

Cook Islands Government Public Sector Strategy 2016 – 2025



Our Journey to Excellence
To Tatou Kaveinga Kia Ārangatū



Kia Orana!

In a rapidly changing and globalised world, we face significant challenges, to maintain contemporary and equitable social development while remaining economically viable. Innovative transformation specific to our Cook Islands context is essential and must recognise that our people are our greatest asset.



We need to be confident that we can offer a future where every Cook Islander is given the knowledge and skills to achieve their aspirations.

We must strive for a future where our economy grows at a sustainable pace and is competitive in the global business environment, while respecting the uniqueness of our people and culture, as well as the beauty and vulnerability of our natural environment. We must aspire for a future where our country is self-sufficient and not reliant on resources from others, rather, that we contribute to the development of others.

These aspirations can only be realised through a Public Sector providing Excellence that grows leaders with integrity, delivers results efficiently, and constantly innovates to remain relevant to the people it serves and the global environment in which it operates.

Our journey to excellence calls for strong leadership at all levels in order to deliver a cadre of high performing public servants serving our communities with integrity and excellence.

Kia Manuia

Honourable Prime Minister Henry Puna
Minister for the Public Service

Celebrating 50 years of self-governance encourages us to reflect on past achievements and prepare for future challenges. An important starting point is for us to avoid triggering an economic and subsequent social crisis with reactive public sector reforms, similar to that which occurred in 1996.



As the world continues to evolve, we too must evolve. We need to remain relevant to the communities we serve and the global environment we operate in. We need to adapt and continuously innovate to deliver better public goods and services.

Our vision is for a “Public Service of Excellence”. Our mission is to deliver quality goods and services through effective leadership and governance, and achieve our National Sustainable Development goals through:

- A Public Sector that is well led and trusted by the people of the Cook Islands
- A Public Sector that is relevant and responsive

Our journey involves building progressive thinkers and high-performing public servants, and ensuring a culture of excellence is embedded across the public service.

I challenge every public servant to live and build a legacy for future generations that speaks of greatness, commitment, integrity, resourcefulness and value - a legacy that we can all be proud of.

Kia Rangatira

Russell Thomas
Public Service Commissioner

A Public Sector Achieving Excellence

Our Public Sector Strategy outlines our transformation journey to achieving excellence over the next ten years. The Strategy recognises that all public sector agencies, our development partners, private sector, non-government organisations and the general public have a role to play. Our Strategy will be implemented over three phases with phase one (2016 to 2018) focusing on establishing crucial leadership capacity and institutional infrastructure. Phase two is when we fully embrace change through strong leaders, better structures and systems. Phase three is where we sustain a culture of continuous innovation and adapting to remain relevant and responsive to the communities we serve



Our Vision

Public Service of Excellence

- ## Our Mission

To deliver quality goods and services through effective leadership and governance and achieve our National Sustainable Development Plan goals through:

 - A Public Sector that is well led and trusted by the people of the Cook Islands
 - A Public Sector that is relevant and responsive

The Strategy

Our transformation will focus on improving effectiveness and efficiency in three critical areas.

Strategic Priority Areas	Strategic Goals
People	Progressive and high-performing public sector employees
Structures	A relevant and fit for purpose public sector
Systems	Responsive service delivery

Excellence Principles

Our transformation is underpinned by our excellence principles:

CARE ▼ GROW ▼ LEAD

Collaboration Accountability Respect Empathy

- We strive to achieve excellence through collaborative, accountable and respectful partnerships and empathy for the communities we serve
- We demonstrate honesty, excellence, accountability, respect and transparency (HEART)
- We work to earn the trust and confidence of our communities

Grow People Raise Standards Open Innovation Whole of Government

- We strive to achieve excellence through learning, innovating and a continuous improvement culture across 'one public sector'
- We inspire each other by working smart and going the extra mile
- We create value by delivering results in an effective and efficient manner

Leadership Excellence Action Development

- We strive to achieve excellence through strong leadership, passion for excellence and action to achieve sustainable development
- We embrace change, innovation, continuous learning and technology



Strategic Priority Areas

PEOPLE

Strategic outcome: A well led and trusted public sector
Strategic goal: Progressive and high-performing public sector employees

We aim to:

- Establish a HRM framework that attracts, develops and retains high performing people
- Build high performing public sector leaders with integrity and empathy
- Create leadership and career pathways for public servants
- Reward exemplary performance

