

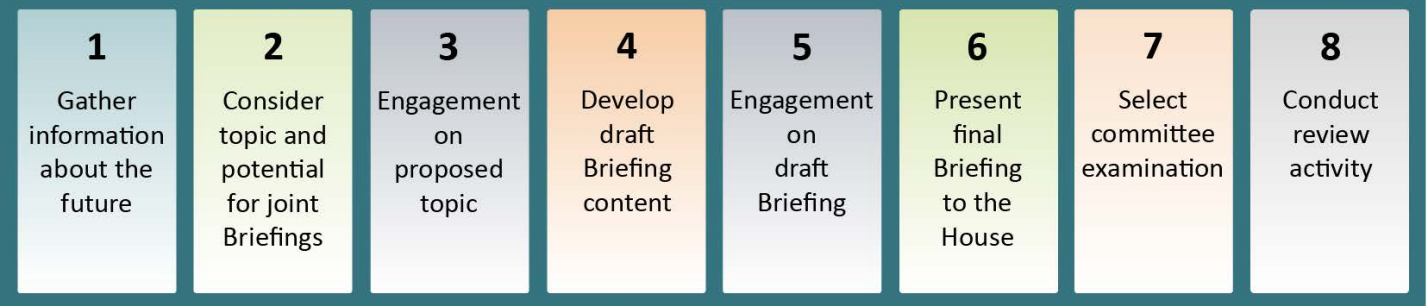
# Long-term Insights Briefings Process guide

The *Public Service Act 2020* (Schedule 6, clauses 8–9) requires departmental chief executives to publish a Long-term Insights Briefing (Briefing) at least once every three years, in an intentional approach to increase our focus on the long term. New Zealand’s Public Service has a duty of stewardship, to look ahead and provide advice on future challenges and opportunities. The Briefings are intended to bring a focus to thinking long-term and promote public debate on important matters for New Zealand.

The purpose of this guidance is to support chief executives on their second Briefing. Agencies in the broader state services may also find it useful when contributing to a Briefing relevant to their agency’s functions.

## Steps in the Long-term Insights Briefings process

Indicative timeframe: April 2024 – March 2026



This product is first in a suite of three Long-term Insights Briefings guidance resources:

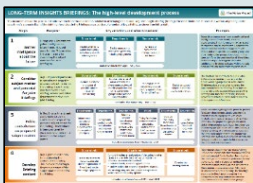
**A**

### **Long-term Insights Briefings: Process guide** — THIS DOCUMENT —

sets out the requirements on departmental chief executives to develop a Long-term Insights Briefing and gives recommendations for how they should best be developed. It includes principles to guide departments in making decisions that fully realise the potential benefits of the Briefings, and criteria to help in selecting the Briefing topic.



**B**



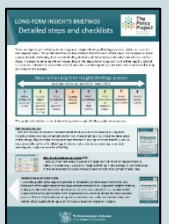
### **Long-term Insights Briefings: Overview of steps**

sets out the high-level process and indicative timeframe for departments to follow in developing a Long-term Insights Briefing. This A3 display eight high-level steps in the development process, and each step consists of a number of activities.

**C**

### **Long-term Insights Briefings: Checklists**

provides checklists with questions based on good practice for departments to consider during each of the eight steps in the development process. The checklists set out practical actions that can be taken to develop and deliver a high-quality Briefing, and how to promote the long-term insights.



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## Publication details

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It replaces *Long-term Insights Briefings: High-level overview*, first published in April 2021.

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# Think pieces on New Zealand's future

The Long-term Insights Briefings are think pieces on important issues for the future of New Zealand. The Briefings are an opportunity to enhance public debate on long-term issues and contribute to future decision making. Communicating and promoting Briefing findings to the public is integral to encouraging public debate.

## Statutory purpose of the Briefings

- To make available into the public domain:
- information about medium and long-term trends, risks and opportunities that affect or may affect New Zealand and its society
  - information and impartial analysis, including policy options for responding to these matters.

## Indicative timeframes of the Long-term Insights Briefings process

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Gather intelligence about the future	Consider topic and potential for joint Briefings	Engagement on proposed subject matter	Develop draft Briefing content	Engagement on draft Briefing	Present final Briefing to the House	Select committee examination	Conduct review activity
April to May 2024	May to June 2024	June to Sept 2024	August 2024 to April 2025	April to July 2025	June to July 2025	July to Nov 2025	January to March 2026

## Lessons learned from the first round of Briefings

The first round of Briefings was completed in mid-2023 and a review of the process completed in August 2023. A review by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet of the first round of Long-term Insights Briefings provided a number of insights for the second round of Briefings.

