

Briefing to the incoming Minister of Statistics

23 January 2025



Contents

1. Foreword from Mark Sowden.....	3
2. Your role as Minister of Statistics	5
3. Driving better decisions and services with administrative data	9
4. Powering social investment with integrated data.....	12
5. Better deliver to customer and partner need.....	14
6. Measuring what matters in a modern economy.....	16
7. Upcoming briefings and major releases	18
Appendix I: Organisation and Vote Statistics at a glance	19
Appendix II: Ministerial priorities of Hon Andrew Bayly.....	20
Appendix III: Our leadership team	21

1. Foreword from Mark Sowden

Tēnā koe Minister Reti,

It is my pleasure to welcome you as Minister of Statistics and I look forward to working with you in this portfolio.

As Minister of Statistics, you have significant opportunities to improve the way data is collected, managed and used. Equally, there are opportunities to ensure Stats NZ is well placed to deliver for New Zealand into the future.

As the official data agency, Stats NZ's role is to collect information from people and organisations so that we can produce data and insights to support New Zealand. These data and insights underpin decision-making at a local and national level, and therefore directly impact people's lives.

Every day, communities, businesses, iwi, Government, and individuals throughout our country need and rely on quality data and statistics to make informed decisions.

We are seeing that this need for information is growing exponentially and coupled with that is a need to change how we collect, process, and publish data and insights in response to customer demand.

As a data agency we also face impending changes that will impact us. These include, but are not limited to, Artificial Intelligence (AI), changing demographics, and the future of work, business and government.

To best serve New Zealand, Stats NZ must be ready for these changes, not simply react to them.

Further, like many agencies, we also need to operate within a reduced baseline and adapt to external cost pressures. Stats NZ is focussing on not only operating effectively, but also sustainably.

We are on a path to modernise and rethink how we sustainably deliver quality data and statistics, reflected in four areas outlined in this document:

- Driving better decisions and services with administrative data
- Powering social investment with integrated data
- Better deliver to customer and partner need
- Measuring what matters in a modern economy.

The 2023 Census campaign, centred on the tag line 'Tatau tatou: All of us count,' was highly recognisable and – combined with a concerted effort to reach our priority response groups, especially Māori and Pacific peoples – resulted in coverage of approximately 99 percent of New Zealand's total population.

However, our recent experience has also highlighted some significant challenges for census-taking, echoing the experiences of many other countries worldwide. We need to keep our focus on quality data, meeting the needs of those we struggle to connect with in traditional ways and

building trusting relationships with them – and we need to achieve these results in a robust and fiscally responsible way.

The ‘Modernising our approach to the 2028 Census’ consultation sought widespread public feedback on what the census could look like in New Zealand from 2028 and beyond. Following this an independent evaluation panel provided advice on an approach for the next census and in October in my role as Government Statistician I made an in-principle decision on how we’ll conduct the next census. This in-principle decision is currently scheduled for Cabinet consideration in March 2025.

Our role as leader of the data system is critical to the future of Stats NZ and to the effective use of good data across government. This includes the use of data to support the delivery of digital services.

As Government Chief Data Steward my aim is to build a more integrated and inclusive government data system while maintaining public trust and confidence in how information is used. Our goal is a modernised system where administrative data (supplemented by sample and targeted surveying) underpins most statistics, agencies share data effectively to reduce burden on the public and businesses, and close to real-time information guides key decisions and service delivery.

We have set expectations with government agencies and are actively leading a programme to unify and standardise the government data system and boost its capability.

As an organisation, we also continue to prioritise the privacy and security of data – maintaining the trust of New Zealanders is core to our role. Our robust privacy frameworks ensure data protection, while physical security measures safeguard our facilities and systems. These measures include secure data storage, controlled access to sensitive information, and regular audits to maintain high security standards.

The year ahead provides significant opportunities to position Stats NZ to effectively deliver within a changing context and I look forward to discussing the statistics portfolio with you in further detail. I am especially interested to hear about your priorities and understand how Stats NZ can support you to contribute to the Government’s immediate programme.

We will also provide you with more detailed briefings on specific topics in the coming weeks.

