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2 November 2022

Scott

By email: fyi-request-20627-xxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxx.xxx.xxx.xx
Ref: H2022013182

Tēnā koe Scott,

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) on 21 September 2022 for:

“A copy of the review of “the processes underpinning the Ministry of Health’s ministerial servicing” produced by an external consultant for the Ministry referred to here.

A copy of the “additional specific advice on how [the Pfizer information was released]” produced by the external consultant for the Ministry referred to here.”

Since the start of the COVID-19 global pandemic, Manatū Hauora has played a central role in leading the health response to COVID-19. As a result, the Ministry has seen a significant increase in correspondence and the number of requests for information under the Act. The Ministry has worked hard to meet the increased demand for information, including increasing the amount of information that is publicly available through different channels, including media stand-ups and data publication. The Ministry has also implemented process changes and temporarily increased the number of employees in the Government Services group, which manages responses to ministerial correspondence, Official Information Act requests, parliamentary questions, and Select Committee requests. At its peak in the second half of 2021, the volume of Official Information Act requests tripled.

In December 2021, I contracted MartinJenkins to undertake a review of the Government Services group (the Group). This review provided assurance of the Group’s efficiency and effectiveness when compared to other Ministries and identified opportunities for improvements. This review was completed in April 2022 and is titled *Review of the Ministry of Health Government Services Group*. A full copy is attached as Document 1.

While MartinJenkins was undertaking the review, the Ministry became aware of the inadvertent release of information and asked MartinJenkins to specifically review this

incident. They found that the Ministry's solution was well-targeted to the risk. The complete findings are included in the attached document on page 24.

You might also be interested in the Ombudsman's recent publication of investigations into the OIA practices of 12 core Government agencies, including Manatū Hauora. The final report addresses some of the issues raised in the external review. The Ombudsman's final reports can be found at:

- www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/resources/oia-compliance-and-practice-ministry-health-2022
- www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/resources/oia-compliance-and-practice-ready-or-not-2022

I trust this information fulfils your request. If you have any questions about this response, please contact us at oiagr@health.govt.nz. Additionally, under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Manatū Hauora website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā



Sarah Turner
Deputy Director-General
Government and Executive Services | Te Pou Whakatere Kāwanatanga

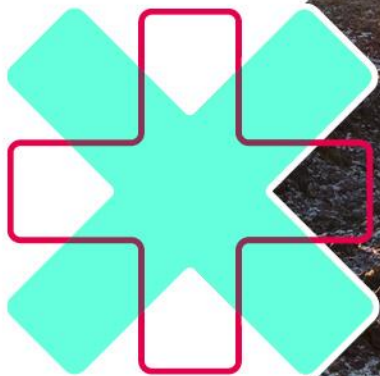
Document 1

**MARTIN
JENKINS**

REVIEW OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH GOVERNMENT SERVICES GROUP

Report

6 April 2022





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PREFACE

This report has been prepared for the Ministry of Health by Richard Tait, Frauke Kruse and Sargam Shah from MartinJenkins (Martin, Jenkins & Associates Limited).

MartinJenkins advises clients in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. Our work in the public sector spans a wide range of central and local government agencies. We provide advice and support to clients in the following areas:

- public policy
- evaluation and research
- strategy and investment
- performance improvement and monitoring
- business improvement
- organisational improvement
- employment relations
- economic development
- financial and economic analysis.

Our aim is to provide an integrated and comprehensive response to client needs – connecting our skill sets and applying fresh thinking to lift performance.

MartinJenkins is a privately owned New Zealand limited liability company. We have offices in Wellington and Auckland. The company was established in 1993 and is governed by a Board made up of executive directors Kevin Jenkins, Michael Mills, Nick Davis, Allana Coulon, Richard Tait and Sarah Baddeley, plus independent director Sophia Gunn and chair David Prentice.



INTRODUCTION

Context for the review

The Government Services group at the Ministry of Health has recently seen a large increase in work volumes, a high turnover in staff with some recent new recruitment starting soon and has introduced new SharePoint-based workflows.

While the leadership team feel there is no indication that current workflows and ways of working are 'broken', the team feels it is timely to:

- seek external assurance of the group's efficiency and effectiveness when compared to other Ministries, and
- identify opportunities for improvement and 'quick wins' to deliver the right outputs at the lowest possible costs.

MartinJenkins was engaged to review how the Government Services Group delivers value to the organisation and its stakeholders.

Objective

The objective of the review is to ensure the Ministry of Health has a high-performing Government Services Group that is recognised for delivering high quality products for its internal and external stakeholders, in an efficient and cost-effective way.

Approach

We have conducted the review in three stages.

- 1 **Inception:** We agreed the scope of the review and the timetable during an inception meeting in January.
- 2 Information gathering: This stage included:
 - conducting interviews with managers of the different groups within the group and key stakeholders to the group
 - reviewing key background documents
 - analysing relevant data (e.g., workflows and demand)
 - creating a high-level process map, and identifying processes with opportunities for improvement
 - using external interviews to explore the Ministerial Services group of comparable Ministries to understand their models and practices, and how this might suggest lessons and opportunities for the Ministry of Health



- discussing insights with the project sponsor.

A summary of reviewed documents and interviewees can be found in the appendices.

- 3 **Present and discuss findings:** We developed a draft report for discussion, refined and finalised this document based on feedback.

Scope

The review has examined whether the Group has the right capabilities and resources, workflows, prioritisation of work, and frameworks and approaches to engage with stakeholders and to deliver outputs.

In scope for the purpose of the review were:

- All functions and activities undertaken by the Government Services Group
- The relation between the Government Services Group and other groups within the Ministry
- Activities and key relationships with external partners in the government network.

Out of scope were:

- A review of other directorates within the Ministry
- A formal structure review and any formal consultation
- Current assumptions in the model about the balance between centralised and decentralised activities.



OVERVIEW

The Government Services group

The group serves as a centralised function for the Ministry's government services products. It applies the Official Information Act and oversees Ministerial Correspondence and Government Services. The group is currently organised in three teams:

- **The Government Services and Coordination (GSaC) team** is responsible for managing responses to Parliamentary questions and supporting briefings related to Select Committee work. It coordinates processes that see the Ministry respond to requests in a consistent and timely manner and meet its statutory obligations. The team applies an impartial lens to responses and helps shape the public image of the Ministry in the way it communicates.
- **The Official Information Act (OIA) team** is responsible for managing OIA requests. The team coordinates processes that see different business units contribute to the information gathering and drafting of responses and ensures responses are made in a timely manner and meet the Ministry's statutory obligations. The team also assists the organisation in managing Privacy Act requests.
- **The Correspondence Team** is responsible for drafting and coordinating Ministerials and Direct Replies. The team works with the different Directorates in the Ministry to support Ministerial offices to respond to correspondence.

The group also includes Private Secretaries, which were excluded from this review.

Current context for the group's activity

COVID-19 has driven a significant increase in demand for information from the Ministry

The COVID-19 pandemic became a large-scale public health crisis around the world in early 2020, prompting government action and dictating large changes in the lives of the public. Since the early days of the pandemic, the Ministry of Health has been confronted with new challenges they could not have previously imagined. This has required the Ministry to develop policies at pace, rapidly stand up new digital and physical infrastructure, and track the performance of the public health system in response to the unfolding pandemic.

As the wide-ranging impacts of the COVID 19 response have become apparent, the public has sought information on a variety of topics impacting their lives. This has been mirrored in an increase in requests for information and response through other, indirect channels, including oral and written parliamentary questions (WPs), and demand for Ministerial Briefings.



Changing demand volumes

The Ministry of Health is one of several Ministries that have seen increases in the volume of information sought through OIA requests. While the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and the Ministry of Social Development have seen increases in OIA requests between 1% and 50% percent between 2020 to 2021, the Ministry of Health has seen an increase in close to 140% percent during the same period.

Similarly, the volume of WPQs for the Ministry of Health in 2021 was three times that of 2020 (300%) and over four times that of 2019 (415%).

Changing complexity of requests

Interviewees felt that not only had the number of requests from the public and members of the Parliament increased, but their complexity had also grown, with many of the documents and guidance that were sought being new and developed at pace.

Summary of findings and recommendations

A focus on continuous improvement

The group appears to have maintained reasonable levels of performance in the face of rapidly increasing demand. Over the last two years, the group has developed and matured, with a focus on streamlining processes and managing risks more effectively. The leadership of the group has expressed a desire to continue that journey, focussing on strengthening the capability of the teams, and enhancing the group's role as a centre of excellence for government services products and stakeholder engagement within the Ministry.

Recent structural measures

The group leadership has suggested several temporary changes to address the most pressing challenges, which are set out in the OLT memorandum from 12 November 2021 on "Proposed temporary changes to Government Services Group management arrangements and work distribution".

We endorse these measures and suggest making the temporary arrangements permanent. The recent changes include:

- Establishing two separate OIA Services teams, reporting to the current Manager OIA Services.
- Establishing an Advisory Services team, with a Triage and Response stream and an Advisory stream. This includes establishing six roles (three Senior Advisor Triage and Response, two Advisors for Proactive Release and for Planning and Reporting, one Senior Advisor Ombudsman)
- Establishing two additional roles in the Government Services and Coordination team.



The strain on processes and resourcing

The Ministry's number of OIA complaints published by the Ombudsman has nearly doubled from 2020 to 2021 (25 additional complaints). Similarly, the Government Services and Coordination team seeks extensions from the Ministers' offices on a large portion of WPQs to ease the deadline pressures on the Ministry. This is symptomatic of the strain the whole organisation as well as the Government Services teams are under.

For the teams, the challenge is twofold: Responding to immediate pressure to improve performance, while setting itself up for success going forward.

Recent challenges in the OIA response

In the OIA space, it is important to maintain a consistent and clear review and sign-out approach. In a recent scenario, papers were released to a requester that were supposed to be withheld. The Group Manager and the OIA manager felt a system of checks and balances was followed, and the process failed at the last step. In the finalisation of the batch for the Minister's office these documents weren't removed from the pack, and thus went out to the requester accidentally, including highlighting that these documents were intended to be withheld.

The solution put in place to address this risk was:

- to advocate for a consistent review approach with the Minister's Office
- to change the label on top of relevant pages. Pages will be 'red box' redacted in full when they go to the Minister's office for review. The advisor will then make sure it is redacted/removed before sending it over – an automated process via the software which manages the redacting.
- to suggest that the Minister's office runs an additional check on it before sending it out.

This appears to be an effective mitigation for the risk that eventuated.

We note that the further digitisation through the workflow management tool and the establishment of a triage function within the new Advisory team are expected to significantly improve the assessment of risks, the adoption of best-practice approaches and the group's ability to digitally track progress.

Breaking the reactive cycle and adopting a more strategic posture

Recognising the immediate pressure as well as the longer-term aspiration, we have divided our recommendations into two areas of focus, to enable the Ministry to get on top of current pressure and position for a more strategic and value-adding approach in future.

1 Right-size the group and review process inefficiencies

The immediate focus is to address immediate performance challenges and to create space to take further steps along the maturity journey. To do this, the teams need to be resourced appropriately to manage demand.