Agencies found the first round of Briefings provided an opportunity to:

- give visibility to important topics across agencies and externally
- influence departments' workstreams and strategic intentions
- encourage collaboration across agencies and with stakeholders
- build new skills within their agencies – futures thinking, engagement, and communication.

Challenges for agencies in developing their first Briefings included:

- deciding on the scope of topic
- the resource implications of conducting two consultation rounds
- trying to separate the department's day to day thinking from long-term thinking
- the time and resources needed to support the development of their Briefings.

Some of these insights have been incorporated into this second round of guidance.

See [Annex E](#) on page 13 for examples of best practice in the first round of Briefings.

# The Briefing development process

## Selecting the topic and working with others

Chief executives are required to select the topic for the Briefing. They must do this by taking into account future trends, risks, and opportunities that are particularly relevant to their department's functions. Selecting a topic is a judgement call, as there's likely to be a range of subject matter that may be appropriate. [Annex B: Criteria for selecting the Briefing topic](#) on page 8 can help chief executives as they consider potential Briefing topics.

Chief executives may:

- develop and sign off their own Briefing on a topic relevant to their department's functions (departmental Briefing), or
- join with other chief executives to develop and sign off a single Briefing on a topic that's relevant to multiple departments' functions (joint Briefing).

How a group of chief executives choose to collaborate to prepare a Briefing they jointly sign off is up to them, provided the selection of topic and the Briefing meets the requirements of the Act for each department. This differs from when a department or other agency in the public sector contributes to a Briefing on a topic relevant to their agency, but doesn't sign off the Briefing. Such a contribution on its own would not satisfy the requirements to provide a Briefing.

The Briefing's topic doesn't need to cover a department's entire portfolio. It may focus on a deeper exploration of a specific issue. If they wish, chief executives may choose to contribute to more than one joint Briefing or develop more than one departmental Briefing. For departments that have multiple ministers, there's no requirement for each minister to develop a Briefing.

## Independent of ministers

In practice, chief executives are responsible for maintaining independence from ministers. This means not seeking input or approval from ministers when developing the Briefing's topic.

It's important to note, however, the 'no surprises' principle still applies.<sup>1</sup> For example, when chief executives first inform their minister of the proposed topic for the Briefing, it's recommended they inform both the department's relevant portfolio minister and any relevant associate ministers. There will likely be other points throughout the Briefing process where chief executives should inform ministers. This includes when consulting the public on aspects of the Briefing, or on significant matters that arise in the select committee examination.

## Public sector-wide process for forming joint Briefings

Departments are encouraged to identify opportunities to form joint Briefings. The existing chief executive groups – such as the Climate Change Chief Executive Board, or Economic Chief Executives – will be available to discuss opportunities for joint Briefings and provide support on selecting a topic. The Policy Profession Board is also available to provide advice on topic selection.

<sup>1</sup> Under the 'no surprises' principle, chief executives keep their ministers informed of significant or controversial matters, especially those that may arise in public, in the minister's portfolio areas.

A smaller number of joint Briefings on key issues would make more effective use of existing resources through departments working together. It also lets the Briefings best contribute to public value by:

- having a greater impact on public debate by focusing on a smaller number of issues and reducing the consultation burden on the public
- making connections between future trends that cross departmental functions, to identify new opportunities or risks.

Individual chief executives retain the decision rights to select the Briefing's topic and decide whether or not to contribute to a joint Briefing.

## Selecting the time horizon

The value of the Briefings is the opportunity to adopt a longer timeframe than may normally be used in the department's work. While the Act references the medium and long term, the exact time horizon isn't defined in years. It's recommended that:

- all Briefings look out at least ten years into the future – (that is, ten years should be the beginning of the medium to long-term period)
- departments select the end of the medium to long-term period for their Briefing after undertaking the initial information gathering and topic selection.

## Developing the Briefing content

The Act doesn't set out requirements for the content of the Briefings. Based on the statutory purpose of the Briefings, it's recommended they include:

- information about medium and long-term trends, risks, and opportunities related to the topic under consideration (see [Annex C: Potential information sources on future trends, risks, and opportunities](#) on page 9)
- information and impartial analysis, including policy options for responding to these matters.