Ngā mihi nui,



Mark Sowden
Government Statistician and Chief Executive

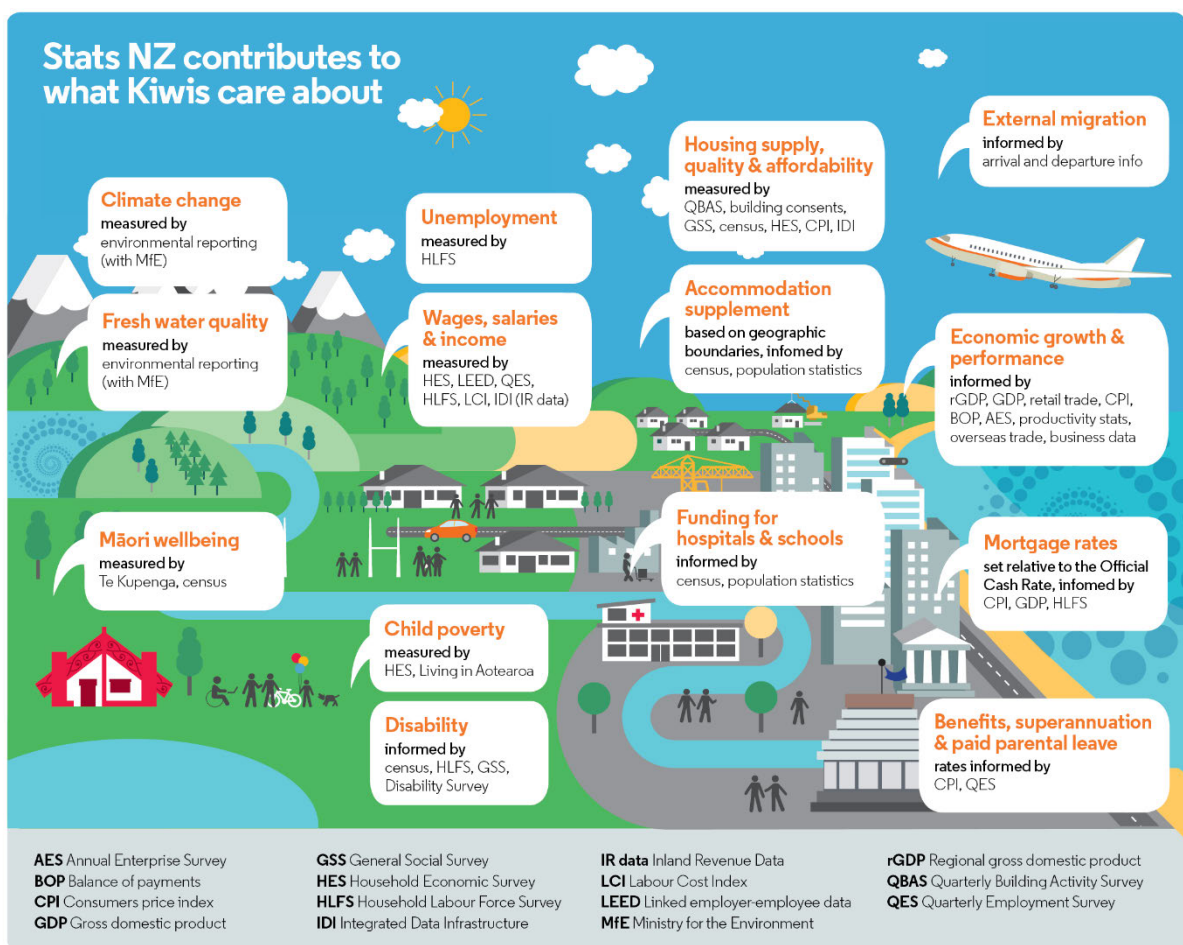
2. Your role as Minister of Statistics

You have oversight of Stats NZ

As Minister of Statistics, you oversee Stats NZ, the agency responsible for providing New Zealand's official statistics and stewarding the government data system. A snapshot of Stats NZ is provided in Appendix I.

Stats NZ, as New Zealand's official data agency, collects information from people and organisations through administrative data, surveys, and the census. This information is used to provide essential statistics, insights, and expertise to decision-makers and the public. Our work covers all sectors of government, including finance, environment, social development, employment, housing, and corrections.

Government agencies, businesses, iwi, and individuals across New Zealand rely on us for valuable data. We release information almost daily, covering economic indicators, population, migration, employment, trade, inflation, living costs, manufacturing, construction, greenhouse gas emissions, environmental indicators, wellbeing measures, and much more.



Stats NZ at a glance (in 2024)		
268	450	8654
Statistical releases per year	Requests for bespoke data	Data inquiries across public channels

You ensure we measure what matters to Aotearoa New Zealand

As Minister of Statistics, you specify what we measure, while the Government Statistician (a role held by the Chief Executive of Stats NZ) sets the how and when. This division of roles, set out in the Data and Statistics Act 2022, means we can measure the things that are important to advancing the Government’s priorities, while ensuring political neutrality in the production and release of official statistics. This helps maintain public trust in Stats NZ’s independence and integrity and reflects international obligations.