- For written parliamentary questions, we suggest ensuring resourcing is at a level where workload does not exceed an average 150 WPQs per advisor per month, or 75 WPQs per senior advisor. The volume of WPQs is cyclical. We recommend not allowing the workload to



go beyond 175 WPQs per advisor per month for full time staff, or beyond 150 WPQs per month for temporary support staff.

- For OIA requests, we suggest resourcing the team to ensure each advisor responds to no more than 15 OIA requests per months on average, and senior advisors respond to no more than 8.
- We recommend maintaining team sizes at a maximum of 10 direct reports per team leader or manager.

The group needs to have assurance that workflows are robust and oversight arrangements are appropriate for all standard processes. In addition to the current temporary structural changes, we also recommend establishing the following roles:

- Adding one Advisor and one Senior Advisor to the Government Services and Coordination team, or making the temporary arrangements suggested to OLT in a memorandum in November 2021 permanent.
- Adding one Advisor and one Senior Advisor to the OIA team.
- Adding a Team Leader role in the Ministerial Correspondence team. This role would support the Manager Ministerial Correspondence and could have Coordinator and Advisors report to them.
- Adding a third Team Leader role to the OIA Services team. The Team Leaders are already overseeing more than the suggested maximum span of 10 direct reports. With the suggested additional Advisor and Senior Advisor roles, it is timely to establish a third team leader role.

2 Move into a more strategic space

The subsequent step is to focus on more nuanced and skilful communications. To do this, the group needs to further increase seniority and expertise within the group, focus on improving retention, and ensure senior leaders have capacity and opportunity to be informed of, and contribute to, the strategic thinking of the Ministry. To not only meet its requirements, but also further develop the team's maturity, we suggest the group investigates:

- Implementing an apprenticeship model for Learning and Development.
- Reviewing the role design, ensuring sufficient senior capacity is dedicated to coaching and supporting more junior staff, and overseeing high-risk responses.



Table 1: Summary

| Focus area | Findings | Recommendations |
|------------------|--|---|
| Step 1 | | |
| Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current permanent resourcing of the teams managing Official Information requests and Government Services and Coordination is not sufficient to address current workloads. Current temporary arrangements and changes set out in a recent memorandum to OLT from 12 November 2012 address the most urgent staffing challenges. However, the group currently heavily relies on those temporary staff that are “borrowed” from other teams within the group. That is an appropriate response to address peak demand. It is not appropriate to rely on temporary staff for more than half the time, as it does not give the group sufficient planning certainty. Temporary arrangements limit the group’s ability to strategically develop their staff into more senior roles. | <p>Suggested workloads and spans of control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For written parliamentary questions, we suggest ensuring resourcing does not exceed an average 150 WPQs per advisor per month, or 75 WPQs per senior advisor. The volume of WPQs is cyclical. We suggest not allowing the workload to go beyond 175 WPQs per advisor per month for full time staff, or beyond 150 WPQs per month for temporary support staff. For OIA requests, we suggest resourcing the team to ensure each advisor responds to no more than 15 OIA requests per month on average, and senior advisors respond to no more than 8. We recommend maintaining team sizes at a maximum of 10 direct reports per team leader or manager. <p>Suggested resource levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We suggest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adding one Advisor and one Senior Advisor to the Government Services and Coordination team, <u>or</u> making the temporary arrangements suggested to OLT in a memorandum in November 2021 permanent. Adding one Advisor and one Senior Advisor to the OIA team. Adding a team leader role in the Ministerial Correspondence team. This role would support the Manager Ministerial Correspondence and could have Coordinator and Advisors report to them. Adding a third team leader role to the OIA Services team. The team leaders are already overseeing more than the suggested maximum span of 10 direct reports. With the suggested additional Advisor and Senior Advisor roles, it is timely to establish a third team leader role. <p>Moving existing resource</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To minimise the effect on the function’s bottom line, it should first be investigated whether existing resource can be repurposed. Some interviewees assumed that some of those temporary resources provided by the Ministerial Correspondence (MC) team could be moved permanently, without overly damaging the MC team’s ability to deliver appropriate products for the Ministry. To confirm that assumption, we suggest engaging in an activity review with the MC team. In addition to ensuring an appropriate level of full-time staff to handle the workload the majority of the time (or eight out of twelve months), we suggest looking at the wider Ministry for temporary support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We suggest exploring the option to second junior staff and career starters from other parts of the Ministry for a period of four months to support the Function in working through peak work volumes in the OIA and WPQ space. |



| Focus area | Findings | Recommendations |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Workflows and efficiency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group manages a complex set of stakeholders that all have their own sets of expectations and preferred ways of working. That system is making process standardisation very difficult. The current workflow management system is outdated, and processes have many media discontinuity (moving between different media without automated interfaces), increasing the likelihood of human error and creating inefficiencies. There is no dedicated role that oversees all continuous improvement efforts. Several recent initiatives are improving the efficiency of operations and are addressing the most pressing challenges interviewees have described, including further digitising workflows. However, there are challenges for the Group that are beyond its control. We heard that the efficiency of the OIA process is impacted by the layers of review and sign-out in business groups, causing delays and/or bottlenecks. While it makes sense for SME to review, this should perhaps be done by either the SME manager or the group manager rather than both. Depending on the complexity of the request, sign-out should be done by the Group Manager or DCE. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A focus should be given to second junior staff from the strategic communication function, as we expect that staff would gain valuable insights into their target audiences from working with the requests coming in. The business groups should be encouraged to streamline and simplify their OIA sign-out processes, with only the SME manager or the SME Group Manager approving the response before sign-out, but not both. Regular training and information provided by the Government Services function ensures Business Units are well placed to appropriately identify and forward OIAs they receive directly. The OIA process should establish a stronger focus on triage, with some clear guidance to enable consistent judgements on complexity and risk. To best leverage of the introduction of the workflow management tool, we recommend appointing a dedicated workflow management owner, who would lead continuous improvement efforts for the group. |
| Prioritisation of work | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We heard that the managers of functions are expected to oversee the sign-out of work. That holds particularly true for the OIA team where we hear the manager is expected to sign-out all responses. This approach leads to very high workloads and not enough time for the manager to engage deeply with high-risk work. In the Government Services and Coordination team, it was noted that the Minister's Offices have very diverging views on priority and urgency of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We expect that establishing the triaging function as set out in OLT memorandum from 12 November 2021 on "Proposed temporary changes to Government Services Group management arrangements and work distribution" will significantly support the prioritisation and resource allocation of work. We suggest continuing to lead conversations with Minister's Offices about the prioritisation of work and associated tolerances to risk. Those conversations could benefit from an agenda that facilitates a structured analysis, for example, a template that covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the thematic analysis of WPQ and Ministerial Correspondences coming in, an assessment of resources spent on each theme, a discussion of key risks associated with responses for each theme, and a decision on approaches and risk appetites for each theme. |



| Focus area | Findings | Recommendations |
|--|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that the Group Manager Government Services has led some important work liaising with Minister's Offices on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strategic communication, - risk assessment, - how prioritising different aspects of work will create value, and - what that means for resourcing requirements. | |
| Step 2 | | |
| Capabilities, frameworks and approaches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The individuals in the Government Services Team are well connected across the Ministry. • The group is respected as a centre of excellence for government products. • The maturity of the function is constantly improving. The group manages a complex set of stakeholders. • To address ever increasing workloads, the group has responded by specialising and adopting agile practices. • There is currently no shared career progression pathway or capability framework in place, that would support retention. • There is an opportunity to address the work of the group at a more strategic level, and to link the function's risk management to the Ministry's strategic objectives and risks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing government services is a craft that is best learned by working alongside more senior analysts. We suggest developing a clear career progression framework for staff within the Ministry's Government Services function, so staff understand what opportunities for progression are available, and how they can develop into more senior roles. • Managers could prioritise staff development to improve retention. That means rather than retaining staff within a single area to ensure immediate workloads are handled, they plan and design employee journeys within the framework. • As part of the career progression framework, it is proposed to implement an "apprenticeship" model for developing advisors with senior advisors being accountable for coaching and mentoring more junior staff as a core expectation of their role. The model needs to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changing the role expectations for managers and team leaders to engage in more strategic thinking and priority setting. - Designing a leadership track that illustrates requirements for and pathways to leadership roles. - Developing a framework for coaching and mentoring by senior staff members, putting an emphasis on on-the-job experience and rotation. • Link the group's risk management to the Ministry's strategic objectives and risks, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaising with Deputy Director Generals across the Ministry to understand what is considered sustained high or emerging risks within their teams and what the business units would like the Government Services group to consider when drafting and overseeing responses. - Link in with other central functions and leadership meetings and disseminate knowledge about Ministry-wide strategic considerations and risks across the group. - Further systematise how the Ministerial Servicing group that is working with the Public Service Commission on improving OIA Servicing analyses and responds to risks. |



FINDINGS

This section summarises the findings from the interviews with internal and external stakeholders and the review of relevant documents. The findings cover an analysis of workload and resourcing, a review of workflows and operating approach, an assessment of current and future capability requirements, and insights into the structure and team design.

Volumes of work and resources

Overview

This section provides detailed analysis of work volumes and findings about the adequacy of resourcing to meet demands for different types of government services products.

Higher Ministerial Services workloads across agencies

Overall, there are continued high Ministerial Services workloads across government agencies. OIA and WPQ volumes are significantly increasing year on year, which is becoming a challenge for many departments. Members of Parliament have a limitless ability to ask questions of Ministers, coupled with a right under the OIA to request information and be given access to it (unless there is a reason not to).

People we interviewed (internally and externally) expected the volume of information requests to remain high. Ministerial Services managers agreed that this government term has seen an increased number of Parliamentary Questions coming through. They also felt that the public appears to have an increased need for information that is channelled through OIA requests. Both these trends were expected to continue in the foreseeable future.

In addition, the pandemic has resulted in heightened expectations and demands on departments to provide detailed information in times of uncertainty. These are real challenges which are compounded by a tight labour market meaning more staff are not necessarily available even if the necessary funds are available.

The numbers are not expected to return to pre-COVID levels

For the Ministry of Health, leading the support of the Government's COVID response and the visibility of the Ministry's senior officials have led to a particularly high increase in work volumes across the group. These volumes are not expected to decrease to pre-COVID levels in the medium-term. There is a perception that the impact and magnitude of the COVID response has led to a growing number of



people learning how to request official information and becoming “regular inquirers” that they are likely to continue to seek further or updated information.

It is currently unclear whether the establishment of Health NZ will change the volumes of requests the Ministry will receive. It is the current assumption within the Group that the net effect of the establishment of Health NZ will not have a large impact on the way the Group operates.

Agencies are working together to address joint resourcing challenges

Several agencies (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Development, Oranga Tamariki, Accident Compensation Corporation and Ministry of Education) have been working with the Public Service Commission to develop a joint approach to Ministerial servicing, especially in the OIA space— aligning processes where possible, exploring joint recruitment, and looking at how staff may be transferred across the system more flexibly to help with surges. There is a real desire among the agencies to ensure Ministerial Services continue to deliver and improve despite the challenges they are all facing.

To mitigate immediate workload pressures, staff move across teams to support other parts of the function.

Having standardised position descriptions across teams would allow flexibility to move staff across groups and support staff to gain experience across teams.

