

STATE SECTOR ACT REFORM FACTSHEET: Te Ao Tūmatanui – Strengthening The Māori/Crown Relationship

STATE SERVICES COMMISSION
TE KAWA MATAAHO

Major decisions

The Government is committed to improving services and outcomes for Māori and strengthening the Māori/Crown relationship through:

- a prominent stand-alone clause that is clear about the expectations of the Public Service in relation to the Crown's Treaty partner and contains guidance to support the public sector in building its capability. The changes will support:
 - engagement, participation of and partnership with Māori
 - delivering services that are responsive, accessible and work for Māori and whānau
 - improving workforce composition and capability
 - collective responsibility for a culturally competent public service that delivers with and for Māori
 - Māori being supported in leadership and decision-making roles
 - recognising the responsibility of the Public Service – including Crown Agents – to enable/support the Crown to fulfil its responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi.

In addition, explicit provisions in the Act will strengthen and clarify the Public Service Commissioner and chief executives' collective responsibilities for developing cultural competence and capability, for supporting Māori leadership within the Public Service.

Public servants will also be expected to work collaboratively and engage meaningfully with Māori in the design of policies, programmes and services. Chief executives will be accountable to the Commissioner for upholding their responsibilities to support the Māori/Crown relationship.

What it means for public servants

The Reform will include provisions that strengthen the Public Service to better support the Government's commitment to a stronger Māori/Crown relationship, and to help improve services and outcomes for Māori.

- We will move beyond a consultation model to one that is based on proactive and meaningful engagement with Māori.
- Our relationship with Māori is based on collaborative approaches that are mutually beneficial.
- We can expect to see greater understanding and incorporation of te ao Māori woven into the work and ethos of Public Service, including.
 - te ao Māori concepts, knowledge, values and perspectives
 - te reo Māori (Māori language)
 - tikanga Māori (protocols and customs)
 - te Tiriti and understanding how it applies day-to-day
- We all have a collective responsibility for a culturally competent Public Service that delivers with and for Māori and is committed to support Māori leadership and Māori in decision-making roles in the Public Service.

Questions and answers

What changes will public servants need to make in their routine work because of the reference in the Act to Te Tiriti o Waitangi?

All public servants, including senior leaders, will be expected to consider Treaty implications in their day-to-day work. Public servants will also be expected to work collaboratively and engage meaningfully with Māori in the design of policies, programmes and services.

Does this new clause require a big shift in thinking and practice for the Public Service?

There are pockets of good practice across the Public Service – however we need to do a lot more to strengthen the Māori-Crown Relationship and ultimately improve outcomes for Māori.

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How will public servants be supported to make these changes?

Public Service chief executives will determine what their agency needs. The Public Service Commission will provide leadership and guidance to support a wide capability lift. Te Arawhiti also has specific responsibilities to strengthen public sector capability to support the Māori/Crown relationship.

Who is responsible for making sure public servants can deliver these expectations?

The expectations will clearly apply to the Public Service Commissioner, Public Service chief executives, and boards of Crown agents.

Chief executives will be accountable to the Public Service Commissioner, as Head of the Public Service.

Does the stand-alone clause apply to Crown agents and the boards of the Crown Agent?

This applies to Crown agents as instruments of the Crown. The Board, as the governing body of the Crown agent, is responsible for ensuring that the Crown agent plays its part in supporting the Māori/Crown relationship.

How will the clause change the way Crown agent employees and boards operate?

Many Crown agents already recognise special relationships with Māori/iwi. For example, district health boards have specific obligations and responsibilities set out in their governing legislation. The new clause will mean that all Crown agents will need to lift their capability to strengthen the Māori/Crown relationship through their work.

How does this work with the Maihi Karauna work already underway?

The reforms complement the work of Maihi Karauna because they go beyond language revitalisation and more broadly set out expectations for strengthening Māori capability of the Public Service.

For more information on the State Sector Act reform, and the full series of factsheets, please visit the [SSC website](#).