You also set the direction for the government data system

High quality data and statistics are valuable national assets. You have a key role in championing the use of data as a strategic asset among your Ministerial colleagues, promoting how better use of data will support a range of the Government’s priorities, and advocating for the use of data to better understand New Zealand and to drive service delivery.

There is an opportunity to build a high-performing data system across the whole of government. The government holds a vast amount of data on behalf of New Zealanders, which has significant potential to drive innovation and contribute to economic and social progress. A high-performing government data system is crucial for achieving the Government’s goals for social investment and digital government, aligning with data-driven approach taken by other countries.

Stats NZ is the also the system lead for data, which is formalised through the Government Chief Data Steward mandate under the Public Services Act 2020. Therefore, the Statistics portfolio has a role as the leaders of New Zealand’s data system and leading the government response to new and emerging data issues, promoting best practice and safe innovation. We help others use data in new ways by promoting best practice and safe innovation, including through the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation and the Data Ethics Advisory Group.

Your legislative functions and powers

Data and Statistics Act 2022

The Data and Statistics Act 2022 came into force on 1 September 2022, replacing the Statistics Act 1975. The Act enables more effective system leadership, supports greater use of administrative data, recognises Māori interests in data and statistics, and supports safe and appropriate data access for research.

Under the Data and Statistics Act 2022, you have specific functions and powers. These include:

- specifying the Government's data and statistical priorities
- approving the multi-year data and statistical programme required by the Act
- approving joint collection agreements
- approving mandatory requests for data by the Government Statistician through Stats NZ or another authorised public sector agency
- directing the Government Statistician to produce or cease production of statistics of any kind.

Other reporting commitments

The Environmental Reporting Act 2015 requires the Government Statistician and Secretary for the Environment to jointly produce and publish reports on New Zealand's environment. Once a report is published, you and the Minister for the Environment must jointly present it to the House of Representatives as soon as reasonably practicable. We also have reporting commitments under the Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018. Under this Act, Stats NZ must report annually on levels of child poverty in New Zealand according to a suite of 10 measures.

Understanding your priorities

First and foremost, we would like to understand your priorities. A Data System Vision and Roadmap for Stats NZ agreed with Hon Andrew Bayly in early 2024 has been incorporated into our work programme, with next steps summarised in Appendix II. We will discuss your goals with you and how we can support wider government objectives, adapting our work programmes accordingly.

We're here to support you

As Minister of Statistics, you will have dedicated support from Stats NZ officials:

- **Scheduled meetings:** We recommend fortnightly meetings with the Chief Executive and officials to discuss briefings, projects, and address any pressing matters. This is a chance to connect and ask questions directly.
- **Private Secretary (Statistics):** This is the primary liaison between your office and Stats NZ. They are based in your office and will ensure your concerns are understood and Stats NZ's advice is clear to you and your office. They will assist you in organising meetings with Stats NZ officials, liaise with other Ministerial offices, and oversee responses to written and oral parliamentary questions, as well as official information requests.
- **Fortnightly report:** We currently produce a fortnightly report highlighting the work of Stats NZ, including updates on high-priority items, progress on various work programmes, a list of upcoming releases, and details about Official Information Act requests or Cabinet Papers and Bills relevant to your portfolio. We can change frequency or format to suit your preferences.
- **Topic-specific briefings:** We will provide separate briefings and reports whenever there are updates or decisions related to our work or if you require more information.

We can also provide in-person support and written advice for any engagements related to your Statistics portfolio.

- **On-demand support:** You can also arrange ad-hoc meetings with our Chief Executive and leadership team whenever necessary.
- **Statistical releases:** While most releases are made available to everyone - including Ministers - at the same time, some may be available to select stakeholders under embargoed conditions. Your Private Secretary will be promptly informed about significant statistical releases and any embargoed information, ensuring that you are well-prepared for relevant developments.

Delivering to the Government's priorities

Last year, we focused on fiscal sustainability, aligning with the Government's goals of managing within baseline funding. The key changes we have made to our business operations are outlined in Appendix I. This year, we continue to prioritise delivering maximum value from our budget, avoiding unnecessary expenditure, and targeting resources toward high-impact initiatives.

This positions us to deliver to the Government's priorities in four key areas, as outlined in the Stats NZ Performance Plan:

- Driving better decisions and services with administrative data
- Powering social investment with integrated data
- Better deliver to customer and partner need
- Measuring what matters in a modern economy.

The key opportunities and decisions required from you to advance these priorities are set out in Sections 3 – 6 below.

3. Driving better decisions and services with administrative data

We are transforming to be future-ready

Stats NZ is focussed on better meeting the information needs of New Zealanders, particularly our underserved and most vulnerable communities. Stats NZ's core suite of household surveys is pivotal to the production of social and population data and statistics. However, the government's data ecosystem is under increasing strain. Conducting face-to-face interviews has become more difficult. We are already working to reduce collection costs and survey burden by moving more surveys onto new technology and online, starting with key business surveys. However, this approach alone is not enough.

