

27 October 2017

Hon James Shaw
Minister of Statistics
Parliament Buildings

Dear Minister

I am very pleased to welcome you to your new role as Minister of Statistics, and to assure you that you have taken on a much more exciting portfolio than you might expect!

You will see that your portfolio covers more than just the production of official statistics. It is a Ministerial portfolio of growing importance in a data age. Data is now seen as the world's most valuable asset, and Stats NZ is New Zealand's data agency. Through our vision of "unleashing the power of data to change lives" we are here to help you, the government, and the rest of New Zealand to make the most of this resource to improve wellbeing.

Nothing a responsible government does is possible without the use of robust data – data about who lives where, and how they move; data about what people need, what they buy, and why; data about what is happening in our environment, in our towns, and in our homes and business. Data helps the government and public service understand where to focus effort, which services work, and how policy affects people and their lives. It is an enabler of good decisions, not an end in itself. At the same time, the government and public service have a great responsibility to safeguard the data that they hold on New Zealanders and their lives. At Stats NZ, we take this responsibility very seriously.

As the Minister of Statistics you are the champion of data as a strategic government asset. This means taking a strategic look at how data is collected, used and re-used across the state sector – with a focus on trusted use. As the newly appointed Government Chief Data Steward, I look forward to talking to you about the opportunities and challenges this presents, including Stats NZ's role in encouraging and promoting open data in New Zealand.

You probably know us best for the critical official statistics part of our role – measuring what matters for New Zealand. By providing independent and impartial statistics and analysis, we help New Zealand understand where we've been, where we are now, and where we are likely to be. We are striving to make our information more accessible and intuitive, for the public as well as for business and government users. Our impartiality and skill in the science of measurement and data analysis makes us well positioned to assist in setting and monitoring progress against the Government goals and targets, for example reducing child poverty and promoting sustainable development, something I would be keen to discuss with you.

What you may not know is that Stats NZ is on a journey from being a traditional official statistics organisation to one focussed on unleashing the power of data to change lives. We are pushing the boundaries of data analysis and use. We are recognised as a world leader, particularly in the use and protection of integrated data. We help government and other users understand what data is telling us, what it can tell us, and importantly what the limitations of the data are. We recognise that data supports decision making, but that it can only take us so far – decisions will still rely on judgement and weighing up of priorities.

We are looking forward to more fully understanding your priorities and how Stats NZ can assist the government to understand and track progress to reduce poverty, improve wellbeing, protect the environment, and support a growing, inclusive, sustainable economy.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Liz MacPherson', written in a cursive style.

Liz MacPherson
Government Statistician

This briefing

The 'scene setting' section of this briefing outlines how Stats NZ, both as a provider of information and a leader in the data system, can support you in your new role, and support the government to deliver on its priorities.

The 'for your attention' section outlines key priorities you will need to consider in your first few months as Minister. This includes key pieces of work and releases of information from Stats NZ, as well as pieces of work initiated by past Ministers that you may like to discuss with officials.

Further detail on anything in this briefing can be provided in supplementary briefings, or discussed with officials in person.

Setting the scene - Statistics and Data in New Zealand

Data are the lifeblood of decision-making. Without data, we cannot know how many people are born and at what age they die; how many men, women and children still live in poverty; how many children need educating; how many doctors to train or schools to build; how public money is being spent and to what effect; whether greenhouse gas emissions are increasing or the fish stocks in the ocean are dangerously low; how many people are in what kinds of work, what companies are trading and whether economic activity is expanding.

From A World that Counts: Mobilising the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development - Report prepared at the request of the UN Secretary-General, by the Independent Expert Advisory Group on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, November 2014

Stats NZ wants to work with you to unleash the power of data to change lives

In 2014 Stats NZ set itself the strategic vision of unleashing the power of data to change lives. We did this recognising that our purpose was to empower decision-makers by adding value to NZ's most important data. Producing statistics, while important, is only one way we add value. Increasingly we are recognised for our other data services – including integrated data and data analytics. Stats NZ produces a huge amount of information for decision makers in New Zealand, as shown in the attached diagram. We look forward to discussing how we prioritise our collection and analysis of data to support your government's aims and expectations.

The Minister of Statistics oversees the provision of official statistics, and the stewardship of data across government.

As the Minister of Statistics you will have a key role in promoting the use of data in understanding New Zealand, in making informed decisions, and in unlocking its value through innovation. The

Government Statistician is the Chief Executive of Stats NZ and supports you by providing key policy advice on statistical matters; we have specific roles described by the Statistics Act 1975 (the Act).

