question should always be an option (i.e., by including a "prefer not to answer" category).

- A person's gender may change over time. It is necessary to allow staff to be able to change the data employers hold on them to reflect this.

- Multiple responses to the gender question are valid. The Workforce Data collection will be updated to allow the reporting of employees with multiple genders.

- The Stats NZ Standard also covers collecting transgender and intersex data. This data can be very personal. If this data needs to be collected for diversity purposes it is better collected anonymously, as was done in Te Taunaki - the Public Service Census. Te Taunaki questions should be used in any such data collection, as they have been reviewed by Stats NZ.

Further information

This guidance has summarised the key points for employers from the Stats NZ Standard for Gender, Sex, and Variations of Sex Characteristics. The full Standard is available here:
https://data.govt.nz/toolkit/data-standards/mandated-standards-register/#gender-and-sex

Guidance on ethnicity data

Why collect and report on ethnicity data?

Ethnicity is a fundamental dimension of New Zealand's diversity. As such, we need to understand the ethnic make-up of our workforce.

Definition of ethnicity

Ethnicity is a measure of cultural affiliation, as opposed to race, ancestry, nationality or citizenship. Ethnicity is self-perceived and people can belong to more than one ethnic group.

An ethnic group is made-up of people who have some or all of the following characteristics:
- a common proper name
- one or more elements of common culture which need not be specified, but may include religion,
- customs, or language
- unique community of interests, feelings and actions
- a shared sense of common origins or ancestry, and
- a common geographic origin.

The standard classification of ethnicity is a hierarchical classification of four levels. Level 1 of the classification has six categories and is used solely for output. Level 2 has 21 categories, level 3 has 36 categories and level 4 has 180 categories.

Collecting ethnicity data

Staff should be able to report multiple ethnicities and data systems should be able to store a minimum of three ethnicity responses.

When collecting ethnicity data, people should be able to state their specific ethnic groups without being forced to identify themselves in a more general category. Because of this, the ideal data collection is to ask for staff to be able to write in their ethnicity and then code it back to the most detailed level of the ethnic standard classification (level 4). Stats NZ uses this question for self-completed surveys:

> *Which ethnic group do you belong to?*
> *Mark the space or spaces which apply to you*
>
> *New Zealand European*
> *Māori*
> *Samoan*
> *Cook Islands Maori*
> *Tongan*
> *Chinese*
> *Indian*
> *Other, e.g. Dutch, Japanese, Tokelauan. Please State: _____*

The Classification Coding System is available from Stats NZ for the coding of large volumes of data. There is also a Classification Code Finder to search the ethnicity classification, or code small volumes of data interactively. Links to both tools are in the Stats NZ Standard (the link to the Standard is below).

If a question like this is used and text responses to the 'other' category are not coded back to the classification, this will result an artificially high proportion of people in the 'other' ethnicity category.

Where it is not possible to code the answers to a write-in question or ask a long list of ethnicities, the following question should be used (which is based on level 2 of the ethnicity standard classification):

Which ethnic group do you belong to?
Mark the space or spaces which apply to you.

New Zealand European
English
Australian
Dutch
Other European
Māori
Samoan
Cook Islands Maori
Tongan
Niuean
Tokelauan
Fijian
Other Pacific Peoples
Filipino
Chinese
Indian
Japanese
Korean
Cambodian
Other Asian
Middle Eastern
Latin American
African
Other

Reporting ethnicity data

Data can be aggregated into a smaller number of categories as users require. The Commission reports ethnicity statistics at level 1 of the ethnicity standard classification:

European
Māori
Pacific Peoples
Asian
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African
Other Ethnicity

The Commission reports ethnicity as the percentage of staff who reported an ethnicity as a proportion of all staff who disclosed an ethnicity (i.e., excluding those who did not report an ethnicity from the calculation). The Commission also reports the percentage of staff who did not disclose an ethnicity. This is an important indicator to monitor the quality of system and agency ethnicity data.

When reporting ethnic data, it should be noted that people who reported more than one ethnic group are counted once in each group reported and as a result staff numbers by ethnicity may add up to more than the total number of staff.