Survey response rates are declining, even as the demand for detailed, real-time information grows. Changing societal attitudes have made it harder to engage the public in critical collections, such as the census, increasing the cost and effort required to obtain reliable data. Inflationary pressures, along with disruptions caused by natural disasters and pandemics, have further stressed the system. These challenges are faced by governments globally.

To address this, we are transforming how data and statistics are delivered and strengthening the broader government data system to meet modern demands. This includes making better use of existing data, particularly administrative data the government has already collected. A critical focus for this shift is transforming future censuses.

Spotlight on census

We were committed to making the 2023 Census accessible to all New Zealanders. We removed barriers by making it easier for people to complete their census forms and sent out more census collectors to support completion. We lifted accessibility of the census with information in more alternate formats and languages. We also connected with partners and community groups, delivered community events, and promoted the census extensively using innovative partnerships for hard-to-reach groups. We responded to the disruption of Cyclone Gabrielle.

To deliver data covering around 99 percent of the population we combined survey data with alternative data sources (including administrative data and data from earlier censuses). This came at a cost of \$326 million and we know it will cost more in the future if we continue with this model. It is not sustainable.

The Government Statistician has therefore made an in-principle decision on 9(2)(f)(iv)

9(2)(f)(iv) prior to 2018, we relied on survey forms. Census 2018 was a mix of surveys and administrative data to fill gaps caused by low response rates. In Census 2023, we had a combined model by design where we set out to use administrative data and forms and trialled several direct data collection partnerships, including with iwi and Pacific groups. 9(2)(f)(iv)

Accelerating the use of administrative data

Our goal is a modernised system where administrative data (supplemented by sample and targeted surveying) underpins most statistics, agencies share data effectively to reduce burden on the public and businesses, and near real-time information guides key decisions and service delivery. This shift supports key Government priorities like digitising government, advancing social investment, and measuring progress on Government Targets.

In addition to addressing challenges of falling response rates, our use of administrative data offers the following benefits:

- lower respondent burden
- data can often be higher quality
- faster and more frequent statistics
- we can bring new products and services to market more quickly and respond more swiftly to changing needs.

To achieve these benefits and reduce our reliance on survey data, we will need to lift the quality of existing administrative data sources. We will also need to create new administrative data sources. This will allow us to produce data and statistics efficiently and at a higher quality, being tactical about how we make use of direct collection methods as large-scale surveys become less and less viable.

Achieving this requires intervention at every stage of the data pipeline, from collection to dissemination. We need to engage closely with the public, key agencies and partners while securing high-quality data from suppliers. Our technology, ingestion and collection systems must be updated to manage linked data and support this shift. Our approach must be underpinned by the safe and ethical use of data, as the success of any work with data will rest or fall on maintaining public trust.

Improving data flows across the government system

The ability to integrate, find, and access data are key to reducing the cost of data sharing. Currently, however, many agencies focus on internal consistency and ensuring data is fit for the purpose for which it was collected. This means that agencies often set up data systems in a way that meet their own needs or the needs of the direct sector they operate in, with limited consideration for use and sharing across the wider system.

Moving to a less siloed system requires data systems and infrastructure that are designed to be interoperable. We also need to build capability across the public service, support agencies to apply consistent data standards, and promote best practice data sharing frameworks and practices.

As part of our future census and social investment work programmes, Stats NZ is likely to seek your feedback on:

- rolling out Multi-Year Data and Statistical Plan identifying critical datasets
- 9(2)(f)(iv)
- introducing robust data quality standards for agencies.

We are also working to enhance data-sharing agreements and data brokering services and offer tailored support for building data capability to agencies needing assistance. 9(2)(f)(iv)

There are, however, benefits to agencies themselves, even within their own functions, as the benefits of administrative data are not yet being fully realised.

This requires significant focus over the next four years. While our immediate priority is transforming how we deliver future censuses (recognising the value census data provides to all government agencies), strengthening the administrative data pipeline will generate wider system benefits.

Decisions needed

Last year, our 'Modernising our approach to the 2028 Census' consultation sought public feedback on what the census could look like in New Zealand from 2028 and beyond. Informed by public consultation, targeted engagement, and advice from an Independent Evaluation Panel, the Government Statistician has made an in-principle decision on the approach to future census 9(2)(f)(iv)

9(2)(f)(iv)

4. Powering social investment with integrated data

Integrated data fuels effective social investment

The Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) is the only system asset tool the government has that provides critical insight into groups of people. The IDI holds longitudinal data on over nine million current and former New Zealand residents, enabling the government to track social outcomes and investment impacts over a person's lifetime. It's free for government agencies, and all IDI data is safeguarded by rigorous safety and data security protocols. Using IDI data, the government can pinpoint when to intervene, how to tailor and target programmes, and where to scale up efforts most effectively.