The Minister of Statistics can direct the Government Statistician to collect or cease collection of statistics of any kind, provided for in the Act. The mechanism for this is Stats NZ's Output Plan, agreed between the Minister and the Government Statistician. The 2017/18 Output Plan was finalised in September this year, but we would be happy to renegotiate this and how to give effect to your priorities for the portfolio.

The Minister of Statistics is required to approve each new survey across government, as well as any substantial alterations to existing surveys. This requirement applies to statistical surveys conducted by all government departments; however, there is a longstanding waiver of this requirement for departments other than Stats NZ.

The Government Statistician has statutory independence, mandated by the Act, in relation to the production and provision of statistics – i.e. what a particular number is, how we calculate it, and how it is shared. This is to maintain public trust and confidence in the integrity of official statistics. Our independence is an important strength – it allows Stats NZ to provide an impartial view of New Zealand, and allows information users to have trust in that view. It means our statistics and analysis can be depended upon now, and our enduring impartiality allows for comparison across time.

This impartiality is also important for New Zealand's reputation on the world stage, to give the international community confidence in our measures of economic and social performance. An independent and trustworthy office of national statistics is a key element of a modern, well-functioning democracy and is reflected in decisions such as the interest rates charged on government borrowing. Stats NZ is an active contributor to the international statistical community, which sets the rules and standards for a number of global measures; we chair a number of committees for the UN Statistical Commission.

Stats NZ measures what matters to New Zealanders and the government

Officials would be happy to discuss with you how we can ensure we are measuring what matters for you and the government. As well as discussing the statistics we already produce, you may wish to discuss potential other measures which Stats NZ could contribute, and what reprioritisation would be necessary to deliver them:

- We are working with Treasury, DPMC and the Ministry for Social Development on a potential measure of child poverty. Given our impartial role in the public service, you may want to support Stats NZ to play a key role in collecting and producing such a measure. Our advice and that of the international experts in this area is to use a range of monetary and non-monetary indicators. A separate briefing has been prepared for you on this.
- Internationally, National Statistical Agencies, like Stats NZ, have a key role in setting and monitoring against the UN sustainable development goals framework. The Labour-Green Party confidence and supply agreement refers to a comprehensive set of environmental, social and economic sustainability indicators. Stats NZ supported Treasury to develop their living standards framework, and can work with you and partners across government to evaluate the data needs and gaps in order to report against these goals. We would be happy to brief you on this at an appropriate time.

- We will have a key role in any review of the official measures for unemployment to ensure they accurately reflect the workforce of the 21st Century, as agreed in the Labour-NZ First coalition agreement.
- We have worked with Land Information New Zealand to collect and share information on property transfer and tax residence information, which relates to foreign ownership of property.
- In order to make ICT the second-largest contributor to GDP by 2025, Stats NZ could work with industry groups to identify an appropriate, meaningful measure of the value of ICT.
- With the Ministry for the Environment, we publish an environment report every six months. We also produce a set of environmental accounts – to show whether patterns of economic activity are depleting or degrading our resources, and the extent to which changes in natural resource use and pollutants are linked to economic activity. Due to our expertise and reputation for impartiality, there may be further roles for Stats NZ in monitoring other environment-related statistics, including emissions or water quality, or environmental measures to be reported on alongside GDP.
- The government has stated that it plans to remove the requirement in social services contracts to share identifiable client-level data in order to gain funding. Stats NZ could help find appropriate sources of data to inform policy while protecting individuals’ rights and needs.
- Stats NZ is working with MBIE and the Ministry for Women to explore how we can collect and share information about how much men and women are paid, to assist with potential claims for pay equity. We regularly publish statistics about income and the gender pay gap using information from the Household Labour Force Survey, and produced analysis of the ‘motherhood penalty’ in February this year.

We draw on a growing range of data sources to measure what matters and reduce the survey burden

Making use of the wide, growing range of information provided by an increasingly digital world, we can better understand New Zealanders and the way they live. Huge amounts of information are created in the digital economy; Stats NZ is pushing the traditional boundaries of an official statistics agency, exploring how we can work with private and public sector partners to make use of this information, in a robust, responsible way.

