



Ombudsman
Kaitiaki Mana Tangata

2024/25 at a glance

**Pūrongo-ā-tau
Annual Report
2024/2025**

Tuia kia ōrite · Fairness for all



The purpose of this part is to provide, at a glance, information about each of our impact and output areas.

Perceptions of participation, openness and integrity

While public awareness of rights appears to be rising, there is an overall trend of declining perceptions of government openness and integrity.

- 59 percent of people had high trust in the public sector, consistent with last year.¹
- 46 percent of people were aware of the official information legislation, up from 43 percent last year.²
- 56 percent of people who requested information received the information they asked for, down from 70 percent last year.³
- New Zealand scored ‘fair’ for the ability for the public to participate in government. Whilst last year New Zealand scored fair for this metric as well, the score underpinning the categorisation of ‘fair’ decreased from 7.7 in 2023/24 to 6.4 this year.⁴
- New Zealand scored ‘fair’ for freedom from torture and ill treatment, down slightly from 6.6 last year to 6.4 this year.^{5 6}
- 84 percent of people would report serious wrongdoing to their employer, an increase from 82 percent last year.⁷
- New Zealand was ranked the fourth least corrupt country, a decrease from third last year.⁸

Inform the public to enable them to take constructive action to realise their rights

Our online and in-person outreach and engagement has seen an increase in awareness amongst Māori, Asian people and young people this year, although this remains low relative to our general public awareness which remains steady at 66 percent. Our social media presence is growing, which may help raise awareness amongst harder to reach populations.

1 Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission administers the [Kiwis Count survey](#) to measure the trust and confidence of New Zealanders in the Public Services.

2 Based on a commissioned domestic market research survey.

3 Above, note 2

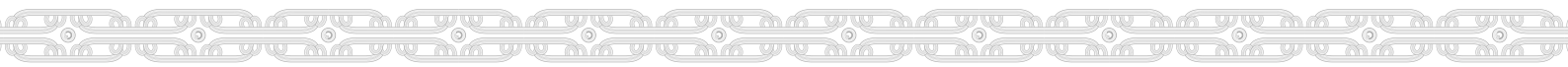
4 Using [the Human Rights Measurement Initiative](#) – Rights Tracker, which quantifies if New Zealand has achieved the rights specified in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights.

5 Above, note 4

6 Interpretation of scores: Good (8-10), Fair (6-8), Bad (3.5-6), Very bad (0.3.5).

7 Based on a commissioned domestic market research survey.

8 Using the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index to track perceptions of public trust in government in New Zealand.

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- Made 424 external resources and presentations available to the public.
 - Launched teaching resources to support civics learning for students from years 1 to 10.
 - Social media platforms had 140,852 views.
 - Carried out 92 engagements with a wide range of people and organisations, including 17 hapū, iwi and Māori organisations, 18 ethnic community organisations, 13 Disability and Deaf organisations, and 23 general providers.
 - 89 percent of people had confidence in accessing our services following our engagements.

Improve public sector capability to do its work and make decisions


We continued to influence good administrative practice in government, with improvements made as a result of our submissions on Cabinet papers, Bills and policies, and our advice and guidance to agencies.

- Commented on 45 legislative, policy, or administrative proposals.
- Provided advice to public sector agencies on 359 occasions.
- Provided 30 speeches, presentations and learning sessions for public sector agencies.
- 96 percent of learning participants said the information provided would help them in their work.
- Published 36 new or updated guides, case notes and opinions.
- Reached 940 officials across 137 agencies through Te Puna Mātauranga, our eLearning platform for public sector agencies.
- 278 full course completions and 2,290 module completions in Te Puna Mātauranga.

Formal consultation to assist public sector agencies to make specific decisions

We supported good decision-making through formal consultations.

- Responded to 18 consultations on applications for authorised access to personal information on the motor vehicle register.
- Advised the Cabinet Office on the regular release of information from the ministerial conflicts of interest register.



Enable serious wrongdoing to be disclosed and investigated and whistleblowers protected

In an environment of growing public awareness of protected disclosures, we managed an ongoing increase in the volume and complexity of protected disclosures and enquiries. We also completed some significant interventions to address serious wrongdoing.

We developed new guidance for organisations on managing protected disclosures, including effective processes to encourage employees to speak out, protect them from retaliation, and keep their identities confidential.