Despite being central to government's data system and a key enabler of social investment, the IDI is built on old, increasingly unstable technology and is exceeding the capacity of its original 2011 prototype design. It is often difficult to access, data ingestion is clunky and slow, and Stats NZ's ability to refresh and update the "central linking spine" underpinning the IDI is limited.

Agencies have recognised the need for support and investment, and several are supporting incremental improvements within their own baselines, citing the IDI's criticality as part of their day-to-day delivery and operations. However, our service and infrastructure investment has not kept pace with the growth in use, and reinvestment in the service is required to meet system demand.

Scaling up the IDI to support the Government's social investment goals

Scaling up the IDI will allow agencies to use integrated data to design and adjust services more effectively, making it a key part of social policy decisions. Community groups, like iwi and NGOs, will see the value of integrated data, engage with the IDI, and contribute their own data. Non-technical users will have access to easy-to-use tools that offer valuable insights into how government policies are working, leading to better decision-making across the system.

Our work to build the administrative data pipeline and improve administrative data flows will support this goal. We are also making IDI-specific improvements that will deliver to social investment priorities. We have secured a small amount of funding from the Budget 24 tagged '*social investment contingency*' (\$2 million) to make immediate fixes to the IDI so that it delivers well while the longer-term work within Stats NZ is undertaken. This includes expanding some of our server capacity to reduce processing demand and enable faster analysis and load from more users. We will also reduce barriers to access through standardised code and ready-to-use analytics tools.

In the immediate term, we have prioritised initiatives that can be made within baseline and the tagged '*social investment contingency*' that will support the current social investment work programme. However, to make the improvements needed for social investment over the longer term, additional investment is needed. Significant work is required to upgrade the IDI (moving it from a prototype) to strengthen it and enhance its value.

Decisions needed

Cabinet has invited the Minister of Statistics and Minister for Social Investment to report back with detailed recommendations for the data and evidence infrastructure required and the expectations for government agencies to protect and safely share appropriate data for social investment purposes.

We work closely with the Social Investment Agency on the data work programme in support of social investment. In the coming weeks, we will provide a briefing on this work programme, the data infrastructure required, and work commissioned by joint Ministers 9(2)(f)(iv)

9(2)(f)(iv)

5. Better deliver to customer and partner need

Redefining what it means to be customer-driven

The needs and attitudes of New Zealanders are continuously evolving, creating a growing demand for timely, comprehensive, and detailed data and statistics. To meet these needs, we are updating how we collect, produce, and deliver high-quality data. Significant gaps exist in data for certain groups, including hard-to-reach populations, people with disabilities, and those experiencing homelessness. This data is essential for delivering effective public services and ensuring value for money in social interventions.

At the same time, communities, NGOs, and iwi/Māori organisations are playing a growing role in delivering services like education and healthcare to their communities but often lack the necessary data to plan and deliver these services effectively. To address these challenges, we must maintain the relevance of our data portfolio and channels, use analytics and customer intelligence to understand priorities, shift from tactical to strategic, customer-centric approaches, and modernise legacy tools based on usage metrics and customer value.

Reducing the burden on businesses and supporting better decision-making

In response to feedback that businesses receive a large number of surveys and repeated requests for the same information from multiple government agencies, we are working with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) to reduce the survey burden on businesses. Last year we reviewed all our business data collection activity and identified opportunities to consolidate and reduce the volume of direct data collection. We will continue leading interagency collaboration to reduce survey burden. As a result of our collaboration with MBIE, more data for businesses from Stats NZ is now available on MBIE websites, supporting decision-making by businesses.

Improving our tools

Stats NZ is committed to modernising our tools for better user access and data security through our digital programme, with the aim of a smaller system footprint that supports reusable capabilities for a wider range of needs. Last year, we introduced Aotearoa Data Explorer, replacing NZ.Stat as the primary source for large datasets, including census, population, and some business data.

To further reduce the burden on respondents and improve efficiencies, Stats NZ is investing in the underlying technology supporting our data collection through the Survey Platform and Ingestion project. This will enable us to bring more surveys online, initially business surveys. The Quarterly Building Activity Survey has been identified as the first survey for a proof of concept for the full end-to-end process with new survey technology (including enhanced online capability) with work underway. In the first half of 2025, Stats NZ will develop a roadmap setting the order and priority for the rest of our surveys to be migrated to this new technology.

