



# **Te Kawa Mataaho**

Public Service Commission

19 September 2024

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Tēnā koe Edward

## **Follow-up on performance audit of how well public organisations are supporting Whānau Ora and whānau centred approaches**

Thank you for your letter following up on the Office of the Auditor-General's performance audit of how well public organisations are supporting Whānau Ora and whānau-centred approaches.

I understand that the Office of the Auditor-General made seven recommendations that are intended to support the public service to broaden its understanding and development of approaches that give whānau the ability to achieve their aspirations and live well. The following recommendation was directed at the Treasury and Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission:

- the Treasury and Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission provide more proactive guidance to public organisations about joint working and funding arrangements available that would support the use of whānau-centred approaches.

### **The Public Service Act supports coordination and collaboration across the public service**

As the performance audit report mentions, the Public Service Act 2020 introduced a range of formal mechanisms to support more joined-up working throughout the public sector.

Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission (the Commission) works to enable better coordination of services for the public by improvements to the system. For example, on enhancing coordination between agencies and enabling communities to design interventions at a local level.

We have an ongoing role to embed new collaborative models for ensuring agencies are better able to work together and to deliver better results. Part of this involves ensuring our Public Service maintains the capability to support the Crown in its relationships with Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi.

### **The Commission has guidance on collaborative arrangements**

The report also mentions how the Commission often provides direct support to agencies working through matters of system design, including proposals for joint working arrangements.

As government's lead advisor on the design of the systems of government, we prepare and publish guidance and tools to support policy advice on machinery of government issues.

This includes the [System Design Toolkit](#), which provides guidance on different organisational arrangements and forms that can help to enable greater collaboration on complex issues including whānau-centred approaches.

Public Service agencies are increasingly using the System Design Toolkit to inform their advice to Ministers on issues which require greater collaboration across the system. We are providing them with guidance and support as needed.

### **Our role in supporting public organisations**

The Commission leads the Public Service and enables, drives and monitors performance across the system. This includes looking at how the system could be improved to enable better collaboration and co-ordination of services for the public.

Our role in relation to whānau-centred approaches includes supporting Te Puni Kōkiri as the principal policy advisor to Government on Māori wellbeing and development. We support them to take a leadership role across the system in line with their role, including their focus on strengthening and supporting whānau-centred approaches.

Some of the mechanisms that have enabled us to support this work has included:

- working with the **Public Service Leadership Team** (which includes the chief executives of Public Service departments and certain Crown Entities) to support Public Service leaders to co-ordinate strategically on key system matters including Māori-Crown relations
- convening **Te Hāpai Ō** (the Public Service Commissioner's statutory Māori advisory committee, comprising of Māori leaders external to the public service and the chief executives of Te Puni Kōkiri and Te Arawhiti) to drive strategic conversations on implementing the requirements of the Public Service Act. This has led to conversations on how the system could be better supported to develop and deliver whānau-centred approaches and locally led service delivery models where appropriate.
- advising on the creation of other collaborative bodies such as **Te Puna Aonui** (the interdepartmental executive board for eliminating family violence and sexual violence) which is supporting a focus on whānau-centred approaches through Te Aorerekura, the National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence.

### **We have recently provided proactive support to Te Puni Kōkiri**

The Commission has supported Te Puni Kōkiri to consider your recommendations about how the system could provide better support for agencies to deliver whānau-centred approaches. This included looking at existing supports and how they are working in practice, and analysis of options for the future of both whānau-centred approaches and Whānau Ora. Further, we seconded a Senior Advisor from our policy team into Te Puni Kōkiri's social policy team for a few months, strengthening the relationship between teams and supporting work on whānau-centred approaches.

We have assessed our progress on the recommendation as 'substantively complete', in that we have completed the actions that we identified in immediate response to the recommendations in the performance audit, but will continue working with Te Puni Kōkiri on opportunities to better join up work across government to support Whānau Ora and whānau-centred approaches as these opportunities are identified. The responses identified in this section commenced in February 2023 and was substantially complete by October 2023. A self-assessment of our progress on the recommendation using the self-assessment table that you developed is attached as Appendix 1.

The Commission will support public organisations on joint working arrangements that would support the use of whānau-centred approaches where appropriate and as consistent with Government policy. While we have provided proactive support and guidance as described above, we are also open to requests for further guidance from those organisations. Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this recommendation.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hugo Vitalis', written in a cursive style.

Hugo Vitalis

Deputy Chief Executive, Policy, Strategy, Integrity

## Appendix 1 – Self-assessment table

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| <b>Recommendation</b>                        | We recommend that the Treasury and Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission provide more proactive guidance to public organisations about your joint working and funding arrangements available that would support the use of whānau-centred approaches.  |
| <b>Action</b>                                | Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission supported Te Puni Kōkiri to consider your recommendations about how the system could provide better support for agencies to deliver whānau-centred approaches. This included looking at the existing supports and how they are working in practice, and analysis of options for the future of Whānau Ora and whānau-centred approaches. Further, we seconded a Senior Advisor from our policy team into Te Puni Kōkiri’s social policy team for a few months, strengthening the relationship between teams and supporting work on whānau-centred approaches. |
| <b>Status</b>                                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantively completed  |
| <b>Comments on status given above</b>        | The immediate response is complete, but we will continue working with Te Puni Kōkiri on opportunities to better join up work across government to support whānau-centred approaches and Whānau Ora as these opportunities are identified.  |
| <b>Date commenced</b>                        | February 2023  |
| <b>Date completed or due to be completed</b> | October 2023   |