Government Services and Coordination

Summary of findings

The Government Services and Coordination (GSaC) team is responsible for managing responses to Parliamentary questions and supporting briefings related to Select Committee work. The rapid increase in WPQs per month, especially over the past year, has meant the team has needed to grow at pace. The team has put in place temporary arrangements:

- 1 Senior Advisor and 2 Advisors were added in June 2021 for the duration of one year.
- A recent OLT memorandum from 12 November 2021 suggested adding another Advisor and Principal Advisor role to support the team.

After reviewing the actual and forecasted workloads, we believe the current and suggested temporary arrangements are appropriate in responding to increased workloads. The temporary staff are expected to be required until December 2022.

Further staff will also be required in 2023. We expect that sustained workloads will require extending 1 Senior Advisor and 1-2 Advisors in addition to the permanent staff.

Current state

Written Parliamentary questions (WPQs)

The volume of WPQs in 2021 has increased by 200% from 2020, and by 300% from 2019.



Table 2: WPQ volumes for 2019 - 2021

| | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Average monthly WPQs | 161 | 224 | 668 |
| Total WPQs | 1933 | 2687 | 8021 |

Oral Parliamentary questions

The average number of oral parliamentary questions per sitting day that the team leads the drafting of replies for has increased from averaging 1-2 prior to March 2020, to 4-5 in October 2021.¹

Supporting Select Committees

There was also a significant increase in the work the team undertakes to support Select Committee functions including appearances for the Ministry and Ministers. The team went from supporting two hearings a year (an Annual Review and an Estimates hearing) to 10 hearings in the last two years, including several ad hoc Covid 19 update hearings in both 2020 and 2021.

Workloads and resourcing

The increase in demand has been met by running very high average workloads in the team, which is unsustainable.

The team seeks extensions from the Ministers' offices on a large portion of WPQs to ease the deadline pressures on the Ministry to provide responses. This is not sustainable while numbers of WPQs continue to increase and risks the Ministry damaging relationships with Ministers and their offices if the Ministry continues to seek large numbers of extensions.²

It was suggested for OLT to establish a temporary Principal Adviser and a temporary Adviser to manage workloads.

Driver of WPQ increases

Unsurprisingly, most of the increase in WPQs is driven by the work of COVID-19 related Directorates, particularly COVID-19 Health System Response and COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Response.

WPQs for these Directorates have been responsible for a total of 400 additional requests in 2020, and 3182 additional requests in 2021. The increases corresponded with timings of peak periods of change during the pandemic starting in June 2020. Without those two Directorates directly related to the COVID response, the requests would have still nearly doubled (or increased by 212%) from 2020 to 2021 (or increased by 2552 requests from 2020 to 2021).

We also note that COVID-19 requests have potentially trickled down to other connected Directorates within the Ministry of Health (for example, Mental Health and Addiction).

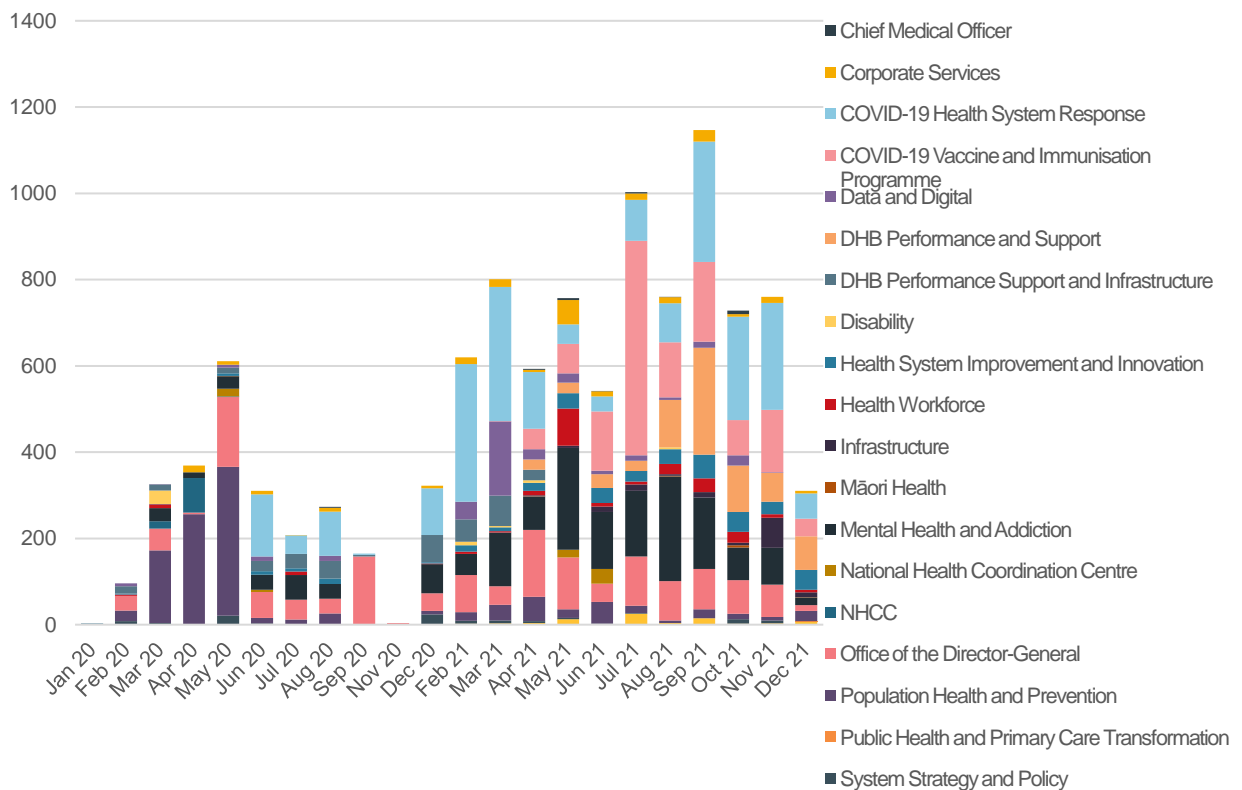
¹ OLT memorandum from 12 November 2021 on "Proposed temporary changes to Government Services Group management arrangements and work distribution"

² OLT memorandum from 12 November 2021 on "Proposed temporary changes to Government Services Group management arrangements and work distribution"



Figure 1 provides a breakdown of the volume of WPQs by Directorate.

Figure 1: Volume of WPQs by month and directorate



Analysis

WPQs will be the main driver for resourcing requirements for the GSaC team

Figure 1 shows a steep rise in the volume of WPQs from 2020 to 2021. The current workload pressure has been met with very high average workloads. If the Ministry of Health does not increase resourcing, it will have to consider the risks of employee attrition and retention issues worsening over time.

To mitigate some of the risks of high workload pressure on employees, we have analysed likely resourcing requirements for handling WPQs. For this analysis, we have followed a triangulation approach with datasets, methods and assumptions laid out below.

We have also made some high-level forecasting assumptions based on interviewee responses to calculate staffing requirements for the calendar years 2022 and 2023 to support the increase in requests. We tested these high-level assumptions with the Manager of the GSaC team.



Assumptions of the model

Before 2021:

- Advisors with a full workload spent half their time (0.5 FTE) in 2020 on WPQs and the remainder on other correspondences.
- Senior Advisors were expected to spend half their time drafting and coordinating responses, and half their time coaching, overseeing, and signing out work. In 2020, half of this drafting and coordinating time was expected to be on WPQs. In summary, we assume each Senior Advisor contributes 0.25 FTE to WPQ related work.
- Managers do not spend time working on WPQs but oversee and give advice on the team's work.
- Coordinators do not spend time working on WPQs but support the coordination of workflows.
- Through anecdotal information and insights, we have estimated that 2020's average workload of 176 WPQs per FTE per month was at an "ambitious but manageable" level for staff members. The same staff also oversaw oral parliamentary questions (OPQs). This is considered a very high output and average productivity.
- To provide a reference point, the Ministry of Social Development has estimated their manageable workload is 150 WPQs per FTE per month in peak times, or up to 1500 requests per FTE per year. In the assumptions, staff are fully dedicated to WPQs and do not also oversee OPQs.

From 2021 onwards:

- Advisors and Senior Advisors added from 2021 onwards have been added to relieve growing pressures from an increase in WPQs. For modelling purposes, we have dedicated their entire writing time to WPQs.

Assumptions on the impact of a reduction in COVID-related questions over time

Given the substantial increase in WPQs as a result of COVID response work, we suspect that eventually the pandemic-related requests will reduce and the WPQs will return closer to the baseline at the start of 2020. However, this may take two to three more years. We note that given the volatility of the numbers in the past, future workloads are difficult to predict. For the purpose of a high-level short-term outlook, we have assumed:

- 2022 will have similar volumes of WPQs as 2021 in our forecast assumptions.
- 2023 will begin to see a reduction of COVID-related directorates such as Health System Response and Vaccine & Immunisation Programme. We have estimated a reduction of 25% in COVID-related requests to demonstrate the slowdown.

There might be other areas of increased WPQs in the years 2022 and 2023 that our approach does not comprehensively cover

We note that our analysis does not consider:

- the trickle-down effect of the pandemic resulting in an increase of WPQs (for example, in Mental Health and Addiction)
- any other unexpected public health crises



- any effects of 2023 being a general election year.

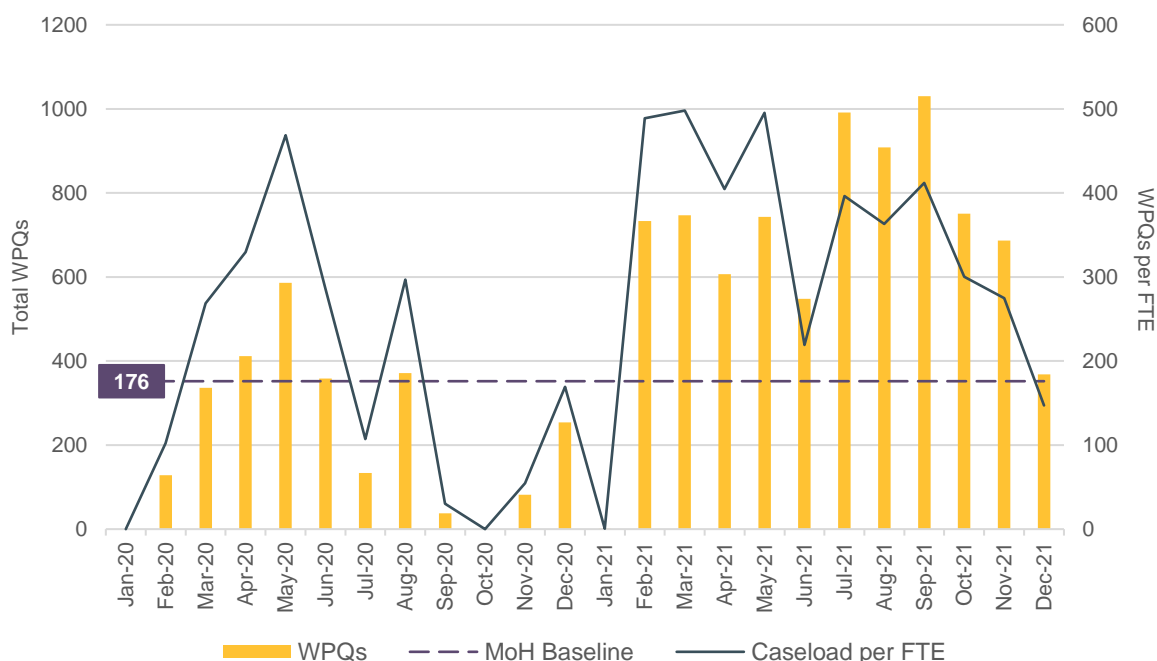
An overview of all staffing assumptions can be found in appendix 3.