New technology, new software, and new processes also provide opportunities to make better use of the data already held by government. Combining these with different data sources, such as information in business tax returns, lets us provide more high-quality information more frequently than is provided by survey collection methods. By reusing existing ‘administrative’ data, this will see a better return on government investment. By reducing the burden on respondents, this will improve citizen experience of government.

Using administrative data is already providing more information on business income, improving how we assess migration (rather than depending solely on arrival card information), and will be key to removing the need for passenger departure cards. Administrative data will be key to transforming how we carry out censuses in New Zealand. Officials can brief you on these projects separately.

While new data sources can provide a significant amount of information it is not yet clear the extent to which this will be able to replace existing methods. Surveying will remain important to fill information gaps, and validate the quality of other data sources.

We support data-driven decision making, including through the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI)

Data from across the public service and beyond helps support policy decisions. As well as providing a wealth of data from our surveys and analysis, Stats NZ provides advice to our public service partners on the use of data – what the data is telling us, what it can tell us, and what the limitations of the data are. In this way, we help strengthen the use of data in good decision making.

Stats NZ is the home of the IDI, which is a world-leading research infrastructure linking together our surveys, data from other government agencies, and non-governmental organisations. The IDI provides researchers and government organisations with access to over 166 billion facts. The resulting linked data is de-identified (common personal identifiers are removed) and research results are further confidentialised to protect privacy.

The IDI cannot be used to target or identify specific individuals for services, but can be used to produce analysis and research about populations of interest. Data, connected through the IDI, does provide a powerful analytical tool, contributing to government and researcher understanding of what interventions work and their impact on peoples' life outcomes. It helps to identify the level of need or disadvantage in different populations and inform early interventions to be improved for particular populations with shared characteristics.

There are currently over one hundred active IDI research projects. These include a number of large pieces of focused analysis, such as the collaborative justice sector project to identify groups of people and places most at risk of offending and victimisation, and analysing the return on investment of crime prevention activities. Other projects are answering specific questions like whether the employment of temporary migrants has an impact on wages and employment opportunities available to New Zealanders.

Stats has been funded to continue sustainable expansion of the IDI, and improve the data and services it provides. This 'IDI 2' project will enhance the IDI, making it easier, quicker and more stable for our customers to engage with data. A separate briefing has been prepared with further detail on integrated data.

We are working with Māori and iwi, and other partners

Stats NZ is committed to meeting its responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its broader legal obligations to Māori. Further, Stats NZ plays a key role in strengthening the wider Crown-Māori relationship: our work supports iwi self-determination and aspirations to thrive and be successful through the benefits of data-enhanced decision-making. This includes:

- understanding the views of Māori, particularly concerns around data sovereignty and governance
- working closely with iwi and Māori to ensure their involvement and engagement in key developments around data for and about Māori and the data system, including as key partners in the Statistics Legislative Review and recent Iwi Statistical Standard review
- collaborating with Māori/iwi through Pilot Partnership Projects, which tackle real-world issues and develop innovative products and services
- improving our products and services so that they align with Māori data needs
- providing richer insights to enhance decision making quality.

Other domestic partnerships include work with government agencies, public bodies, non-government organisations, and private organisations. We have also partnered with external vendors to explore innovative ways to deliver our own core business more effectively and efficiently, including by making use of automated processes and machine learning to replace more manual processes.

The data environment in New Zealand is full of innovators who are keen to offer insights and expertise, and to make use of our data. Stats NZ is working with a number of partners and intermediaries to make the most of what the private sector can offer. As Minister of Statistics, you may hear from a number of these organisations directly – Stats NZ would be happy to advise on how we are working with these organisations, and where opportunities for further work may exist.

We are also in the process of establishing a small 'Data Ventures' group within Stats NZ, with the appointment of an Executive Director to be announced. This group will partner to commercialise Stats NZ knowledge and expertise, and in so doing encourage the development of new and innovative ways to grow data access and analytics services for New Zealand.

A more detailed list of key relationships with agencies, private sector and international bodies is attached as an appendix.

Stats NZ - Our People

Stats NZ has around 900 staff across three main locations, Wellington, Christchurch, and Auckland, and a further 80 field interviewers throughout the country:

- About 530 staff are based in Wellington. Since the November earthquake, our main office in Wellington is located in HP House on Gilmer Terrace. We also use Westpac House, Grant Thornton and the Glassons/ Hallensteins buildings.
- We are the lead agency in the Christchurch Integrated Government Accommodation (CIGA) project, with around 240 staff based in the BNZ Centre – Stage 1.
- We have just moved our Auckland office to the NZ Mint building, where about 130 staff are based.