Partnering with iwi and Māori to grow Māori data capability

Partnering with Māori will help ensure the government data system generates a greater amount of data and better-quality data for and about Māori. To support key Government priorities such as social investment, efficient and devolved service delivery and a robust economy, iwi and Māori must have the data they need to make informed decisions regarding their social, economic, cultural, and environmental wellbeing. This also enables them to deliver targeted programmes and assess their effectiveness.

In October 2019, Stats NZ and the Data Iwi Leaders Group (Data ILG) of the National Iwi Chairs Forum signed the Mana Ōrite Relationship Agreement (MŌRA). The MŌRA is significant to Stats NZ and the Data Iwi Leaders Group and sets out a commitment to work together through agreed relationship principles, goals, and deliverables. The Data Iwi Leaders Group trustees will also seek to meet periodically, with you on a mana-to-mana level. The MŌRA with the Data ILG has enabled the Te Whata platform (a data platform tailored specifically by iwi for iwi), which is the data dissemination tool for iwi data from the 2023 Census.

We also hold Mana Ōrite relationships direct with iwi to implement commitments arising from Treaty Settlements and report on how these commitments are tracking. These have enabled a pilot Community Datahub which explored pathways towards improved housing outcomes for Ngāti Whātua and laid down a foundation for Ngāti Whātua to undertake their own data collection and analysis to meet their future data needs. Additionally, following Cyclone Gabrielle, we provided direct data support to iwi in Wairoa to help them understand where to prioritise action and support.

Taking a strategic approach to engagement

We are forming partnerships with new data suppliers, including businesses, iwi organisations, and community groups, to access their valuable data. This will help us fill key data gaps, particularly for high-need or hard-to-reach groups.

Accurate data on these groups is essential for informing social investment and public services. A better understanding of these groups helps the government design targeted interventions, allocate resources efficiently, and improve programme outcomes. This data will also support community-led services, empowering communities to address their own needs.

We are partnering with other organisations, such as Figure.NZ, to find innovative ways of disseminating our data more widely.

6. Measuring what matters in a modern economy

Measuring our society, our economy, and our environment remains our core business. However, this work is not without its challenges, particularly in the macroeconomic space. The growing complexity of the modern world makes it increasingly difficult to measure the economy accurately and comprehensively.

Updating economic statistics

There is a need to invest in improving economic statistics. The international standards that underpin many of New Zealand's key economic statistics (including on employment, trade, and inflation) are undergoing major updates. The next set of standards are targeted to be adopted by 2030, and these updates are particularly significant, reflecting major societal and economic shifts that have occurred since 2008 (including the rise of the digital economy). Non-compliance with the new standards will affect New Zealand's standing in the OECD and IMF and impact our national credit rating. A downgraded credit rating will have impacts on the New Zealand dollar, the cost of borrowing, and access to capital markets. 9(2)(f)(iv)

We are already investing in the platform underpinning the Consumers Price Index (CPI). Unlike other OECD countries, New Zealand currently produces CPI on a quarterly (rather than monthly) basis, due in part to the inability of our legacy systems to produce monthly CPI. 9(2)(f)(iv)

In the meantime, we started producing the Selected Price Indexes in October 2023, which means we are publishing monthly data for about 45 percent of the total CPI basket (accounting for approximately two-thirds of the change in prices at the time it was launched). We are also currently updating the basket of goods and services for the CPI (a "reweight") to ensure this basket accurately reflects current household purchasing patterns. We will provide you with further briefing on this.

Population: 2023 Census

Last year we published all major releases from the 2023 Census of Population and Dwellings. Over the next six months, we will release a range of additional tables and infographics highlighting different topics captured through the 2023 Census. These include:

- Regional
- Māori descent
- Ethnicity, culture & identity
- Housing & households
- Disability and activity limitations
- Work & income, education & training, transport.

Environment

The Environmental Reporting Act 2015 requires the Government Statistician and Secretary for the Environment to jointly produce and publish reports on the environment. Our most recent domain report, *Our Air 2024*, was publicly released on 9 October 2024. Once a report is published, you and the Minister for the Environment must jointly present it to the House as soon as reasonably practicable. We will work with your office to assist with this process. We are also reviewing our environmental reporting indicators to improve our ability to provide a reliable picture of the state of the environment.

Child poverty

Stats NZ is required under the Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018 to report annually on ten measures of child poverty. Nine of these measures are reported annually from data collected through the Household Economic Survey. The next release will be on 20 February 2025 and is the sixth year that Stats NZ has reported under the Act. The statistics reported in the release will be used by the Government Statistician to determine whether the Government's second set of three-year intermediate target measures were or were not met. We will provide further advice to you on the release of child poverty statistics ahead of the release on 20 February 2025.