The Briefings may also include the strengths and weaknesses of policy options but without indicating a preference for any particular policy option.

In certain situations, the chief executive may consider it appropriate to produce one document that meets the requirements of the Briefings, and at the same time meets the requirements of another statutory requirement they are required to produce.

## Public consultation

The Act requires chief executives to consult the public twice in the process of developing their Briefing – first on the topic of the Briefing, and second on the draft Briefing once developed.

It's recommended that chief executives consider:

- whether to consult on only one proposed or a number of possible topics
- to what extent to specifically engage with iwi Māori and other Māori interests<sup>2</sup>
- any specific population and stakeholder groups that should be a particular focus of consultation.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See the principle 'Respect Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi interests' outlined in Annex A on page 7.

<sup>3</sup> Some groups making up the New Zealand population include Māori, Pacific peoples, other ethnically diverse peoples, disabled people, women, rainbow communities, religious communities, children and youth, and seniors. This is not an exhaustive list. The groups with a stake in the topic most relevant to consult with will vary from Briefing to Briefing.

See [Annex D: Public messaging on the Long-term Insights Briefings](#) on page 12 for messages that can be adapted for context when communicating on the Briefings.

Chief executives must take into account the consultation or wider engagement feedback when finalising the topic for the Briefing (before the Briefing is drafted), and when finalising the content of the Briefing.

Taking into account means genuinely considering matters raised during consultation. This means:

- weighing up the factors being considered
- effecting a balance between these factors that's appropriate for the circumstances
- being able to show that proper consideration of the feedback has taken place.

Chief executives may need to conduct engagement activities with key groups on government policy. To avoid confusion, any engagement processes on the Briefings should be kept separate from engagement processes on government policy.

## Parliamentary scrutiny

The Act requires chief executives to provide a copy of their final Briefing to the relevant portfolio minister – to enable the minister to present the Briefing to the House of Representatives. Once tabled in the House of Representatives, a Briefing is allocated to a select committee for examination.<sup>4</sup> Select committees may decide to hear evidence from departments, ask ministers to appear, call for public submissions, and seek independent advice.

If called to give evidence on a Briefing at a public hearing, chief executives should clarify that their attendance is in the exercise of a statutory duty independent of the minister. That is, they aren't acting on behalf of their minister. If the select committee asks the minister to appear, however, departments should brief the minister in preparation.

When officials are giving evidence in select committees, particular care should be taken not to indicate a preference for different policy options – either current or future policy. This doesn't preclude chief executives from providing information and impartial analysis on the technical, operational, societal, or other wider implications of the policy options identified in the Briefing and providing advice on their strengths and weaknesses.

## Timing of the Briefings

The Briefings are required to be presented to Parliament by the relevant portfolio minister – as soon as reasonably practicable after receiving it. The Act is silent on the exact timing for when the Briefings are to be prepared by a chief executive and presented to the House.

Where possible, chief executives should produce the second round Briefings in time for them all to be presented to Parliament by 30 June 2025, as the Standing Orders Select Committee has requested. If this isn't possible, chief executives should aim for as soon as practicable after this date. This timing will ensure the Briefings aren't presented during the pre or post-election months.

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<sup>4</sup> Briefings that span multiple sectors may be examined in joint select committee meetings.

### Promote public debate

The Briefings are a mechanism for the public to contribute meaningfully on what matters most for the future of New Zealand. The communication and engagement aspects of the Briefings are just as important as the research and analysis itself. Consideration should be given to drawing out the voices of young people, especially when discussing issues with intergenerational implications for wellbeing.

### Contribute to public value

The outcome of the Briefings is to contribute to public value – to focus on matters important to the future wellbeing of people in Aotearoa New Zealand. Contributing to public value will be achieved when long-term thinking in the Briefings usefully contributes to decision making – not only by government, but also by iwi and other Māori interests, business, academia, not-for-profit organisations, and the wider public.

### Open and transparent

Making all information related to the Briefings publicly available – such as consultation feedback, significant data used to develop the Briefings and the methodologies applied – can build trust and confidence in the Public Service. It will increase the chances that the Briefings contribute to future decision making and can reduce the number of Official Information Act requests on the Briefings.