Vote Statistics

The Minister of Statistics is responsible for appropriations of approximately \$185m for Vote Statistics for the 2017/18 financial year, the key elements of which, from the Budget 2017 Estimates*, are:

- Multi Category Appropriation – Official Statistics is \$121.2m.
- Departmental Output Expenses comprise \$1.6m for the Data Futures Partnership, and \$3.6m for Services to Other Agencies
- Departmental capital expenditure appropriation of \$10m.
- Five-year 2018 Census Multi-Year Appropriation of \$111m (\$48.5m in 2017/18) plus \$7.9 million of capital injections.

* Adjustments will be made to Vote Statistics at the 2017 OBU (October Baseline Update) for Cabinet decisions made since Budget 2017 and other technical adjustments.

A more detailed briefing on operational matters, including our staff and budget, has been prepared for you.

Stats NZ leads the public service by acting as a steward of the data system

Meeting the growing data needs of the future will require strong, engaged leadership. We are supporting all of government by growing our leadership role, building on our proven strengths to understand New Zealand's data system needs, chart progress, and understand what does and does not work.

In July 2017, the Head of State Services confirmed an additional new public service role for the Government Statistician – the Government Chief Data Steward. This appointment reflects the growth in value and potential of data in the public service, and an understanding that leadership is needed to make the most of the data asset.

We are guiding the system to better use of data, through common standards and infrastructure

Treating data as an asset, rather than simply an input, allows more value to be extracted from it. It requires us to consider how the data asset will be used, not just once, but multiple times, by different users. It makes data a core part of our infrastructure, something that needs to be planned and maintained for the good of all users. Doing so allows more users to use more information, with reduced burden on the providers of that information. Use and reuse of the data asset will provide a platform for innovation, support better decision making, better design of public services, and better targeting to people, families, or populations in need.

Currently, public service agencies operate in an ad hoc way, leading to inconsistency in how data is collected, managed, accessed, stored and shared. The Government Chief Data Steward will work alongside the Government Chief Digital Officer and Chief Executives to ensure data is stewarded as a system asset, helping achieve better outcomes for New Zealanders, through informed decision making and evidence-based policy.

New technology and new ways of working with data will support the design and delivery of more effective public services, but they also require joined-up data. The Government Chief Data Steward has responsibility for the provision of data architecture. This includes technical data standards, and infrastructure across the government data system, with a priority focus on the economic and natural resource sectors.

We are improving transparency and value, by making data more open and accessible

Bringing together different sources of data for analysis allows us to support better decision-making through evidence-based intervention. Opening up access to the data that public service bodies hold provides a platform for more people to make more use of that data – to better understand New Zealand, design innovative products and services, better serve the public, and inform business decisions.

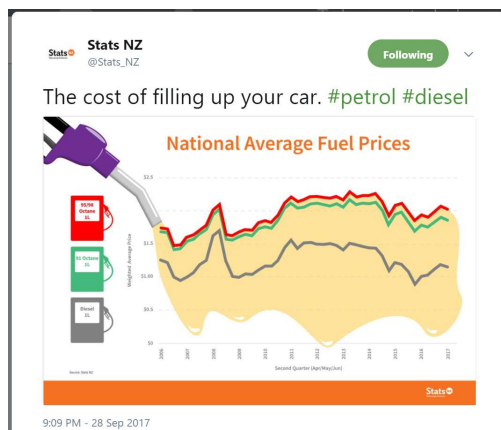
Open data is publically available data that anyone can take, use and share. It is data where all personally-identifiable information has been removed to protect individual identities and privacy. We lead work with government agencies to support, inform, troubleshoot and advise on their release of open government data. Open data presents opportunities for increased collaboration and

innovation, and provides an increased return on investment for government by enabling the data collected to be used for a wider range of purposes.

As well as helping innovation, making government data more open and accessible is a key part of the operation of transparent government. Giving more people access to more government data supports open democratic processes, and will build the public's trust and confidence in government and the public service.

Public Service Departments are required to release their data, however, many departments lack the capability and/or capacity to proactively release their open government data, and release is often a secondary priority behind their primary roles and responsibilities. As part of our system lead role we work with data users to understand their needs, and connect users with relevant government contacts.