The tenth measure, persistent poverty, is not yet reported on as a part of the annual child poverty release. Measuring persistent poverty requires data that follows individual respondents over an extended period (longitudinal data). We will report on this through a combination of administrative data and the Household Income and Living Survey (which replaces the Household Economic Survey). Reporting on persistent poverty will commence in early 2027, in line with the requirements of the Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018.

Disability

The 2023 Household Disability Survey, New Zealand's source of data on disability prevalence and the experiences of disabled people, was collected in late 2023. Statistics from the survey are scheduled to be published on 27 February 2025, in *Disability statistics: 2023*.

Data and insights from the Household Disability Survey, along with Household Labour Force Survey, General Social Survey, Household Income and Living Survey, and the 2023 Census, will inform important decisions for disabled communities for years to come.

7. Upcoming briefings and major releases

Key briefings

We will provide separate briefings to you in the coming weeks on:

- the approach to future census
- 9(2)(f)(iv)
- the data infrastructure that supports the Government's social investment goals
- responding to the independent investigation by Doug Craig commissioned after allegations that 2023 Census data collected by Manurewa Marae staff as part of a contract with Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency has been misused, and the related PSC Inquiry.
- our operations including a detailed financial snapshot.

Major releases

Notable releases for the next three months are set out below. The Private Secretary for Statistics can brief you on upcoming releases and processes.

February

- 3 Feb – Household living-costs price indexes: December 2024 quarter
- 5 Feb – Greenhouse gas emissions (industry and household): September 2024 quarter
- 5 Feb – Labour market statistics: December 2024 quarter
- 13 Feb – 2023 Census topic: Iwi affiliation and Māori descent
- 14 Feb – Selected price indexes: January 2025
- 20 Feb – Child poverty statistics: Year ended June 2024
- 20 Feb – Household income and housing-cost statistics: Year ended June 2024
- 27 Feb – Disability statistics: 2023

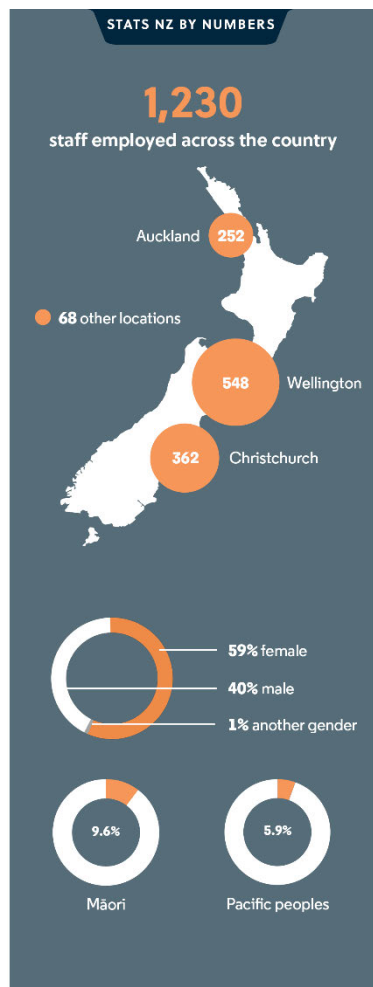
March

- 14 Mar – Selected price indexes: February 2025
- 19 Mar – Balance of payments and international investment position: December 2024 quarter
- 20 Mar – Gross domestic product: December 2024 quarter
- 25 Mar – Regional gross domestic product: Year ended March 2024

April

- 8 Apr – Greenhouse gas emissions (industry and household): December 2024 quarter
- 10 Apr – 2023 Census topic: Housing, families and households
- 15 Apr – Selected price indexes: March 2025
- 17 Apr – Consumers price index: March 2025 quarter (with updated basket of goods)

Appendix I: Organisation and Vote Statistics at a glance



Vote Statistics

The Minister of Statistics is responsible for appropriations of approximately \$258m for Vote Statistics for the 2024/25 financial year.

The key elements from the Budget 2024 Estimates¹ are:

- Multi Category Appropriation – Official Statistics is \$176.45m².
- Departmental Output Expenses comprise \$16.24m for services to other agencies including lead agency in shared accommodation with other Crown tenants in Wellington and Christchurch.
- Departmental capital expenditure appropriation of \$20m.
- Five-year delivery of population and social statistics Multi-Year Appropriation of \$227.12m (\$45.42m in 2024/25³).