Data issues

- If less than 75% of staff have disclosed their ethnicity, the quality of ethnic data is poor. Agencies should aim to have ethnic data for at least 92.5% of their staff, which is the average disclosure rate across the Public Service. The majority of agencies achieve over 95% disclosure.

- A person's ethnic identity may change over time. It is necessary to allow staff to be able to change the data employers hold on them to reflect this.

- Classify staff whom write-in New Zealander and similar responses like Kiwi, to the level 4 'New Zealander' category, which is grouped up into the 'Other' category.

- 'New Zealander' should generally not be an option in a tick box question as people may under report other ethnicities. If 'New Zealander' has to be used, it needs to be the last option before the 'Other' category and the first option needs to be 'New Zealand European'.

Further information

This guidance has summarised the key points for employers from the Stats NZ Standard for Ethnicity. The full Standard, including links to the coding tools, is available here:
http://aria.stats.govt.nz/aria/#StandardView:uri=http://stats.govt.nz/cms/StatisticalStandard/vv0ovwUoTSSVDhpt

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Guidance on occupation data

Why code workforce data to occupation?

If agencies code their jobs to the Stats NZ Standard for Occupation, it allows their workforce data to be comparable with other workforce data, such as that published by Stats NZ and the Commission.

By using the Stats NZ Standard for Occupation (and the classification ANZSCO), the Commission's Workforce Data collection allows workforce data across agencies to be comparable, despite agencies using different job title and pay grade classifications.

Definition of occupation

An occupation is defined as a set of jobs that require the performance of similar or identical sets of tasks. As it is rare for two actual jobs to have identical sets of tasks, in practical terms, an occupation is a set of jobs whose main tasks are characterised by a high degree of similarity. Occupations are organised into progressively larger groups on the basis of their similarities in terms of both skill level and skill specialisation.

The Standard uses the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO); this is a hierarchical classification with five levels. The major group level of the classification has eight categories. The sub-major group level of the classification has 43 categories. The minor group level has 97 categories. The unit group level has 358 categories and the group level has 1033 categories.

Coding occupation data

Agencies should use information on a particular job (job title, pay grade etc.) to code to the Occupation standard at its most detailed level (the unit group level).

The Aria Coding Service is available from Stats NZ for the coding of jobs to the ANZSCO classification. The links to this tool and the Stats NZ Standard are below.

Stats NZ provides the following coding advice:

- A person working as a manager must be performing managerial tasks such as planning, organising and coordinating the activities of the workforce to be coded as a 'manager' (major group 1). If not, allocate to a more appropriate code elsewhere in the classification.

- Supervisor (or team leader) is a person who controls and supervises a group of workers without doing any managerial tasks. Code them to the occupation category that they supervise.

- Code apprentices, interns and trainees to the occupation for which they are being trained.

Human resources staff

The Human Resources Head of Profession suggests the most appropriate codes in ANZSCO for the
HR workforce are:
- 132311 Human Resources Manager
- 223111 Human Resource Adviser
- 223112 Recruitment Consultant
- 223113 Workplace Relations Adviser
- 223311 Training and Development Professional
- 272313 Organisational Psychologist
- 551311 Payroll Clerk
- 599411 Human Resources Clerk

Policy staff

The Policy Project suggests the most appropriate codes in ANZSCO for the policy workforce are:
- 132411 Policy and Planning Manager
- 224412 Policy Analyst

Ministerial advisors and private secretaries

The Commission suggests the most appropriate code in ANZSCO for ministerial advisors, and
private secretaries seconded from departments to ministerial offices, is:
- 224412 Policy Analyst

Legal staff

The Legal Head of Profession suggests the most appropriate codes in ANZSCO for the legal
profession are:
- 139999 Specialist Manager Not Elsewhere Classified (for legal managers/GMs)
- 271111 Barrister (for those whose primary role is to plead cases in courts or other tribunals)
- 271299 Judicial and Other Legal Professionals Not Elsewhere Classified (for parliamentary
  counsel and other specialist legal roles)
- 271311 Solicitor (most legal roles should be coded here)
- 599214 Law Clerk

Communications staff

To align with the communications function definition, the Commission suggests the most
appropriate codes in ANZSCO for the communications workforce are:
- 131114 Public Relations Manager (for communications managers/GMs)
- 225311 Public Relations Professional (Communications professionals engage in a broad
  range of functions primarily focused on public-facing communications channels such as
  media, social media, and publications.). Sub roles include:
  - Media advisors
  - Comms advisors
  - Corporate comms
  - Internal comms (Internal Comms roles are included as they are typically closely
    connected to public relations professional roles and are not easily segregated.)
  - Social media (Social media roles are distinct from website content writing roles. The
    later type of role should not be included in this code.)