- Completed 278 protected disclosures and enquiries.
- Published two new protected disclosures guides.
- 67 percent of people would look to the Ombudsman for advice about serious wrongdoing.
- 48 percent of people thought they would be safe if they reported serious wrongdoing.

Break down the barriers that prevent disabled people from participating equally in society

We continued our work to monitor implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Disability Convention) and address issues through feedback and submissions, and to ensure accessibility of our information and services.

- Published 36 new or updated resources.
- Translated eight Ombudsman pamphlets into New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) and alternative formats.
- Alongside our Independent Monitoring Mechanism (IMM) partners⁹ developed a draft Workplan to monitor the implementation of the Disability Convention.

⁹ The Ombudsman is part of the *Independent Monitoring Mechanism* protecting and monitoring implementation in New Zealand of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. The Ombudsman, Te Kāhui Tika Tangata Human Rights Commission and the Disabled People's Organisations Coalition form the Independent Monitoring Mechanism (IMM) under Article 33 of the Disability Convention.

Improve the conditions and treatment of people in detention

We continued to work with government and detention facilities to identify and address long term challenges that are common across many of the places of detention we examine, including capacity pressures, staffing shortages, substandard material conditions, insufficient training and resources, overly restrictive practices, and poor record keeping.

- Visited 121 places of detention where people are not free to leave at will.
- 100 visits to places of detention were unannounced.
- Made 214 recommendations, of which 95 percent were accepted.
- Reported on an examination of the Prisoners of Extreme Risk Unit.
- Published a thematic Report on Aged Care Monitoring.

Ensure official information is increasingly available and not unlawfully refused

We resolved and investigated (Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) and Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA)) complaints, and investigated the practices of central and local government agencies, to help ensure the appropriate operation of the official information legislation, enhance public trust and confidence in government, and increase the availability of official information.

We effectively managed increasing demand, through sustained effort and trialling new approaches and systems. Our focus is on resolving cases more quickly, acting proportionately, and addressing systemic issues.

- Received 2,554¹⁰ complaints concerning official information matters, 15 percent more than last year.
- Completed 2,858 official information complaints, 34 percent more than last year.
- Achieved a complaint clearance rate of 112 percent.
- Obtained 1,031 remedies for the benefit of an individual or public administration, through resolution or investigation.
- Formed 857 opinions and made recommendations in 162 complaints, all of which were accepted.
- Quality standards remained high, although timeliness was an ongoing challenge.
- Completed seven proactive investigations into how seven central government agencies were meeting their timeliness obligations under the OIA. Also initiated and completed proactive investigations into the official information practices of five local government agencies. The combined 12 agencies accepted 16 recommendations and 320 action points for improvement to their practices.

¹⁰ Includes complaints under the Official Information Act and the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act.



Identify flawed public sector decision-making and processes and how to resolve them

We resolved and investigated complaints under the Ombudsmen Act (OA) about the administrative conduct of public sector agencies, and undertook proactive interventions to identify and correct administrative deficiencies and help improve government administration and decision-making.

We effectively managed increasing demand through sustained effort and trialling new approaches and systems. Our focus is on resolving cases more quickly, acting proportionately, and addressing systemic issues.

- Received 5,269 OA complaints and 4,935 enquiries concerning OA matters, a record number.
- Completed 5,305 OA complaints, a record amount and 28 percent more than last year.
- Achieved a complaint clearance rate of 101 percent.
- Obtained 557 remedies for the benefit of an individual or public administration, through resolution or investigation.
- Formed 636 opinions and made recommendations in 98 complaints, of which 99.5 percent were accepted.
- Quality standards remained high, although timeliness was an ongoing challenge.

Learn from, and assist to develop, international best practice

We gained insight from our international colleagues to help inform our work practices, and worked with them to lift regional and international best practice.

- Responded to 65 requests for collaboration with overseas Ombudsmen and integrity institutions.
- Facilitated and hosted 16 international initiatives and delegations.
- Ten resources and publications for overseas stakeholders were produced or updated.
- Engaged with Ombudsmen and integrity agencies across 19 Pacific and South-East Asian countries.
- Alongside the Cook Island's Ombudsman, delivered the *Regional Workshop: Being an Effective Investigator* in Fiji, with participants from eight organisations in the Pacific.

[Read the full report Annual Report](#)



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