### Independent and impartial

The Briefings need to be both independent and impartial. Developing the Briefings independently of ministers enables the Public Service to take a longer-term stewardship role. It doesn't mean the Public Service can dictate the priorities for the future or the actions taken to pursue those priorities.

### Respect Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi interests

The Briefings must appropriately consider Māori and Treaty interests. The same considerations in relation to the Treaty of Waitangi that normally apply to government work also apply to the Briefings. Engagement with Māori is likely to be necessary in developing the Briefings to better understand:

- the impact of future changes on iwi, hapū, whānau, Māori organisations, and Māori interests
- what matters to Māori about the future, including the impact on outcomes that affect them, Treaty settlements and customary rights and interests, and aspirations and needs
- Māori tikanga or mātauranga Māori at play.

The extent to which engagement occurs will depend on the department's functions and the level of Māori interest in the topic of the Briefing. The Briefings can build closer relationships with Māori by appropriately recognising the interests and roles Māori may have and by signalling which policy options are more likely to improve outcomes for Māori over time, and Māori Crown relationships.

### Achievable and sustainable

The Briefings need to be achievable and sustainable. Considerations of resourcing, capability and existing stakeholder relationships will influence decisions on the scope and substance of the Briefings.

### 1. The topic has not yet received adequate consideration

The Briefings provide an opportunity to explore issues that are known but haven't received adequate attention, as well as new and emerging issues that haven't yet been recognised. This may include a topic that has previously been identified, but not analysed. It may also include problems that develop slowly over time, which means they attract little attention.

### 2. The topic is likely to have significant implications for the long-term wellbeing of people in New Zealand

The Briefings provide an opportunity to explore the issues that matter for the long-term wellbeing of people in Aotearoa New Zealand. This includes issues that impact the long-term distribution of wellbeing across people, places, and generations.<sup>5</sup> To be long term, the issues should have the potential to endure over time or have implications that are likely to arise in the future. As a guide, when selecting the topic ask whether it's likely to affect wellbeing significantly at least 10 years into the future.

### 3. The topic can ordinarily be sufficiently distanced from current government policy when consulting the public

There's a risk of public confusion if the department is consulting in the same time period on both a government policy topic and a similar Briefing topic. It's likely to be difficult or impossible for the public to distinguish between government policy development and the Public Service developing its independent advice on that topic. Briefings are intended to promote public debate and later decision making on future issues not being sufficiently addressed by current policy work programmes. So if the topic is already being focused on by government policy development, it will generally be appropriate to propose other topics for the Briefing.

### 4. The scope of the topic is manageable

The scope of the topic is manageable given existing resourcing, capability and stakeholder relationships to develop the Briefings. Most long-term issues overlap and require clear boundaries to be put in place. Also, check that security classifications don't impose unmanageable restrictions to exploring the topic in public.

### 5. The topic is particularly relevant to the department's functions

The topic is closely connected to the department's functions and not incidental to them.

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<sup>5</sup> Departments may refer to the Treasury's [Our Living Standards Framework](#) for guidance on applying a wellbeing approach. The publication [An Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework](#) provides additional insights on its application.



# Annex C

## Potential information sources on future trends, risks, and opportunities



This list is an indication of the different types of information sources that are available when examining future trends, risks, and opportunities. It's not comprehensive, and not all sources will be relevant to all departments. Departments are also likely to have other information sources they use relevant to their specific function.

### Futures thinking reports

- Futures thinking journals such as Futures and Journal of Futures Studies.
- Futures centres that publish futures thinking insights on key areas, such as:
  - Tokona Te Raki (Māori Futures Collective)
  - McGuinness Institute
  - Koi Tū: The Centre for Informed Futures
  - Stockholm Institute for Future Studies
  - Institute for the Future
  - Futures Centre
  - Policy Horizons Canada
  - Finland Futures Research Centre at the University of Turku
  - Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies

### Sources by type of organisation

#### Ministers and/or agencies on their behalf

- Wellbeing reports – starting from 2022, the Minister of Finance must table a four-yearly report prepared by the Treasury, using indicators to describe the state of wellbeing now and over time, and its sustainability or risks (section 26NB, Public Finance Act 1989).
- Fiscal Strategy Report – yearly report by the Minister of Finance on long-term objectives over at least the next 10 years, as well as short-term intentions for the next three years (section 26I, Public Finance Act 1989).