Stats NZ has made savings to meet Government's 7.5 per cent baseline reduction goals for government departments and to operate within baseline. To do this we:

- reduced office space operating and lease costs
- reduced contractor/consultant spending
- disestablished our data system leadership branch and distributing remaining functions to other branches
- reduced the size of our policy function from two teams with four leadership roles, to one team with one leadership role
- disestablished Data Ventures (the commercial arm of Stats NZ, which focussed on developing joint ventures with businesses and was partially third-party funded)
- reduced the size of the data system capability function
- realigned our organisational structure to better fit our future production model, focusing on efficiency and modernisation
- returned funding from discontinuation of the Living in Aotearoa Survey.

9(2)(f)(iv)

¹ Adjustments will be made to Vote Statistics at the 2025 March Baseline Update (MBU) for Cabinet decisions made since 2024 October Baseline Update (OBU) and other technical adjustments.

² The Official Statistics Multi Category Appropriation has increased by \$2m to \$178.45m in the 2024 OBU due to the draw down of tagged contingency for Social Investment.

³ The funding profile for Delivery of Population and Social statistics Multi-Year Appropriation will be reviewed in line with estimated actual expenditure for the year in the 2025 MBU.

Appendix II: Ministerial priorities of Hon Andrew Bayly

Priority area	Next steps
Strategically improve access to data to grow the economy and support New Zealand households and businesses	• Add additional data to our new Aotearoa Data Explorer tool including Census 2023 data on housing, disability, work and income, education, training and transport. • Continue providing data on businesses to MBIE.
Digitising government and improving collection approaches to cut costs & reduce compliance burden on New Zealanders	• Develop a roadmap setting the order and priority for surveys to be migrated off legacy technology to new technology. • Work with MBIE on options for the Business Operations Survey. • Lead interagency collaboration to reduce survey burden. • Refresh guidance and tools for agencies undertaking surveys.
Foundation work for the 2028 Census	• Develop Cabinet paper on approach to the next Census.
Investing in the IDI to support delivery of the social investment approach	• 9(2)(f)(iv) • Implement immediate fixes to IDI funded by funding from the Budget 24 tagged social investment contingency (\$2 million).
Expand and improve economic datasets to grow the economy and support New Zealand households and businesses	• Update CPI basket for quarter ending March 2025. • Add Electricity to the Selected Prices Index. • Plan for the implementation of new international standards.

More information on these priorities is available in [Data System Vision and Roadmap for Stats NZ](#).

Appendix III: Our leadership team



Mark Sowden

Government Statistician, Government Chief Data Steward, and Chief Executive of Stats NZ

Mark began his role as the Government Statistician and Chief Executive of Stats NZ in January 2020. Mark also holds the role as Government Chief Data Steward, supporting government to realise the potential of data to improve wellbeing, while maintaining and building trust in its use. In this role he also leads New Zealand's open data programme.



Emma Jones

Deputy Government Statistician and Deputy Chief Executive for Technology, Operations, Commercial & Collections

Emma's role is responsible for organisational technology and infrastructure, including corporate offices and procurement activities. Technology, Operations, Commercial & Collections also leads in the areas of continuous improvement, along with opportunities for alignment, integration, and economies of scale across Stats NZ's activities.



Kate Satterthwaite

Deputy Chief Executive & Chief of Staff, Office of the Chief Executive

Kate's role is responsible for policy, legal and internal audit, governance, ministerial and executive services, risk, privacy, and communications. As Deputy Chief Executive, she also has oversight of Stats NZ's Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation.



Rachael Milicich

Deputy Government Statistician and Deputy Chief Executive for Insights & Statistics

Rachael leads the Insights and Statistics business group which curates, shapes, and enriches data to provide reliable and relevant insights and statistics on New Zealand's economy, population, society, and environment.



Rhonda Paku

Kaihautū, Tangata Tiriti Learning Capability

Rhonda's role provides critical cultural leadership across the business. The Kaihautū heads the business group that advocates for and champions the data needs and interests of our Tiriti partner, while building capability in cultural transformation for Stats NZ to ensure our meaningful engagement in the Māori-Crown relationship – ultimately to deliver far greater outcomes for Māori through data so that Māori can thrive. The ground-breaking Mana Ōrite Relationship Agreement and associated work programme is sponsored by the Kaihautū.



Tia Warbrick

Deputy Government Statistician and Deputy Chief Executive for Strategic Engagement, Māori Partnerships & Data Capability

Tia's role supports the organisation to deliver for and with Māori, iwi and hapū.

Delivering for and with Māori, iwi and hapū confirms Stats NZ's commitment to build enduring relationships with iwi Māori and develop the infrastructure, capabilities and resources required to work with Māori data appropriately as part of our core business.



Vince Galvin

Chief Methodologist

Vince leads the Methods & Design group which provides methodological leadership and technical support to Stats NZ and the wider statistical and data community.