We are striving to make our information more accessible and intuitive, for the public as well as for business and government users. This is important to improving the value of the data we gather and produce. Stats NZ is increasingly using interactive maps, apps, and a user-friendly website, and making better use of social media to provide easily digestible information, and respond quickly to the data needs of the public.



We champion the security of data and protection of privacy

When people trust that their data will be used as they have agreed, and accept that enough value will be created, they are likely to be more comfortable with its use. This acceptance is referred to as a social licence. Because data integration is linking and using data to an extent previously unseen, the question of social licence is a crucial one.

Our licence to use data in new and different ways is affected by the behaviour of all of government; loss of trust of one part of government can have a lasting effect on others. Recent research on social licence and perceptions about data collection and use, undertaken by the Data Futures Partnership, showed the New Zealand public expects that their data is used, but used wisely and for the public good. It also showed that Stats NZ has a strong reputation as a 'data expert' and trusted custodian of public information.

Stats NZ is continuing to engage the public in an informed debate about social licence, intended to move to increasingly well-informed trust. High profile pieces of work to ensure safe use of data include:

- We have supported the work of the Data Futures Partnership – which is a cross sector group aiming to mobilise action to increase the value being generated by New Zealand’s data, and create the right environment for trusted data use. The Partnership has developed guidance on social licence and the safe use of data, and as its initial term has now come to an end, its work is being reviewed.
- We are working with the Social Investment Agency, who is leading work to develop a Data Protection and Use Policy. This will provide guidance for social sector organisations on what to consider when collecting, storing, sharing and using clients’ personal information, in order to increase the availability of data for social investment purposes in a way that is scalable, and builds and maintains trust and confidence.
- The IDI’s profile and collation of a variety of data sources about individuals, means it poses particular security challenges. We address these through the introduction of a ‘five safes’ approach, which could be replicated elsewhere: IDI access is only granted for safe (appropriately vetted) people, working on safe projects (in the public interest), in safe settings (meeting particular security requirements), with safe (de-identified) data, to produce safe, confidentialised outputs.

We are already taking practical steps to improve data use and capability across government

Stats NZ will continue to develop the Government Chief Data Steward role and identify how it will be implemented. We would like to work with you to identify and deliver priority areas for data infrastructure and capability building, across government.

Stats NZ has established the Data Leadership Hub, an external facing service, which engages across the government data system to promote good practice, grow capability, steward data knowledge, and provide support to agencies. As part of this, we are developing a Data Knowledge Centre – a web portal supported by real people – managing a toolkit of data knowledge and advising where to find data and ‘how to’ guidance.

To make the most of the data asset, and to simplify interactions between people, businesses, and government, we need appropriate governance and shared responsibility for data in the public service. We have a way to go, but we are already working together, across government, to develop an agreed view of the current and future state of the data system and agree shared priorities. The Data Leadership Hub has made significant progress to co-develop and promote the adoption of a Data Stewardship Framework across government. The framework will support agencies to build capability, and access and use data effectively and efficiently.

Stats NZ has been leading a legislative review to ensure the relevant legislation is fit for purpose (the Statistics Act was introduced in 1975). Based on the current schedule, we expect to provide you with draft new data and statistics legislation in 2018 to increase data use and innovation, with an aim to introduce new legislation in 2019/20. We would like to discuss this, and how it fits with the government’s priorities, with you.

Stats NZ offers a wealth of expertise in a range of areas

Due to our work in the design of data collection from administrative, survey or other sources, and shaping data to suit the needs of information users, we have considerable expertise to offer. Many agencies already look to us for leadership – we are asked by others to review their practices, and to support them to improve their:

- Measurement and design of data collection
- Safe use of individual level client data; including anonymisation and risk reduction
- Management and use of data, including understanding its strengths and limitations

Through our integrated data and analysis expertise, we actively support the public service to improve its services and change lives for the better. We are working with NGOs and agencies to understand how they can make better use of data to understand their services, populations and outcomes; we have prioritised data services for Oranga Tamariki; supported a bespoke solution for the Ministry of Justice’s predictive modelling; and set up remote data labs across New Zealand to help increase secure access to integrated data.

Internationally, we are seen as a leader in the development and use of integrated data. We have shared lessons, processes, and methodologies with Australia and the European Union, among others. We are exploring new international relationships, including with the Netherlands, Singapore, and the UK, to share expertise. To support further collaboration and analysis, we are trialling secure international remote access to de-identified, integrated data which remains in New Zealand in Stats NZ’s control. Any further offshore remote access will be dependent on the success of these trials.