The average WPQ caseload by FTE has increased by approximately 60% from 2020 to 2021. The team was not set up to deliver on those caseloads.

Figure 2 shows the steep increase in workload pressure under different levels of staffing resources at different points in time. The average number of cases per FTE per month increased from 176 in 2020 to 283 in 2021. The team has brought in three temporary roles, a Senior Advisor and two Advisors, to manage the increased workloads.

We have illustrated the 2020 Ministry of Health benchmark of 176 WPQs per FTE per month in the graph below.

Figure 2: Volume of WPQ caseload by FTE



To calculate the appropriate resourcing going forward, we have looked into two scenarios:

- **Medium option:** Going forward, we suggest targeting resourcing to fulfil caseload volumes with permanent staff in the team at least two-thirds of the time (i.e., 8 of 12 months), with peak demand covered by temporary additional resources.
- **Maximum option:** The second option considered is staff resourcing to fulfil all the WPQs in a timely fashion at any given point of time during all months of the year.



The maximum option scenario would potentially increase costs beyond what is required, by having underutilised staff during less busy months.

- For example, if the team were to adequately resource for any given point of time, it would have needed approximately **6 FTE** in September 2021 to work on 1030 WPQs (assuming 176 cases per month per FTE).
- Whereas, if the team were to resource comfortably for 8 of 12 months, in 2021 at the fifth highest volume of 746 cases (shown in figure 2), the Ministry of Health would need approximately **4 FTE**.

Table 3: GSaC team summary resourcing analysis

| Assumptions | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 [Forecast] | 2023 [Forecast] |
|---|--|---|---|-----------------|
| Volumes of WPQ | | | | |
| WPQ volume | 2699 | 8144 | 8144 | 5723 |
| Staff resources fulfilment numbers | | | | |
| Maximum option: Total FTE required to fulfil WPQ with ease at any given point of time | 3 FTE | 6 FTE | 6 FTE | 4 FTE |
| Medium option: Total FTE required to fulfil WPQ comfortably for 8 months out of 12 | 2 FTE | 4 FTE | 4 FTE | 3 FTE |
| Comparison: FTE that were dedicated to WPQs (assuming temporary arrangements will not be extended) | 1.25 FTE (Jan-Oct) and 1.5 FTE (Oct-Dec) | 1.5 (Jan-June) 3.5 FTE (from June 2021- June 2022) | 4.5 FTE (From Jan-June 2022, assuming the additional advisor roles set out in The OLT paper) | 1.5 FTE |
| | | | 1.5 FTE (from July onwards, when temporary arrangements conclude) | |

1 Figures are rounded.

2 The manageable workload figures are calculated based on information provided in interviews and estimates provided by MoH and MSD

Assumptions for this calculation are summarised in appendix 4.

Official Information Act requests

Summary of findings

The current permanent resources in the OIA team are not sufficient to manage current demand.

The current permanent resourcing of the team managing OIA requests is not sufficient to address current workloads.



The current permanent set up includes only one Team Leader and a high workload per person. The team appears very stretched and often needs to apply for extensions for responses.

The team relies heavily on “borrowing” staff from other teams, but these staff can be withdrawn when required elsewhere. It was noted in interviews that the temporary nature of the support of other teams and the fixed-term contracts of many staff members contributes to planning uncertainties for the team.

To address some of the pressing challenges:

- The Ministry increased the amount of information that is released proactively and improved the Ministry’s coordination of Ombudsman complaints.
- In addition to the recorded requests, the team introduced a quick response system for low-risk requests to allow for timely replies and reduce the burden on the group.

The Ministry has reported to be able to manage 15-20 OIA requests per FTE per month. That would indicate a requirement for 24-30 FTE dedicated to responding to OIAs, which is 2-8 FTE more than the team’s current temporary arrangements.

Further suggested changes will change the way OIA requests are managed.

In addition to the measures described above, the OLT memorandum from November 2021 has suggested temporary relief measures:

- Establish two separate OIA Services teams, reporting to the current Manager OIA Services. This will require establishing one Coordinator OIA Services.
- Establish an Advisory Services team, with a Triage and Response stream and an Advisory stream, which would require establishing six roles.

We believe that the suggested measure will have a positive effect on the OIA team’s capacity to manage its workloads. However, after reviewing the volumes, we believe the suggested temporary arrangements are not sufficient to address the current increased demand and an additional minimum of one Advisor and one Senior Advisor will be required to manage current workloads sustainably.

The development of volumes of OIA requests are hard to predict.

We suggest staffing requirements may remain high for the remainder of 2022. In the OIA space, we have not attempted to forecast workloads in 2023, as they will be subject to too many unknown variables. Points for consideration we have heard through our interviews included:

- When public health measures in connection to the Government’s COVID response are dialled back later this year, so will the public interest. COVID-related OIA requests are expected to decrease.
- Conversely, members of the public have learned more about their rights to information over the past two years and appear more inclined to exercise those rights.
- There was a perception that the establishment of Health NZ would not overly affect requests directed to the Ministry of Health.



Current state

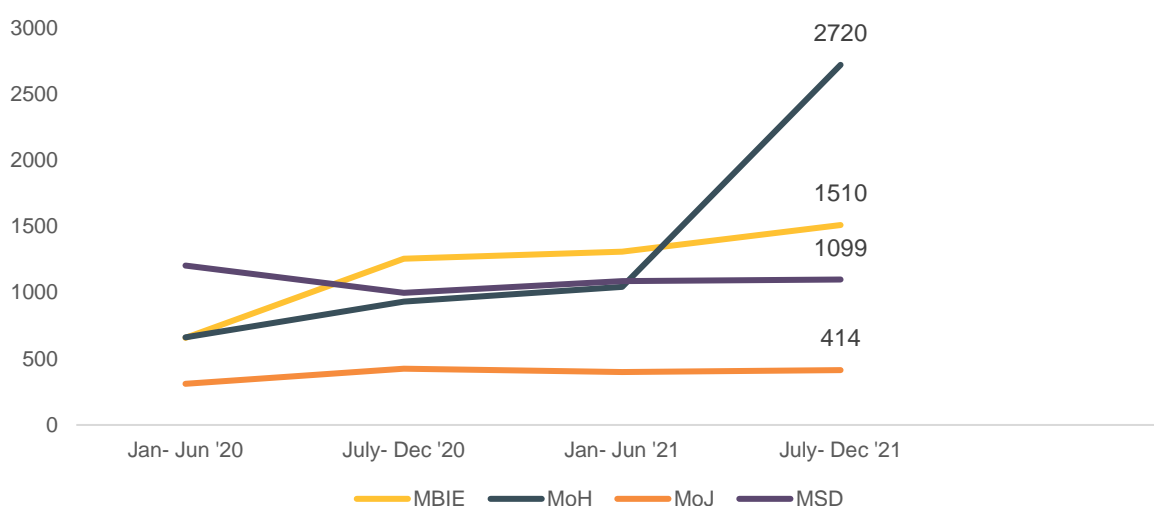
The Ministry of Health has seen the steepest increase in OIA requests across all Government agencies, growing by 140% between 2020 and 2021.

Staff resourcing numbers increased gradually to accommodate the increase in workload but did not match the stark increase in workloads.

Table 4: Summary of OIA data and assumptions

| | MoJ 2021 | MSD 2021 | MBIE 2021 | MoH 2020 | MoH 2021 |
|--|---|---|-----------|---|----------|
| Total number of OIA requests | 814 | 2185 | 2818 | 1593 | 3762 |
| OIA requests resourcing standards | 15 OIAs per Advisor (0.5 FTE for Senior and Principal Advisors) | 8-10 OIAs per Advisor or Senior Advisor per month | [Unknown] | 15-20 OIAs per Advisor (Senior and Principal Advisors dedicate 0.5 FTE to caseload, the remaining 0.5 FTE is dedicated to coaching, training and quality assurance) | |
| Caseload per FTE (Yearly) | - | - | - | 57 | 86 |
| Percentage of OIAs completed within timeframe | 94% | 99% | 90% | 94% | 95% |
| Total number of Ombudsman complaints | 10 | 16 | 39 | 24 | 49 |

Figure 3: Comparison of volumes of OIA requests by Ministry



Analysis

The team has experienced very high average workloads. The team's current average Advisor caseload is fluctuating at approximately 25-30 requests per person in the second half of 2021. This is well above the accepted caseload levels for comparable agencies such as the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Social Development, where the ideal load is seen as 8-15 OIAs per FTE per month.

Table 5: Staff resources for the OIA team 2020-2022

| | January – June 2020 | July – December 2020 | January – June 2021 | July – December 2021* | January – June 2022 |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| OIA requests completed | 662 | 931 | 1,042 | 2,720 | |
| Team headcount (not including Manager) | 11 1x Principal Advisor 3x Senior Advisor 7x Advisors | 13 2x Principal Advisors 4x Senior Advisors 7x Advisors | 18 2x Principal Advisors 4x Senior Advisors 11x Advisors • 3x COVID-funded • 1x 3 month secondee 1x Coordinator (COVID-funded) | 17 2x Principal Advisors 4x Senior Advisors 10x Advisors • 3x COVID-funded 1x Coordinator (COVID-funded) | 17 2x Principal Advisors 4x Senior Advisors 10x Advisors • 3x COVID-funded ³ 1x Coordinator (COVID-funded) |
| Allocated FTE (including temporary staff, not including Manager) | 14 | 14 | 22 | 22 | 22 |
| Average OIA per month per FTE | 8 | 11 | 8 | 21 | - |
| FTE at an ideal workload of 15 OIA requests per month | 7 FTE | 10 FTE | 11.5 or 12 FTE | 30 FTE | - |

When comparing the Ministry of Health numbers to those of other Ministries, it is clear that the Ministry of Health team has very high target and actual productivity.

The Ministry of Health has managed to increase the headcount considerably in recent months using COVID-funded advisors, secondees, and coordinators to fill the gap to keep workload levels relatively the same. However, even with the additional temporary staff, the current number of 21 OIA requests per FTE (for both permanent and temporary staff) is not sustainable.

³ From the end of January, MoH borrowed 3x Advisors within the Government Services Group to assist with the holiday backlog. This arrangement was for a month and ended at the end of February.



An additional minimum of one Advisor and one Senior Advisor will be required to manage current workloads sustainably.

Correspondence (Ministerials and Direct Replies)

Summary of findings

There is no reason to believe the team is currently under-resourced. We do not have sufficient information to suggest the team is over-resourced.

Current state

This part of the Government Services Group has seen the least change in workloads over the past year.

The correspondence volume managed within the Ministry has remained relatively static throughout 2021, with peaks occurring in response to Government announcements.

The OLG memorandum from November 2021 has noted that the correspondence that the Ministry has supported Ministerial Offices to respond to, particularly the Office of the Minister for COVID-19 Response, has grown significantly as the public has questioned the impact of decisions that relate to them. It was noted that it was not possible, however, to accurately report this volume.