- o Press secretaries (Press secretaries only applies to roles in parliament supporting Ministers. These roles are employed by the Department of Internal Affairs)

There are a number of related roles that are often managed by Communication teams that are strictly speaking not core communications functions. These are to be **excluded** from the Communications function when reporting on either workforce numbers or expenditure. Instead, code them to:

- 225113 Marketing Specialist (Marketing specialists have a strong focus on branding, advertising and promoting services. The marketing professional operates at a transactional level, providing audience insights that can be used in awareness raising campaigns around specific initiatives or programmes.) Sub-roles include:
  - o Content advisor/creator
  - o Digital/website advisor
  - o Photographers/videographers
- 224912 Liaison Officer (Liaison officers are community-based and focused on understanding the needs of communities. Through establishing local networks, they are able to understand the pressures or challenges facing local communities and to feedback this information to agency policy or project delivery teams. Their role involves meeting statutory community engagement required to support effective project delivery.) Sub-roles include:
  - o Community Liaison Advisors
  - o Stakeholder Engagement Advisors
  - o Events Management

Health and safety staff

The Health and Safety Lead suggests the most appropriate codes in ANZSCO for the health and safety workforce are:

- 132111 Corporate Services Manager
- 251312 Occupational Health and Safety Adviser
- 221214 Internal Auditor (for risk advisors)

Finance staff

The Finance Head of Profession suggests the most appropriate codes in ANZSCO for the finance profession are:

- 132211 Finance Manager (including Chief Financial Officers (CFO), Finance Directors, Financial Controllers, Financial Operations Managers, Business Partnering Managers, Strategic Finance Managers and other positions that report directly to a CFO and manage staff)
- 221111 Accountant General (including Financial Accountants (and External Reporting), Fixed Asset and Capital Accountants, System Accountants and those reporting to a Financial Controller or similar position and may manage staff)
- 221112 Management Accountant (including Finance Business Partners, Cost Accountants, Project Accountants, Financial Analysts, Business Analysts and Strategic Finance advisors and may manage staff)
- 551111 Accounts Clerk (including Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable and Fixed Asset Clerks)
- 551311 Payroll Clerk (including payroll officers)

Māori, and other, cultural managers and advisors

The Commission suggests the most appropriate code in ANZSCO for Māori, and other, cultural managers and advisors is:

- 139999 Specialist Manager Not Elsewhere Classified (for managers)
- 272499 Social Professionals Not Elsewhere Classified (for advisors)

Reporting occupational data

The major groups of the Standard ANZSCO classification are:

1. Managers
2. Professionals
3. Technicians and Trades Workers
4. Community and Personal Service Workers
5. Clerical and Administrative Workers
6. Sales Workers
7. Machinery Operators and Drivers
8. Labourers

Use these groups to compare to data published by Stats NZ.

The Commission reports occupation data using groupings better reflecting the composition of the Public Service workforce. Use these groups to compare to data published by the Commission:

- Managers
- Policy Analyst
- Information Professionals
- Social, Health and Education Workers
- ICT Professionals and Technicians
- Legal, HR and Finance Professionals
- Other Professionals not elsewhere included
- Inspectors and Regulatory Officers
- Contact Centre Workers
- Clerical and Administrative Workers
- Other Occupations

Data issues

- The Occupation Standard does not cover voluntary work or illegal occupations.

Further information

This guidance has summarised the key points for employers from the Stats NZ Standard for Occupation. The full Standard is available here:
http://aria.stats.govt.nz/aria/#StandardView:uri=http://stats.govt.nz/cms/StatisticalStandard/IkPVEIFDEuDNZfmV

The Aria Coding Service for Occupation (6 digit) is available from here:
https://aria.stats.govt.nz/aria-coding/search

The concordance between the detailed Standard classification and the Commission's Workforce Data collection occupational groups is available from pscdata@publicservice.govt.nz