Our status as a world-leader means Stats NZ’s data expertise is an increasingly important part of New Zealand’s international relationship building. Sharing of knowledge and expertise is a useful way for New Zealand to establish and deepen working relationships with partners like the European Union; the Prime Minister’s Chief Science Advisor recently lead a delegation, including the Government Statistician, to identify areas we could work with our UK counterparts. We are also exploring options for working more closely with Australia regarding open data, customer rights, social licence, legislative frameworks and integrated data. This may include secondments between the two countries to share experience and support the development of data policy.

For your attention – key priorities and pieces of work for your first 100 days

This section outlines a few key areas which you will need to consider in the first months of your new role. We would like to discuss with you how we can help you to deliver your government’s priorities, and oversee the operational side of your portfolio.

We can support you to work with Ministers across a range of portfolios

As described above, the Minister of Statistics is the champion of data as a strategic government asset. More joined-up data stewardship requires departments and agencies to come together, and

this will be most effective when government ministers can work together and understand each other's requirements and motivations.

A more detailed list of links to other portfolios is attached as appendix 2, but we recommend that a priority for establishing your portfolio and role would be building relationships with those ministers whose work will most closely connect with your own; the Ministers with responsibility for:

- State Services
- Justice
- Inland Revenue
- the Environment
- Internal Affairs (and the Government Chief Digital Officer)
- Land Information New Zealand (geospatial data and foreign property ownership data)
- Social Development
- Economic and regional development
- policy under the current Social Investment Agency.

Your Stats NZ private secretary can help arrange initial meetings, with material to support. The Government Statistician also hopes to meet with relevant Ministers, to outline the support Stats NZ provides to their portfolios.

We are working on our long-term accommodation and infrastructure, post-earthquake

The November 2016 North Canterbury earthquake saw significant damage to our Wellington headquarters, and a shutdown of our data centre. However, with the retrieval of key servers from Statistics House, our back-up systems worked as planned and we rapidly got key systems online first. Publishing and external website access was recovered within three days and production of statistics restarted after five.

We secured new, seismically sound accommodation for our people in Wellington. We will not be returning to Statistics House, but will seek new long-term accommodation with the support of MBIE.

During the initial disruption, Stats NZ staff displayed terrific resilience. The morale of our staff was affected during the few months post-earthquake, however this has steadily improved as we have progressed toward a more stable overall work environment. This has been supported by a wide range of initiatives over the last few months around culture, wellbeing and employee morale. Such initiatives included employee assistance programmes and flexible working options.

Learning from our experience, we have updated our business continuity and disaster recovery approaches to ensure we can recover key services as quickly as possible.

Stats NZ is an early and strong adopter of the new government approach to IT as a service – which allows for more flexibility and efficient purchase of IT infrastructure. In the wake of the earthquake, and subsequent loss of old IT assets, we have been rolling out the new IT approach faster than planned.

While our statistics releases are already back on schedule and staff morale continues to improve, the earthquake has impacted on Stats NZ's financial position due to immediate one off costs and higher ongoing operational costs in some areas. We have made an insurance claim under our business

continuity insurance, and are actively working with Treasury regarding the handling of earthquake costs within our overall appropriation.

A separate briefing has been prepared for you, outlining the operational details of Stats NZ, including our finance, HR, and the effects of the November 2016 earthquake.

We are gearing up to the 2018 Census

The Census is the highest profile piece of work in your portfolio's calendar. The census produces authoritative and, in some cases, the only comprehensive population and dwelling statistics, including information on small communities and small populations. It includes a wealth of data about New Zealanders, including ethnicity, occupation, highest level of qualification, household and family composition, iwi affiliation/Māori descent, and geographic location. This information is used by local and central government for planning and to allocate funding; and by businesses, NGOs and other organisations to support decision making.

Stats NZ is running the next five-yearly Census on 6 March 2018. The 2018 Census will use a new collection model focused on the online completion of census forms and the reduction of field staff required. The target for online uptake is 70 percent.

System and operational risks for the census programme have been identified following the November earthquake. As a result, Stats NZ may seek additional funding to manage the newly identified risks. This work is underway in conjunction with Treasury and any funding would likely be sought from the between-Budget Contingency already established as part of Budget 2017.

The questions for the census, including on how we record gender and sexual identity, are determined by the Government Statistician through her statutory independence. An explanation of the content decisions made for the upcoming census is provided in a separate 2018 Census briefing, and officials would be happy to discuss this further with you.