It is difficult to compare the work of the team to that of other Ministries.

The Ministry of Social Development has suggested it assumes that one Advisor would be able to manage about 30 pieces of correspondence per month. If that figure was used as a comparable baseline, the Ministry of Health team would be expected to require about eight Advisors and four Senior Advisors to manage all correspondence. However, when comparing the team to similar functions, it was noted that the Ministry of Health team leads larger parts of responses centrally. This makes it hard to benchmark staffing numbers against work to resource ratios of other organisations.

Staff members are currently supporting other teams to release immediate pressures across the wider group.

In November it was recommended to the OLT to change the reporting line for two Advisors Ministerial Correspondence positions, to temporarily report to the Manager Advisory Services. The Advisory Services Team will include a Triage and Response team that will focus on quick responses across the OIA and Correspondence services and work with the organisation to improve information available to the public to respond to focus areas.

Analysis

We have seen no indication to suggest the team is not sufficiently resourced to manage current workloads. Some interviewees have suggested that the team could potentially manage with fewer staff, suggesting making temporary arrangements of staff supporting other teams permanent. The only way to confirm this suggestion would be to conduct a more detailed activity review of the team, estimating FTE based on the activities performed.



Operating approach

The way the group is designed balances efficiency and a need to account for complexity.

The Group follows a hybrid model, where government services are managed from the centralised function, while coordinating the inputs into responses from experts across the Ministry. The central coordination and oversight mean that the bulk of the increased workload is within the Government Services group, but other parts of the Ministry feel the effects of the additional workload too.

To address ever increasing workloads, the group has responded by specialising and adopting more agile practices. The maturity of the group is constantly improving.

The group has had to grow at pace, and the way the OIA team operates is relatively new. The group has established three specialised teams:

- OIA services
- Ministerial Correspondence
- Government Services and Coordination (covering both Briefings and WPQs).

The differentiation of the three functions allows for specialisation of each team and efficiency gains that come from staff applying knowledge and repeatable processes to the work. To address acute resource needs, teams “borrow” staff temporarily to help manage peaks in workload.

There is an opportunity to add more value by moving beyond simply responding to operational demand, but capacity is a constraint.

Interviewees felt that further resource would be required to go beyond managing the workloads of daily operations and following templates, to tailoring responses to audiences and backgrounds to information requests more.

There is an opportunity to link the group’s risk management to the Ministry’s strategic objectives and risks.

We understand that the Ministry of Social Development has introduced a risk assessment process based on the Ministry’s risk framework – which defines risk on a scale of very low to very high. There is now a consistent definition of risk used in their Ministerial and Executive Services function and across the Ministry, coupled with a clear authorisations/sign-out framework commensurate with the level of risk associated with the request.

The Ministry of Social Development has also introduced revised guidance for WPQs, which follows from conversations with the Minister’s’ offices around acceptable approaches.

Managers spend a large part of their time on sign-out processes.

Some interviewees felt that there was a lack of management oversight, with senior advisors signing out high-risk responses. Other interviewees noted that the fact that the team manager is required to sign-out all OIA responses for some DDGs leads to that role spreading their time too thinly, and not spending enough time on high-risk responses. The wide range of demands on managers at the moment (including through large spans of control) amplifies these risks.



There are challenges for the group that are beyond its control.

Interviewees have shared that the Ministry's IT system, especially the use of the Lotus Notes system and document management systems, leads to rework and churn because systems are not well integrated or centrally supported. However, challenges related to the Ministry's wider IT infrastructure beyond the group are not within the sphere of control of the Government Services group.

Workflow efficiency

When reviewing workflow efficiencies, lean management principles suggest identifying opportunities to

- minimise the time spent on support processes in comparison to directly value adding work
- reduce 'waste' in the form of rework, delays and redundancies
- reduce the amount of complexity and variation of work in key processes, enabling standardised outputs to be delivered efficiently and effectively.

Support processes take up much of the group's time.

Frequent turnover in staff means that the function spends a lot of time onboarding and training new staff. This is particularly the case in the OIA team, which is reliant on temporary support staff.

However, processes for new starters have been reviewed and streamlined, which helps new staff come onboard quickly. This mitigates some of the efficiency losses connected to the high staff turnover.

The group is currently relying on manual processes and individual oversight, increasing the likelihood of human error and making communication and oversight inefficient.

We have heard that the function still relies on outlook reminders, emails, spreadsheets and templates that are not integrated into one system, providing transparency and a 'single source of truth'.

When compared to other Ministries with lower workloads, interviewees felt that the workflow management was lagging and urgently needed to be digitised.

A key driver of rework for all processes reviewed are the numerous media discontinuities in the Briefings, Ministerial Correspondence, WPQs and OIAs workflows. A media discontinuity occurs, when staff must manually transfer data between systems, email or other Microsoft programs, and there is no software interface.

Information is currently downloaded from websites, logged in Quill, summarised in emails with manually attached documents, and sometimes uploaded onto websites again.

Each media break in a process is a source of both potential error, and inefficiency.

There is a lack of clear accountability for process improvement.

We have heard that team leaders and team managers are expected to lead process improvement efforts, in addition to their day-to-day work. There is currently no central coordinating role that would identify, oversee or facilitate continuous improvement practices. Area of rework, delay or general process inefficiencies are thus identified by chance, rather than being the result of systematic process improvement practice and mechanism.



A digital workflow system is being developed to improve the efficiency of operations and to address the most pressing challenges of the group.

The Ministry is implementing changes to make workflows more efficient and effective. A workflow management system is being developed to improve visibility over processes, reduce media discontinuities and facilitate coordination.

This solution is expected to address concerns interviewees shared around visibility of process steps, status, and deadlines as well as support continuous improvement practices, such as how feedback gets reflected in templates and content management. It is also expected to reduce delays and redundant processes and improve information management practices, providing the aforementioned 'single source of truth'.

Stakeholders outside the group have identified opportunities to further strengthen continuous improvement efforts.

Stakeholders have noted that they sometimes provide the same feedback to responses multiple times (for example, the Ministry needs to apologise for delays). It was suggested for the group to:

- review its continuous improvement efforts and ensure that feedback is received and reviewed, and fed into standard processes and templates where appropriate, or discussed with the submitter if there is a particular reason for not making the adjustment.
- enable proof-readers of responses to have access to a regularly updated list of standard features and best practice responses for different scenarios.

We also suggest that the workflow management system itself will provide a valuable tool to improve the efficiency of workflows. For example, by actively reviewing areas of the workflow where work gets 'stuck' this may reveal patterns of issues relating to the design of the process, including those that may be amenable to process improvement.

The group manages a complex set of stakeholders that all have their own sets of expectations and preferred ways of working. That system is making process standardisation very difficult.

The team manages many inputs, with various points of contact across the Ministry 'holding the pen' on different answers. The teams liaise with five Minister's Offices and thirteen Deputy Directors-General. Each Minister's Office can define response times and declare preferences for communication materials. Each Deputy Director-General can design and delegate sign-off processes and roles within their group as they see fit.

While there is constant coordination on good workflows and quality requirements for products which will contribute to the establishment of best practice standards over time, there is no expectation that workflows will ever be fully standardised.

There is an opportunity to streamline process flows and reduce delays and bottlenecks.

Interviewees shared that there are delays in the process that make it difficult for the government services group to deliver responses in time.

Delays commonly occur at transition points when work is handed from one individual or group to another. The number of transition points or handovers that occur in each process vary across the Ministry, as Directorates currently respond to requests in different ways.



By reducing the number of transitions or process steps and sharing standardised expectations around response times, the Ministry could significantly reduce process delays.

Another potential source of process delays is unequal distribution of capacity or resource to work on responses. This could include reviewing whether there is more resource required within Directorates, to provide equal capacity at all steps within the process and eliminate delays.

Adding flexible capacity for potential changes in demand at only one step will lead to increasing delays downstream later in the process. Any changes made to improve individual steps of a process, without addressing the bottleneck are likely to fail to improve the process.

The Group Manager liaises with the Minister's Offices to make workflows as efficient and effective as possible.

In the Government Services and Coordination team, it was noted that the Minister's Offices have very diverging views on priority and urgency of work. It was noted that the Group Manager Government Services has led some important work liaising with Minister's Offices on:

- strategic communication
- risk assessment
- how prioritising different aspects of work will create value, and
- what that means for resourcing requirements.

It was noted that there was an opportunity to further strengthen the strategic engagement. One option would be to explore how managers of the teams input the generation of insights and derivation of strategic implications and recommendations.

Avoidable error in OIA release

Issue

In January 2022 some papers were accidentally included in a release of OIA materials by the Minister's office to a requester, when they were intended to be withheld.

The Ministry has described the situation as a 'Swiss cheese' case, in which there were some steps which ordinarily have avoided the mistake but didn't due to human error, exacerbated by a change in personnel on the file over time.

The context

After material identified as included in the scope of an OIA request has been reviewed within the Ministry it is sent to the relevant Minister's office. The office reviews the material, and any proposed withholdings, and provides comment on the proposed approach including the proposed withholdings and the reason for these.

When the material is sent to the Minister's office for review, the material is included in its entirety without redaction. This is called the 'red box' version and includes visible highlighting indicating what is within scope and to be withheld. After the Minister's office provides comment the OIA team makes revisions as required and finalises and returns the pack for release by the Minister's office (in the case of a request to the Minister, which this was).



What happened

Amongst the information to be released, there were some documents that were intended to be withheld in full. This was indicated at the top of the page, which was the practice for documents to be withheld in their entirety. In the finalisation of the batch for the Minister's office to release, these documents weren't removed from the pack and were sent to the requester accidentally, including the pages highlighting that these documents were to be withheld.

Several factors were assessed to lead to the mistake:

- The OIA request at issue had been in the Ministry's system for a while and gone through a number of advisors. This meant that the person who took final action wasn't familiar with the file.
- There was a watermark on all pages that the material was to be released under the OIA, so it wouldn't have been immediately obvious that the material was to be withheld, apart from the note at the top of the page.

The Ministry observed that there wasn't an issue with the sign off layers, which consider what is to be released or not, rather than the mechanical preparation of the pack to be sent to the Minister's office. All the right eyes had been over the decision-making prior to release.

The changes the Ministry has made

The Ministry has made the following adjustments to its release processes to avoid this problem in future:

- 1 Instead of a 'to be withheld' label on top of pages that are to be withheld, pages will be 'red box' redacted in full when they go to the Minister's office for review. The advisor will then make sure it is redacted/removed before sending it over as part of a final batch for release. This redaction is an automated process via the software which manages the redacting.
- 2 Working to standardise the review approaches across Minister's offices, to avoid the application of different ways of handling the review and release process at the back end.
- 3 Suggesting that Minister's office does a final check it before sending it out.

The situation highlighted a vulnerability in the release process. Ultimately the mistake was due to human error, but it is easy to see how it could have happened, without stronger visual cues that the material needed to be removed prior to release.

Appropriateness of the changes

The Ministry's solution to this issue appears well targeted to the risk, as it effectively uses the redacting software to remove the risk of human error. This assumes that the material to be withheld is red box redacted in the first place, but there is no suggestion that this earlier stage in the process was deficient in this case.

This fix would also have avoided a similar situation where a Budget sensitive document was inadvertently released in 2021. Following that incident an additional check by a senior member of the team was implemented.



