



Regulatory stewardship

As of 1 May 2024, the Treasury's regulatory functions, including responsibility for the public service regulatory management system, have transferred to the new Ministry for Regulation. Information relating to these functions will continue to be available on the Treasury website while the transition occurs.

Any questions can be directed to hello@regulation.govt.nz.

What is regulatory stewardship?

The Government of Aotearoa New Zealand uses regulation to protect the community from harm and to improve the living standards of its people. Regulation is likely to involve legislation in some form, but it is not just about the law. In order to make the intentions of the law come to life, government agencies and other organisations need to deliver services, educate and inform, make sure people follow the rules, and support resolution of disputes. The rules, organisations and their practices – the whole regulatory system – work together to shape people's behaviour and interactions and improve the lives, work and businesses of all New Zealanders.

Regulatory stewardship is the governance, monitoring and care of our regulatory systems. Regulatory systems are intended to be assets for our communities but, like most other kinds of assets, they need regular ongoing care and maintenance if they are to deliver best value to New Zealanders.

Regulatory stewardship aims to ensure that all the different parts of a regulatory system work well together to achieve its goals, and to keep the system fit for purpose over the long term. Effective stewardship requires government

agencies to be proactive and collaborative, so that regulatory systems adapt to changing circumstances in a timely way.

Regulatory stewardship is a statutory obligation for public service agencies

The Public Service Act provides that public service chief executives or boards are responsible for upholding, and ensuring the agencies they lead also uphold five public service principles when carrying out their responsibilities and functions. “Stewardship” is one of those five principles and, as specified in the Public Service Act, that includes proactively promoting stewardship “of... the legislation administered by agencies” – see **s.12 of the Public Service Act 2020**

(<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2020/0040/latest/LMS356871.html>).

Government expectations

The Government’s **expectations for regulatory stewardship by government agencies**

(</sites/default/files/2015-09/good-reg-practice.pdf#page=5>).

form Part B of the Government Expectations for Good Regulatory Practice, and set out responsibilities for regulatory stewards in three broad areas:

- monitoring, reviewing and reporting on existing regulatory systems
- robust analysis and implementation support for changes to regulatory systems
- good regulatory practice.

Functional leadership

Dr Caralee McLiesh (Chief Executive and Secretary to the Treasury) is the **public service functional lead**

(<https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/system/leaders/public-service-system-leaders/functional-leads/>) for Regulatory Stewardship, as appointed by the Public Service Commissioner.

The Secretary has set up a Regulatory Stewardship Chief Executives Group to advise and collectively lead regulatory stewardship work across the public service. This group is

committed to providing support to agencies with their stewardship work, and to providing the Government with confidence that the public service is actively delivering on its regulatory stewardship responsibilities.

Membership of the Regulatory Stewardship Chief Executive Group comprises Chief Executives of key regulatory departments in the public service.

Starting out with regulatory stewardship: A resource

Starting out with regulatory stewardship is a resource on regulatory stewardship and is endorsed by the Regulatory Stewardship Chief Executives Group for use by government agencies with regulatory stewardship responsibilities.

[Starting out with regulatory stewardship: A resource \(/node/16576\)](#)

Regulatory systems reporting

The Government expects major regulatory departments to publish information on their websites about:

- the nature, scope and objectives of each regulatory system for which they have or share a stewardship responsibility
- current or recent reviews of those regulatory systems, or findings from system assessments, as relevant
- forward plans for approved legislative or operational improvements to those regulatory systems

This reporting expectation has its origin in the Government response to the New Zealand Productivity Commission's 2014 report on Regulatory Institutions and Practices.

It is closely aligned with the Government's 2017 "Expectations for regulatory stewardship by government agencies", which sets out the responsibility of regulatory agencies to, among other things:

- monitor the ongoing performance and condition of the regulatory systems and the regulatory environment in which they operate

- review each system at appropriate intervals to determine whether it is still fit-for-purpose, and likely to remain so
- use that information to proactively identify and assess, and then report or address, problems, vulnerabilities, and opportunities for improvement in the design and operation of that regulatory system.

See [Regulatory systems reporting \(/node/1654\)](#) for links to reporting provided by some of the major regulatory departments.

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