A supplementary briefing on the 2018 Census programme has been prepared for you. Officials would be pleased to discuss this with you if you have further questions or comments.

We release a variety of statistics and analytical reports

All of Stats NZ's scheduled releases are published in accordance with the Principles and Protocols for Producers of Tier 1 statistics (a Cabinet approved list of 162 of New Zealand's most important statistics, based on international standards set by the UN, OECD, and the international labour organisation). Our release calendar is published six months in advance; embargoes on data are lifted at 10:45am on the day of the release, at which time Ministers, the media, and the public can access the information. Our release calendar can be accessed at <https://tinyurl.com/StatsNZreleases>.

The independent release of Tier 1 statistics is planned in advance

We have stringent protocols around our information releases, and only release information if it meets our quality standards. Stats NZ holds media conferences under strict embargo conditions for selected releases. These are open to media, officials from government departments, and key stakeholders. We also offer briefings to Ministers and their staff in the Beehive for the cardinal releases – the Labour Market Statistics, quarterly GDP, the Consumers Price Index, and Balance of Payments and International Investment Position. Generally, subject matter Ministers, not the Minister of Statistics, comment on the content of information releases.

The next scheduled release is *Labour Market Statistics: September 2017 quarter*, on 1 November. A separate briefing is attached outlining the process for this release and the Government Statistician will discuss this with you when you first meet on 31 October.

We will keep you informed of upcoming releases and reports through your weekly report, but if you would like to discuss this or any future releases, officials would be happy to meet with you.

The Tier 1 statistics list is under review

Stats NZ is undertaking the first five-yearly review of the Tier 1 statistics list. The review to date has been informed by consultation with 15 government agencies, and has led Stats NZ to consider that the Tier 1 statistics list remains relevant and fit-for-purpose. It is likely to suggest further work is required to develop potential new Tier 1 measures, and to strengthen assurance, guidance, and prioritisation across the data system.

Review findings and any recommendations for change were expected to be reported back to Cabinet this year, but we will discuss with you how this fits with your government's priorities. A draft cabinet paper will be provided to you for discussion, ahead of formal consultation with government departments.

There are a number of projects underway, which we would be happy to discuss with you

Stats NZ has a number of key projects underway, which are either key responsibilities of Stats NZ, or responses to current events or the direction of previous Ministers. We would be keen to meet with you to discuss these pieces of work, how they fit with your own priorities, and whether you would like to proceed with them in light of the government's priorities:

- Stats NZ is transforming how future Censuses will be carried out, to provide more timely information with reduced burden
- Stats NZ is reviewing and updating the Statistics Legislation, to make it fit for the future
- Stats NZ is expanding the Integrated Data Infrastructure to deliver more insights for researchers and government
- A Cabinet paper is being prepared by the State Services Commission (SSC) on the Functional Lead roles for digital (the Government Chief Digital Officer, Colin MacDonald, DIA) and data (the Government Chief Data Steward, Liz MacPherson, Stats NZ)
- Stats NZ is supporting SIA's development of a Data Protection and Use Policy
- Stats NZ will provide you with recommendations for the removal of Departure Cards for passengers leaving New Zealand.
- The work of the Data Futures Partnership is being reviewed, as laid out in the establishing cabinet paper
- Ministers of Statistics, Social Investment, and Land Information undertook to form an Iwi Chairs Data Partnership Group, due to begin meeting this year
- The Government Statistician is setting up an external challenge group to provide a critical outside view and challenge our thinking.

Appendix 1: Supplementary information

The list below covers topics that Stats NZ consider would be valuable background for you on your portfolio. These can be provided as and when you like, so please indicate if you or the office would like any of these briefings. Otherwise, we will append these to future briefings, as further background, when appropriate.

Attached briefing:

- Stats NZ Pre-release Briefings (outlining release protocols and background for *Labour Market Statistics: September 2017 quarter*)

Initial briefings, to be provided 31 October

- 2018 Census
- Census transformation
- System leadership
- Child poverty
- Stats NZ operational information (finance, HR, and November 2016 earthquake)

Supplementary briefings to be provided as needed or requested. Please indicate if you would like any of these provided sooner

- Integrated data (IDI, IDI2, Longitudinal Business Database)
- Statistics Legislative Review
- Data Governance
- Working with and understanding data concerns of Māori
- Economic and social stats
- Environmental reporting
- Outcome indicators and sustainability development goals

Appendix 2: Connections to other portfolios

As Minister of Statistics and through Stats NZ's regular release of statistical information you have a connection with every other ministerial portfolio. However, you will work directly with key Ministers who maintain an active interest in the following areas.