Capabilities

The individuals in the Government Services Team are well respected.

Respondents felt that the function generally works well, given the high work volume and high stress environment the team is operating in. Individuals are viewed as motivated, well trained and are produce content that can be reused, allowing for efficiency gains to be realised. Informally, the strong relationship skills of all team members allow the team to reach different parts of the Ministry and facilitate timely responses to requests from the group.

There was a consistent view that people in the group are capable and resourceful, and the management level agreed they wanted to make sure staff are well supported in their workloads and professional development.

The group serves as a centre of excellence for government services products.

The group supports the rest of the organisation through training and central communication on government services products, timelines and process requirements. Staff from the group often move on to other roles across the Ministry, lifting the level of understanding about government processes across the organisation.

This Ministry-wide capability-building is an important role of the group, but one that is dropped when workloads mean that the group needs “all hands on deck”.

There is an opportunity to further improve the nuance and style of writing.

Interviewees shared that they found the quality of the Correspondence Team’s written products to be variable, and there is room for improvement in both the content, tone and in presentation and flow. Interviewees felt that Ministerials and Direct Replies could be better tailored to pick up on the tone, background and information need of the audience.

There is currently no career progression pathway or capability framework in place, that would support retention.

We have heard from internal and external interviewees that roles in most Ministerial Services Groups are often a first career step for graduates seeking a career in government. Staff often move on when career opportunities arise, often with short notice periods. Furthermore, some staff find the constantly high workloads challenging.

There is an opportunity to design a framework that addresses different life stages and career ambitions, that considers job variety, building expert tracks, allowing for more flexible workload management, and aiming to improve longer term staff satisfaction and retention.

Structure and team design

It is timely to revisit the span of control, especially for the OIA team.

The group has reached the point where the current structure has come to its limits and the group cannot add further resource to the existing structure, without revisiting the team and role design.

The way the teams are organised will allow for a span of control that is on the larger end of the spectrum. Those features include a comparatively high degree of standardisation, a high similarity of tasks across staff, and a moderate level of training required to perform (basic) tasks.



However, large spans of control mean that managers' time is spread thin across managing staff and their development, driving and supporting improvement, and overseeing delivery. This means that one or more aspects of the management role could be compromised depending on the immediate demands.

A typical span for a manager that primarily acts as this type of supervisor is eight to ten direct reports. The managers OIA Services and Ministerial Correspondence currently each have about 20 direct reports. The OIA team must additionally oversee the work of several temporary staff, borrowed from other teams.

The temporary arrangements suggested in the OLT memorandum from 12 November 2021 address the challenging managerial oversight arrangements, by recommending:

- Establishing a fourth Manager role, overseeing Advisory Services.
- Establishing two team leader roles for OIA Services, reporting to the Manager OIA Services.
- Establishing a team leader role for triage and response, reporting to the Manager Advisory Services.



RECOMMENDATIONS

We have identified areas of focus that have the potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness in the way the group operates. We suggest the Ministry addresses the recommendations of this review in two steps, to address the most pressing challenges first.

Step 1: Setting the Ministry up to manage workloads and perform well now and in the future

Appropriate case loads

As part of the review, we have discussed appropriate caseloads with stakeholders within the Ministry and in similar functions in other Ministries.

The main driver of workloads in the past two years were OIA requests and written parliamentary questions. We thus suggest monitoring caseloads in both categories closely and respond by adding additional resources as required.

- For written parliamentary questions, we suggest ensuring that caseloads do not exceed an average 150 WPQs per advisor per month, or 75 WPQs per senior advisor. The volume of WPQs is cyclical. We suggest not allowing the workload to go beyond 175 WPQs per advisor per month for full time staff, or beyond 150 WPQs per month for temporary support staff.
- For OIA requests, we suggest resourcing the team to ensure each advisor responds to no more than 15 OIA requests per months on average, and senior advisors respond to no more than 8.

Advisor, Senior Advisor and Principal Advisor roles

There is no “one size fits all” answer to resourcing the group. To make recommendations on right-sizing it, we have made assumptions and built on experiences of the Ministry and others.

We have conducted a high-level exercise in modelling the resourcing required to deliver sustained very high workloads over this year, and high workloads in 2023. We have built scenarios based on:

- The resourcing required based on assumptions of achievable workloads per person that the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Social Development have shared.
- The resourcing the Ministry of Health had to handle the workload in 2021, assuming this would be a reasonable baseline for a high-performing team.

We have not heard any indications the Correspondence team requires further permanent resources.



Make current temporary roles in the Government Services and Coordination team permanent.

Based on the workload-to-staff ratios and a suggested span of control of no more than 10 direct reports, we suggest making the currently approved temporary roles (one Senior Advisor and 2 Advisors) permanent.

In addition to these roles, we have identified a need for 1 to 1.5 FTE to support the team with its current workload. We suggest establishing two roles:

- One of those roles should be an **Advisor** role, working on WPQs full-time.
- One of those roles should be a **Senior Advisor** role, with 0.5 FTE dedicated to working on WPQs, dealing with trickier requests. The other 0.5 FTE would support the learning and development, coaching and oversight of the team's Advisors.

This staffing scenario would see the team comfortably able to cope with workloads in most months. In the four months of peak work volumes, the team should be supported by one or two temporary staff from across the Ministry. We suggest making one of the Advisor roles temporary until the end of 2022, as we expect WPQ workloads related to the COVID response to decrease in 2023.

We note that the recent OLT memorandum from 12 November 2021 came to similar conclusions, suggesting an additional Principal Advisor and an Advisor position. We suggest reviewing whether an additional Principal or Senior Advisor role is best suited to support the team.

The advantage of the Principal Advisor role is that the role could act as an 'Editor in Chief', working to lift the team's quality of writing and supporting the team's strategic orientation (working on the system). The advantage of a Senior Advisor role would be that the role would directly contribute to developing responses and easing the workload (working in the system).

Increase OIA team resource levels to match workloads.

The way that OIA requests are addressed is largely non-negotiable. It is important to right-size the team and seniority mix to acknowledge increased work volumes and complexity. When compared to other Ministries, the team appears very lightly resourced which creates a risk of delays and not meeting expected timeliness standards, as well as creating risk of lower quality responses. There is no indication that the sustained high workloads will decrease in the short- to medium-term future. An investment in more permanent capacity in the team does not carry a significant risk of overbuilding the capacity in the event demand drops, due to the high ongoing turnover of staff in the group.

We suggest establishing one Advisor and one Senior Advisor role.

It should be reviewed if some of the seconded staff could join that team permanently or be transferred into a pool of flexible staff whose primary role is to support the OIA Services team, and secondary role is to support other teams with non-time-critical work when workloads allow.

Reducing the number of shorter term contracts.

Predicted workloads are expected to stay high for Ministerial Services functions across government. The Ministry of Health is competing for resource in a limited labour market, and advertising temporary roles will see the Ministry at a disadvantage in comparison to other agencies.

Providing the team with permanent staff allows the team to better invest in people's learning and development and support an apprenticeship model to increase the group's maturity (as set out in the capability section of the report).



There is an opportunity to explore secondment options from across the Ministry

We suggest exploring opportunities to second staff from outside the group for its busiest months. In addition to ensuring an appropriate level of full-time staff that could handle the workload comfortably in off-peak months, we suggest looking at the wider Ministry for temporary support:

- We suggest exploring the option to second junior staff and career starters from other parts of the Ministry for a period of four months to support the group in working through peak work volumes in the OIA and WPQ space.
- A focus should be given to second junior staff from the strategic communication function, as we expect that staff would gain valuable insights into their target audiences from working with the requests coming in.

Management structure, capability, and capacity

Create additional management and team lead roles to reduce the span of control.

This would free up the management resource for more strategic, oversight and risk management work. This could be achieved by either:

- Adding managerial roles to the group, or
- Adding a level of team leaders with direct reports, responsible for the direct people leadership and Principal Consultants that support the oversight and sign-out of straight-forward responses.

A reduced or redesigned span of control would allow the managers to work “on the system” instead of being caught up with operation within the system.

Based on the workload-to-staff models and a suggested span of control of no more than ten direct reports, we suggest making permanent the temporarily approved roles set out in the OLT memorandum from 12 November 2021 on proposed temporary changes to Government Services Group management arrangements and work distribution. This includes:

- Establishing a fourth Manager role, overseeing Advisory Services
- Establishing two team leader roles for OIA Services, reporting to the Manager OIA Services
- Establishing a team leader role for triage and response, reporting to the Manager Advisory Services.

In addition to those roles, we suggest establishing:

- A team leader role in the Ministerial Correspondence team. This role would support the Manager Ministerial Correspondence and could have Coordinator and Advisors report to them. The role would report to the Manager, Ministerial Correspondence, who would also still have Principal and Senior Advisors reporting to them.
- Adding a third team leader role OIA Services. The team leaders are already overseeing more than the suggested maximum span of 10 direct reports. With the suggested additional Advisor and Senior Advisor roles, it is timely to establish a third team leader role.

Proofreading and editing skills need to be featured in all roles.

Diligent editing and proofreading of responses determine the quality of the products produced by the team.

Editing involves going over the writing of yourself or others, ensuring that responses are presented as clearly as possible, structured appropriately, and have a suitable tone and style. It reviews the content,



clarity and structure of responses. Proofreading ensures correct spelling, punctuation and fixes grammatical errors.

We suggest ensuring that editing and proofreading skills are featured in all newly recruited roles. We also suggest for Principal Advisors to lead the way in setting up appropriate systems, trainings, and standards to ensure the group's outputs are of high quality.

High-level workflows

We support current proposals to establish an Advisory Team that would operate in a strategic and tactical space.

We have identified the need to strengthen a risk- and complexity-based view of prioritisation of work and senior oversight. This team will ensure that the right eyes are across the right challenges. It also allows for pairing up senior and more junior advisors to support learning and development on the job.

Given the importance of this step for the group's outcomes, we do not think it is appropriate for rotating Senior Advisors to perform this task as part of their job.

We support the establishment of a triage function, set out in the OLT memorandum of 12 November 2021. The memorandum described how a newly established Advisory Services team would be instrumental in improving the way the Government Services group manages the triage, proactive release and Ombudsman service lines.

The Advisory Services Team will include a Triage and Response Team that will focus on quick responses across the OIA and Correspondence services.

The team will also work with the organisation to improve information available to the public to respond to focus areas, and manage the relationship with the Ombudsman.

We suggest the Advisory Services Team would also act as a first point of contact for the Strategic Engagement and Communication functions in the Ministry to liaise on communication focus areas and share strategic insights.

Process design and efficiencies

We suggest addressing all three aspects of lean management:

- reducing waste
- streamlining support processes
- standardising key processes.

A key part of this will be using the insights provided by the workflow management tool to inform continuous improvement practices.

Increase efforts to standardise sign-out processes.

The Group works with different Directorates that all have a preferred way of working. That variety increases complexity and can lead to inconsistent practices that in itself reduces efficiency. There is an opportunity to further standardise templates, for example, around delegations or commissioning templates.