We will focus our efforts on developing and implementing:

- Recruitment strategies and practices to attract and retain employees with the appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and attributes
- Induction programmes for all public servants that promote our national identity and values
- A robust remuneration framework to attract and retain high performing employees
- A performance management system that improves performance and rewards excellence
- Strategies that support employee innovation and empowerment
- A public service culture that promotes zero tolerance for misconduct and corruption
- Training and skill development programmes
- Partnerships with the private sector, our Cook Islands overseas diaspora and development partners to secure the best employees for our roles

STRUCTURES

Strategic outcome: A relevant and responsive public sector
Strategic goal: A relevant and fit for purpose public sector

We aim to:

- Ensure the 'machinery of government' is designed to deliver results
- Ensure the roles of various agencies are defined and understood

We will focus our efforts on implementing:

- Centralisation of certain corporate functions and shared services
- Continuous reviews of public sector structures - consolidating agencies where possible

SYSTEMS

Strategic outcome: A relevant and responsive public sector
Strategic goal: Responsive service delivery

We aim to:

- Improve our engagement with stakeholders on the design and delivery of services
- Strengthen the strategic planning capability of every agency
- Strengthen the organisational management of every agency
- Improve the performance and service delivery of every agency

We will focus our efforts on institutional strengthening by:

- Improving agency operational systems and processes
- Ensuring better use of our people, technology and communications
- Improving information management systems and retaining institutional knowledge
- Promoting best practice, continuous improvement and innovation



EXCELLENCE IS WHERE...

The Public Sector is:

- Implementing policies and programmes to support social and economic development
- Providing public goods and services in an effective and efficient manner
- Led by leaders and competent public servants performing with integrity and empathy

Public Servants:

- Are providing services that meet public expectations
- Are informative, helpful and efficient
- Are embracing our national identity and serving our communities well
- Are respectful, professional and responsive to the needs of our communities
- Are held accountable for actions taken and decisions made

The Public:

- Are contributing to the design and delivery of public services
- Know and trust that our government has their best interests in mind
- Have access to a range of information on services, charges and service charters
- Appreciate the value of public funded infrastructure and services
- Have confidence in our public sector leaders and public servants

The Private Sector:

- Contributes to government policies and programmes that support economic growth
- Can access better public services relating to: business registration, advisory services for tax, superannuation, immigration and employment relations to do business effectively

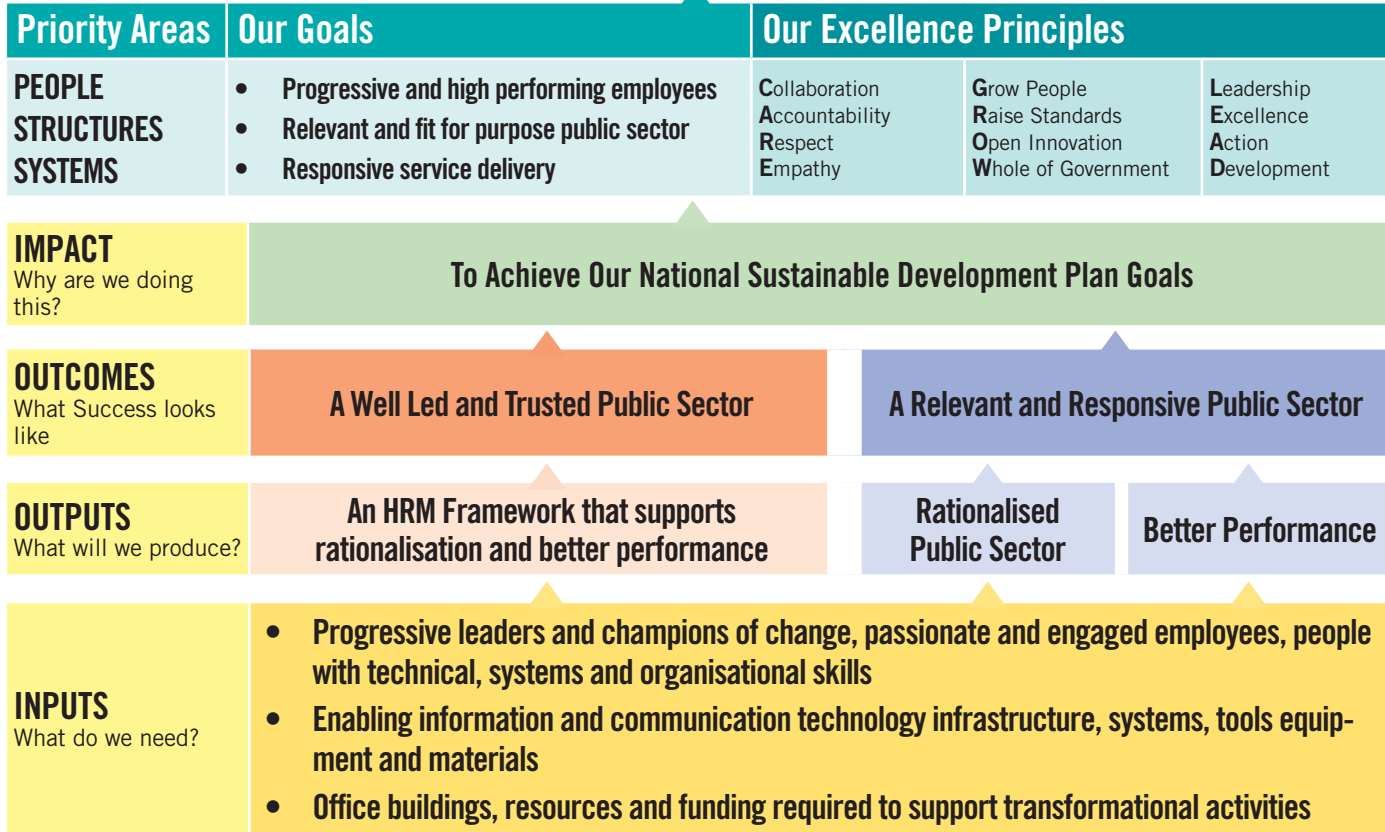
Development Partners:

- Have confidence in our systems of government
- Understand and invest in priority areas for national development using country systems
- Are able to verify the effectiveness of their support

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Our Vision: Public Service of Excellence

Mission: To deliver quality goods and services through effective leadership and governance



GLOSSARY OF KEY WORDS

Capability

Knowledge, skills and behaviours public servants need to perform in their roles

Centralisation

Process where central agencies deliver shared activities for the public sector to optimise efficiency gains and minimise costs

Central Agencies

Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Finance, Crown Law Office and Office of the Public Service Commissioner

Consolidation

Joining agencies together and dissolving others to improve service delivery and efficiency gains

Collaboration

Discussing and agreeing on matters of mutual concern among key stakeholders

Consultation

Discussing matters of mutual concern with stakeholders to obtain representative views in areas of special interest

Culture

Beliefs, behaviours and values which determine how we work

Evaluation

The process of reviewing the result of something to determine the impact and achievement of intended objectives

HRM Framework

Strategies and practices through which people will be managed and developed

MOG

Machinery of Government is the interconnected structures and processes of government, such as the functions and accountability of various agencies across the public sector

Mission

Purpose of the public sector and how it will achieve its vision

Public Sector

Encompasses the public service and agencies within the parliamentary and judiciary arms of the Westminster model of governance

Public Service Values

Honesty – acting honestly, being truthful, and abiding by the laws of the Cook Islands

Impartiality – providing impartial advice, acting without fear or favour, and making decisions on their merits

Service – serving the people well through faithful service to the Government of the Cook Islands

Transparency – taking actions and making decisions in an open and transparent manner

Accountability – being able to explain the reason for actions taken and taking responsibility for those actions

Respect – treating the people, the Government of the Cook Islands and colleagues with courtesy and respect

Effectiveness & Efficiency Achieving good results for the Cook Islands in an economical way

Public Service

All government agencies established to serve the government of the day

Relevant

A public sector that is 'fit for purpose' and relevant for the 21st century operating environment and meets the changing needs of our people

Stakeholders

People who have an interest in the public service, its activities and its achievements. This includes: government, employees, private sector, non-government organisations, development partners and the general public

Strategy

Plan for how the public sector aims to achieve its vision of excellence

Strong Leadership

Leaders who create a culture of motivation and commitment, and an environment of trust and accountability for performance

Transformation

Complete and continuous change aspiring for better service delivery by addressing beliefs, behaviours and institutional weaknesses

Vision

What and where the public service wants to be in the future and how it wants to be described by its stakeholder



**All images used courtesy of Cook Islands Tourism Corporation.*