Minister	Topic
Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern Prime Minister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child poverty reduction
Rt Hon Winston Peters Minister of Foreign Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership and guidance to statistics offices in the Pacific
Hon Kelvin Davis Minister for Crown/Māori relations Minister for Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iwi Data Leadership group Māori data governance Exploration of removing International Departure Cards International Visitors Survey
Hon Grant Robertson Minister of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic and government finance statistics Improving the timeliness of regional GDP
Hon Phil Twyford Minister for Housing and Urban Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing supply and quality measures
Hon Chris Hipkins Minister of State Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership of the government data system, the Government Chief Data Steward lead role
Hon Andrew Little Minister of Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics Legislative Review
Hon Carmel Sepuloni Minister for Social Development Minister for Disability Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child poverty reduction Data for the social investment approach
Hon David Parker Minister for Economic Development Minister for the Environment Minister for Trade and Export Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic statistics Environmental Reporting Improving the timeliness of regional GDP Improving the quality of International Migration Statistics
Hon Stuart Nash Minister of Revenue Minister for Small Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IR as key supplier of data to Stats NZ IR Transformation Programme
Hon Iain Lees-Galloway Minister for Immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the quality of International Migration Statistics Exploration of removing International Departure Cards
Hon Clare Curran Minister for Government Digital Services Associate State Services with responsibility for Open Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership of the government data system, the Government Chief Data Steward and Government Chief Digital Officer lead roles Open data

<p>Hon Tracey Martin Minister for Children Minister for Internal Affairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership of the government data system, the Government Chief Data Steward and Government Chief Digital Officer lead roles ▪ Information Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data Investment Framework ○ Budget advice and prioritisation ▪ Child poverty reduction
<p>Hon Shane Jones Minister for Infrastructure Minister for Regional Economic Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improving the timeliness of regional GDP
<p>Hon Willie Jackson Minister of Employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measuring unemployment and labour statistics
<p>Hon Meka Whaitiri Minister of Customs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exploration of removing International Departure Cards
<p>Hon Eugenie Sage Minister for Land Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Foreign property ownership measurement

Appendix 3: Connections with other organisations

Stats NZ manages relationships with many other organisations across the private, government, and non-government sectors:

Organisation	Current areas of work/interest
Government Chief Digital Officer Colin McDonald CE of DIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Functional lead for New Zealand Government ICT ▪ Key Information Group stakeholder ▪ Promotes ICT and information standards
Inland Revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Significant data supplier – IR data makes up more than 70 percent of our total economic data supply ▪ IR data is critical for the IDI and the production of core economic statistics ▪ IR is undertaking a four-year Transformation Programme; we need to respond to changes in order to continue to produce key economic statistics and maintain the integrity of the IDI
MBIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Statistics House; accommodation coordination with the Government Property Group ▪ Key interest in immigration data – both a user and supplier ▪ Key user of labour market information ▪ Digital Domain Plan
Ministry of Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Privacy, and de-identification of data ▪ Microdata simulation to support service delivery
Ministry for the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental reporting, under the Environmental Reporting Act 2015
Prime Minister’s Chief Science Advisor Sir Peter Gluckman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Privacy, and de-identified data ▪ Integrated Data, sharing of knowledge and expertise as a component of trade with the European Union
Ministry for Social Development/ Social Investment Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key user of the IDI to support the social investment approach ▪ Key user of social statistics
Auckland Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Significant information user
Iwi Leadership Group: Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Statistics Legislative Review ▪ Data sovereignty, privacy, and de-identified data use ▪ Iwi Chairs Partnership Group
Data intermediaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We work with a number of innovative data organisations across both the private and non-governmental sectors, e.g. Figure.NZ, Nexus, Qurious, Koordinates, Southern Methodist Mission, DOT Loves Data
Key technology suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spark, Fujitsu, and Revera are our key technology suppliers ▪ We are currently exploring possibilities to work with Spark on analytics
Statistics Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In March 2017, the Minister of Statistics and the Government Statistician announced a partnership with Statistics Netherlands to strengthen the way both agencies gather and use data
UN, OECD etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We are active members of the international official statistics community and provide technical capability development in the Pacific