The team would benefit from revisiting the delegations, clarifying roles and ensuring management attention is appropriately applied to oversight. For example, this might look at whether sign out processes in directorates need to go through multiple layers (SME manager, group manager, GM,



DDG), and the right balance between risk management and efficiency. It is worth noting that streamlining the sign out process might reduce delays in the process. It might also improve the efficiency in sign outs for the directorates. It might not of itself save much time for the Government Services group.

We understand that this will be a journey and that processes will unlikely be fully standardised and consistent across all directorates. However, we suggest the team leadership engages in a series of structured discussions across directorates with a view to standardising sign-out processes, roles and responsibilities, and creating further trust in the group's capability to draft and oversee high-quality outputs.

Reduce delays by reducing process steps and enabling an equal distribution of capacity

We suggest reducing the transition or hand-over points of processes and encouraging the Directorates to standardise practices and to reduce steps in the sign-out process where possible.

We also suggest for the government services group to adopt practices of communicating expected changes in workloads early, allowing the Directorates to account for additional resource requirements in their work programmes and facilitating a more equal ramp-up in capacity across the different process steps. Addressing the bottlenecks in the process will increase the speed of individual requests moving through the process.

Enhancing the continuous improvement process

The group has demonstrated the ability to adapt and improve its ways of operating. We recommend reinforcing this by establishing a continuous improvement practice that is linked in with the new workflow management system and:

- Ensures that feedback on mistakes on standard responses is picked up systematically, and the same comments are not made repeatedly (for example, adding an apology when responses are delayed).
- Ensures that improvements are reflected in templates.

We suggest Principal Advisors lead the thinking on how insights gathered through continuous improvement practices will feed into standards and templates.

Identify a workflow management owner to leverage the workflow management system by capturing insights and initiating process changes.

We suggest identifying a workflow owner who ensures that information, data and insights inform the evolution of the workflow management system and support continuous improvement. That role could sit within the newly formed advisory team, and focus on:

- **Gathering insights:** Identifying common areas of delays and steps with long wait times, identifying inefficiencies, identifying which workflows have the most variation across Directorates and tracking which version is the quickest and leads to the least mistakes. Typical inefficiencies we would expect this role to pick up are:
 - the owner of steps changing repeatedly
 - steps with high needs of back-and forth communications
 - or teams developing redundant systems or templates outside of the workflow management system (e.g., Excel sheets to track progress, templates that are not embedded in the system)



- **Informing process improvement:** Chairing quarterly meetings with the group manager, team managers, principal advisors, and team leaders to examine patterns of issues - combining data and insights and the experience of people. This person would lead the discussion of areas of inefficiency and waste and the identification of solutions. They would also provide information on best practice processes to the group manager, to facilitate the manager's standardisation efforts across Directorates.
- **Overseeing process optimisation efforts:** Overseeing adaptations of workflows, updating workflows within the management system and developing digital templates.
- **Centralise and coordinate improvement efforts:** Being the point of contact for stakeholders across the Ministry for process improvement suggestions.



Step 2: Establish a Centre of Excellence that is linked to the Ministry's strategic objectives

At the core of a high-performing Government Services group is its people. Responding to Ministerial, Parliamentary and public requests requires skill, tact, and an understanding of underlying concerns. These skills can only be learned over time, by doing the role, being exposed to a variety of issues, and observing the approach of more experienced practitioners.

To consolidate the group as a centre of excellence for government products, it is important to continue to lift the capability and subject matter expertise of the group. This includes improving the competency to make judgement calls and reducing mistakes in sign-out processes and final dispatch of a packaged product.

An "apprenticeship model" would allow staff that are looking to progress their careers within the team to understand the nuance of the work with a combination of formal and supported on-the-job learning.

In addition, tailoring the approach to development and career pathways could lead to longer retention, with an impact on knowledge and experience in the group, and reduced management time spent on recruitment and onboarding.

Prioritisation of work

There is an opportunity to address the work of the Group at a more strategic level.

A strategic view is needed to build a stronger focus on the outcomes and points of leverage that truly matter.

The Group currently functions at a mostly reactive operational level. It was noted that a next step in the Group's maturity would be to take a strategic approach to how (official) communication shapes the public image of the Ministry. That includes further work with Ministers' Offices around proactive release, liaising on a risk-based approach to responses and reflecting the Ministry's strategic objectives and key messages in the way responses are worded. We suggest this work be led by the group's management team, with the Advisory team being the main arm for execution and oversight.

Rather than leaving the strategic thinking around key messages to a separate Communication and Engagement function in the Ministry, we suggest the Government Services group take a more proactive role in shaping and reflecting the narratives of the Ministry, complementing the work of other central functions.

To support a strategic focus in the way the group is set up, we suggest the management team prioritises:

- Ensuring that the Government Services Group has a base of skilled advisors to enable it to work across the Ministry and wider sector to identify and prioritise areas of focus for improving the Government engagement approach and outcomes. Secondments to the Communications and Engagement function from the Government Services group could be an expectation to support this approach and ensure that questions and concerns from the public and from Parliament inform thinking about strategic communications, and vice versa.
- Creating a clear expectation that Principal Advisors and Team Leaders will play an active tactical role, including reviewing the approach to bundling up work and finding an appropriate tone to responses on an ongoing basis to ensure that it aligns with overall strategic priorities and risk assessments, and is focused on addressing the issues and opportunities that matter most.



Creating projects out of the regular management line to carry out strategic thinking on particular questions that are important to the performance of the Government Services system. This should be aligned with the peer group of government agencies, working with the Public Service Commission to lift government capability and capacity.

Capabilities and progression pathways

Improve retention by tailoring role design to different career stages or needs.

Interviewees shared that they did not have the expectation that staff would stay in the group forever, but that they should ideally stay at least one year, to reduce the management time spent on constant onboarding, and to improve the quality and nuance of responses.

In addition, it was noted that it would be good to keep some staff in the role for an extended period, building a pool of trusted Senior Advisors that more junior staff can seek guidance from. Those trusted advisors could support peer learning and ensure that institutional knowledge is maintained.

The ideal role design for both desired scenarios would vary:

- In the first case, the role would be designed to maximise opportunities for a career starter that is curious to learn more about the group's operations and wants to explore different parts of the system. On that "career starter track", staff could move through the teams and learn a defined skill set. After one year, that person could decide whether to:
 - move into a next step of an apprenticeship system, preparing to develop their skill set and advance their career within the group (see outlined below), or
 - move into another role within the Ministry. The managers in the Government Services group would facilitate the move and career progression.

Verbalising the desire to retain the role for at least one year and offering to actively support career development as part of that track, would make it easier to plan with and for staff.

- In the second case, staff need to be supported to perform their role in the long run and become experienced and trusted advisors. A focus should be put on wellbeing and stress reduction, ensuring manageable workloads.

Employing an apprenticeship system to support learning and development.

It is proposed that generic government services skills continue to be strengthened through the adoption of a mentoring model, commonly used by successful policy groups and professional service firms. Under this model, the expectations on different roles would be as follows:

- **Entry level/ Advisors** would focus on learning the basics of government services product development. Advisors would be expected to work across multiple teams to increase their breadth and depth of knowledge, skills and experience. In a first year, they would be expected to learn the basics in the OIA team, supporting the team in managing its high workloads. In a second year, entry level Advisors could choose whether they prefer seek opportunities elsewhere in the Ministry or continue their progression pathway within the Government Services group. In case they remain within the group, they would be expected to learn and move through the wider group. They would be expected to develop strong networks with all colleagues inside the Ministry.
- **Senior Advisors** would be expected to take increased responsibility to supervise and mentor advisors. They could be encouraged to undertake a 3-month secondment to the strategic communications function prior to their appointment, learning more about strategic dimensions,



priorities and risks associated with the Ministry's public communications. The secondment would be expected to happen in the 'downturn' of work volumes between December and February.

- Senior advisors would be expected to have a good understanding of risks associated with the publication of information and have an ability to provide nuanced and appropriate answers to requests for information.
 - Senior advisors would be expected to have a minimum of 2.5 years' experience in the group (or other relevant) role during which time they would have led triaging or risk assessment activities.
 - Senior advisors are expected to have well-developed networks with all stakeholders, and regularly explore long term strategic solutions with these groups.
- **Principal Advisor** positions would reflect a need for specific skills in the development of products. These specialist roles would report to Managers. They would be responsible for leading the response to high-risk requests, understanding the wider and long term implications, and engaging all relevant stakeholders at an early stage. They would be involved in ensuring the right skills are sourced for each task and oversee the development of the response to ensure that it delivers to the required standard, engages more widely, and follows the right processes.

Principal advisors would be responsible for supervising and mentoring the learning and development of senior advisors, by drawing them into the responses generated for high-risk requests, explaining their thinking and decisions along the way.

The role would provide an alternative career path for staff who have the aspiration and capability to develop into an expert practitioner rather than a people manager. It is expected that Principal Advisors and Team Leaders would sign-out medium-risk responses. In the Ministerial Correspondence team, this role could provide quality control and professional development for staff, acting as a an "Editor in Chief". Ministerials and other Ministerial products, including briefings and Cabinet papers, will pass through this position.

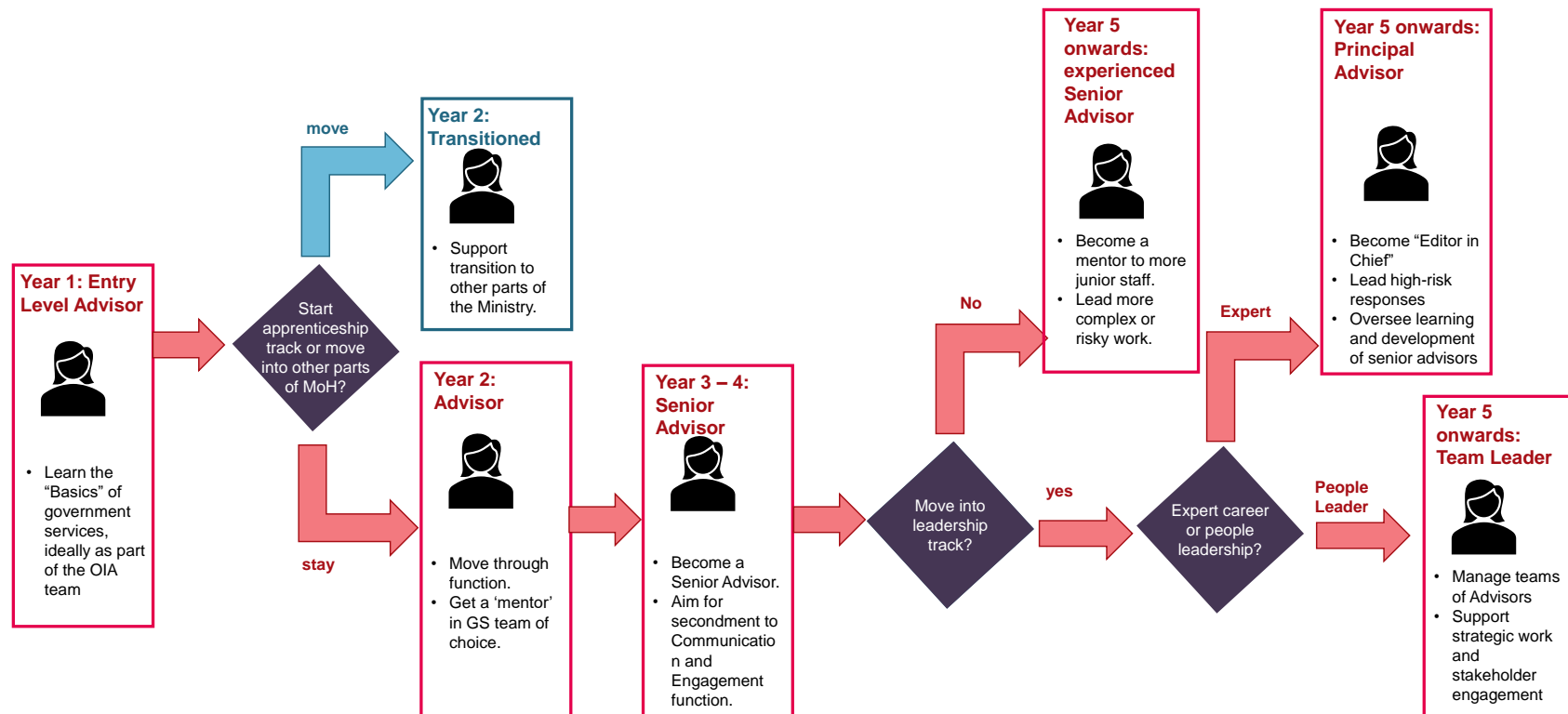
As systemic or capability problems are identified, the editing Principal Advisor would work with the management team and staff to address these.

- **Team Leaders** would be expected to provide support to Managers in considering the broader strategic work programme of the group, and forge synergies and relationships with the Government Services Peer Group and other stakeholders. This role would report directly to the Manager of a team. They would exemplify the behaviours, innovation and efficiency that the Ministry expect the teams to work with. It is expected that Principal Advisors and Team Leaders would sign-out medium-risk responses.
- **Team Managers** would primarily focus on people management and development, ensuring their team was running effectively and efficiently, managing relationships with key stakeholders, and 'owning' the outputs. Managers would also be required to have sufficient knowledge of the pipeline of work and be across high risk responses. It is expected that managers would sign-out high-risk responses.
- **The General Manager** plays a key role in setting and monitoring the strategic direction of the group, ensuring that capability across the group is being built in the right way, and that resources are being deployed flexibly onto the priority areas of focus. They would collectively own the prioritisation of work with the managers, along with the DDG, and would ensure that the programme is aligned with wider Ministry and sector priorities.



Figure 4: High level apprenticeship model

APPRENTICESHIP MODEL



Further strengthen the learning and development framework for the wider Ministry

To complement the apprenticeship model, the Group should develop an in-house learning and development programme for staff in other Business Units to understand the statutory requirements, objectives, risks and priorities of work within the group. The model can build on the good work the Government Services Group has been acknowledged for and offer refresher sessions as well as information tailored for different seniority levels across the business units.

This will allow the team to have richer engagements with senior leaders of business units, and create shared understanding of roles and responsibilities, contributing to a standardisation of response workflows and sign-outs.

The apprenticeship model should be included in a wider Ministerial capability framework, to ensure an all-of-Ministry approach to career development.

We suggest the Group's leadership engage with the people experience side of the Human Resource function to ensure the apprenticeship model feeds into the Ministry's direction of travel and maximises opportunities for Learning and Development established in other parts of the Ministry.

Link the group's risk management to the Ministry's strategic objectives and risks.

We suggest that the group leads discussions with various stakeholders to understand current risk profiles and respond accordingly. Concrete steps could include:

- Liaising with DCEs across the Ministry to understand what is considered sustained high or emerging risks within their teams and what the Business Units would like the Government Services Group to consider when drafting and overseeing responses. Central insights should be captured in a central dashboard for all staff within the Group to access.
- Link in with other central functions and leadership meetings and disseminate knowledge about Ministry-wide strategic considerations and risks across the group.
- Further systematise how the Government Services Peer Group that is working with the Public Service Commission analyses and responds to risks. That could include:
 - Making risk identification and assessment a standard agenda item.
 - Working with the wider system to identify mitigations.

Expand the role of the Government Services Group.

There is an opportunity to expand the role of the group to coordinate the proactive release of Cabinet Papers. Currently each Directorate coordinates the proactive release of its Cabinet papers. There is an opportunity to centralise the oversight of that group and manage a central knowledge and content management, increasing consistency and efficiency of current practices.



APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEWEES

Internal interviewees

- Jan Torres, Acting Manager Official Information Services
- Nick Allen, Manager Official Information Services (substantive)
- Andrew Dames, Manager Government Services and Coordination
- Vera Hennessy, Acting Manager Ministerial Correspondence
- Emily Richards, Manager Office of the Deputy Director-General
- Ricarda Vandervorst, Manager Office of the Deputy Director-General
- Elisabeth Brunt, Group Manager Government Services
- Sarah Turner, Deputy Director-General, Office of the Director-General.

External interviewees

- Magnus O'Neill, General Manager Ministerial and Executive Services, MSD
- Nicky Dirks, Manager Ministerial and Executive Services, Public Service Commission
- Jenna Bottcher, Manager Ministerial Relations and Services, Ministry of Justice.



APPENDIX 2: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Numbers and data

- GSaC data 2020-2021
- OIA statistics as published by the Public Service Commission:
<https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/resources/latest-oia-statistics-released-jul-dec-2021/>
- Calculations and workload estimations shared in emails and memos by the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Justice.

Processes

- Process Flow diagrams on Briefings, Ministerial Correspondence, WPQs and OIAs and excel logs detailing the changes made in the new system.
- Proposed future state value stream of the workflow management system.

Resourcing

- Current organisational charts detailing the structure of the group
- Information provided by the manager of each group
- OLT memorandum from 12 November 2021 on “Proposed temporary changes to Government Services Group management arrangements and work distribution.”



APPENDIX 3: GSAC STAFFING ASSUMPTIONS

The table below lists the detailed assumptions and data we have used to demonstrate the caseload per FTE from 2019-2023.

Table 6: Assumptions for WPQ staff resourcing analysis

| Assumptions | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023 |
|---------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Staffing resources | <p>Jun 2020- Oct 2020 staff resource numbers for MoH⁴</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager (1) at 0 FTE • Senior Advisor (1) at 0.25 FTE • Advisors (2) at 0.5 FTE <p>Oct 2020 – Jun 2021 figures staff resource numbers for MoH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager (1) at 0 FTE • Senior Advisor (2) at 0.25 FTE • Advisors (2) at 0.5 FTE each | <p>Jan 2021- Jun 2021 figures staff resource numbers for MOH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager (1) at 0 FTE • Senior Advisor (2) at 0.25 FTE • Advisors (2) at 0.5 FTE each <p>Jun 2021- June 2022 staff resource numbers for MoH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager (1) at 0 FTE • Senior Advisor (2) at 0.25 FTE • Advisors (2) at 0.5 FTE • Advisors (2) at 2 FTE⁵ | <p>Dec 2021 – June 2022 staff resource numbers in recent OLT memorandum with two additional resources (1 Principal Advisor and 1 Advisor)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager (1) at 0 FTE • Principal Advisor (1) at 0.5 FTE • Senior Advisor (2) at 0.25 FTE • Advisors (4) at 0.5 FTE • Advisor (1) at 1 FTE | <p>Similar temporary arrangements as the Dec 2021- June 2022 staff resource numbers in recent OLT memorandum with two additional resources (1 Principal Advisor and 1 Advisor)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager (1) at 0 FTE • Principal advisor (1) at 0.5 FTE • Senior Advisor (1) at 0.25 FTE • Advisors (2) at 0.5 FTE • Advisor (1) at 1 FTE. |
| Volume of WPQs | Dataset provided | Dataset provided | Using base volumes of WPQs from 2021 as we are still observing a peak in the volume of WPQs in the third month of 2022. | Using base volumes of WPQs from 2021 and calculating a 25% reduction of two COVID-19 related directorates (Health System Response and Vaccine & Immunisation Programme) |
| MSD Baseline | Estimation of a manageable workload of 150 WPQs per FTE provided by MSD ⁶ for comparison | | | |
| MoH Baseline | Estimation of a manageable workload of 176 WPQs per FTE fully dedicated to WPQs in 2020. | | | |

⁴ Ministry of Health's staff resource figures for the Government, Services and Coordination team were sent to us by Elizabeth Brunt, assuming advisors spend 50% of time on WPQs and senior advisors spend 25% of their time on WPQs.

⁵ Note that Advisors added as a resource from 2021 are assumed to solely help with WPQ workloads, (1 FTE), and newly resourced Senior and Principal Advisors are estimated to spend half their time on WPQs (0.5)

⁶ Ministry of Social Development's caseload by FTE figures for the Ministerial and Executive team were sent to us by Magnus O'Neill.



APPENDIX 4: GSAC TEAM RESOURCING ANALYSIS

Table 7: GSaC team resourcing analysis

| Assumptions | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 [Forecast] | 2023 [Forecast] |
|---|--|---|---|-------------------------|
| Manageable workload per FTE | | | | |
| MOH baseline (monthly) | 176 cases per FTE | 176 cases per FTE | 176 cases per FTE | 176 cases per FTE |
| MSD baseline (monthly) | 150 cases per FTE | 150 cases per FTE | 150 cases per FTE | 150 cases per FTE |
| Volumes of WPQ | | | | |
| WPQ volume | 2699 | 8144 | 8144 | 5723 |
| Highest monthly volume of WPQ in a year | May: 586 requests | September: 1030 requests | September: 1030 requests | September: 741 requests |
| 5 th highest monthly volume of WPQ in a year | March: 336 requests | March: 747 requests | March: 747 requests | March: 521 requests |
| Peak volumes of WPQ | March-July | July-November | July-November | July-November |
| Staff resources fulfilment numbers | | | | |
| Maximum option: Total FTE required to fulfil WPQ with ease at any given point of time | 3 FTE | 6 FTE | 6 FTE | 4 FTE |
| Medium option: Total FTE required to fulfil WPQ comfortably for 8 months out of 12 | 2 FTE | 4 FTE | 4 FTE | 3 FTE |
| Comparison: FTE that were dedicated to WPQs (assuming temporary arrangements will not be extended) | 1.25 FTE (Jan-Oct) and 1.5 FTE (Oct-Dec) | 1.5 (Jan-June) 3.5 FTE (from June 2021- June 2022) | 4.5 FTE (From Jan-June 2022, assuming the additional advisor roles set out in The OLT paper) 1.5 FTE (from July onwards, when temporary arrangements conclude) | 1.5 FTE |

- 1 Figures are rounded.
- 2 The manageable workload figures are calculated based on information gathered through the interviews, and estimates provided by MoH and MSD
- 3 Staff resources fulfillment numbers are calculated by dividing the volume of WPQ by the MoH baseline caseloads per FTE to calculate FTEs needed.
- 4 Current FTE numbers are staffing numbers and proposed plans (2022-onwards) from the OLT memorandum provided by MoH.
- 5 Full time advisors are calculated to use 0.5 FTE resources for WPQs, full time Senior Advisors are calculated to manage 0.25 FTE caseload for WPQs, and Managers and Coordinators are assumed to spend no time on WPQs.
- 6 2022 estimated to have the same volume of WPQs as 2021
- 7 2023 estimated to have a 25% reduction of COVID-19 related requests in COVID-19 related Directorates