#### Public sector and state sector entities

- Long term fiscal position statement – prepared every four years by the Treasury. Provides a 40-year system view using projections, trends, and modelling on fiscal policies (section 26N, Public Finance Act 1989).
- Strategic assessments by Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the National Assessments Bureau (e.g. Global Geo-Politics and State of the Multi-lateral System).
- Statistics New Zealand publishes a wide range of insights and data about New Zealand's economy, society and environment at [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz). For assistance, contact the Stats NZ Info Centre – [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz) / 0508 525 525. For information on how to access the Integrated Data Infrastructure or Longitudinal Business Database, contact [access2microdata@stats.govt.nz](mailto:access2microdata@stats.govt.nz).

- Data, statistics and outlook trend analysis prepared by other departments, such as:
  - Ministry of Transport (e.g. household travel, public transport, domestic freight)
  - Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (e.g. National Science Challenges reports, New Zealand sectors dashboard, employment, tourism)
  - Ministry of Health (e.g. mental health, mortality, hospital event data)
  - the Treasury (e.g. Living Standards Framework Dashboard)
  - Ministry for the Environment (e.g. Environmental Reporting).
- Chief Science Advisor Forum – if your department doesn't have a Science Advisor and you're looking for additional support, you may be able to access the expertise of the Chief Science Advisor Forum. Contact [pmcsa@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:pmcsa@auckland.ac.nz).
- Investment intentions – prepared by capital intensive agencies. Describes an agency's investment journey over the next ten years to support the agency and/or the long-term goals of its sector.
- Government entities with a mandate to think long-term (e.g. Climate Change Commission, New Zealand Infrastructure Commission and New Zealand Productivity Commission). The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment also has a long-term mandate, although is an independent Officer of Parliament.
- Reports produced by population agencies on the needs, views, and values of different population groups (e.g. Ministry for Pacific People's Lalanga Fou provides preliminary information about the aspirations for Pacific peoples that can be re-used across departments).

## Māori

- Iwi and hapū strategies and reports (e.g. Ngāi Tahu 2025 vision, Te Arawa 2050 vision, Ngāi Whātua Ōrākei 2050 vision).
- Reports and other materials produced by the Waitangi Tribunal, including claims that are the subject of the forward agenda of the Waitangi Tribunal. In particular, materials relevant to Kaupapa Inquiries – inquiries that deal with nationally significant issues affecting Māori as a whole.
- Academic research by Māori academics.
- Key themes from Māori news media over time.
- Content of Treaty settlements and related legislation, and related relationship instruments. See Te Kāhui Whakataurua (Treaty settlements) and Te Haeata.
- Submissions by iwi, hapū and Māori organisations on relevant topics, as well as recent litigation in the courts.
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – a comprehensive international human rights document on the rights of indigenous people.
- Whānau Ora – an approach that supports whānau and families to achieve their aspirations in life. The Whānau Ora outcomes framework is the principal instrument for indicating the success of Whānau Ora.

- An Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework – the indigeneity lens on the Treasury’s Living Standards Framework.
- Emerging themes across the work of departments, for example breaking down silos to improve outcomes for Māori and efforts such as coordination on issues like Wai 262.
- Insights from existing departmental relationships with iwi, hapū, whānau, and Māori organisations.

## Local government and other information sources

- Local authorities (e.g. Long-term Plans, Regional Policy Statements, Regional Plans, Infrastructure Strategies and other long-term strategies and plans required under various statutes).
- Research centres hosted by universities, such as:
  - Institute for Governance and Policy Studies (Victoria University of Wellington)
  - Koi Tū: The Centre for Informed Futures (University of Auckland)
  - New Zealand Centre for Sustainable Cities (University of Otago)
  - Centre for Sustainability (University of Otago).
- Academics who work on a particular topic.
- Non-governmental organisations and philanthropy.

## International community

- Reports by the United Nations, OECD, WHO, World Economic Forum and European Union (e.g. OECD publication How’s Life that measures wellbeing, World Economic Forum’s Global Risks Report).
- Reports on global trends (e.g. US National Intelligence Council’s Global Trends Report, UK Ministry of Defence Global Strategic Trends, Ipsos Global Trends Report, Deloitte Beyond the Noise: The Megatrends of Tomorrow’s World).

These messages have been developed as a starting point for departments to adapt for context when communicating with the public about Long-term Insights Briefings.

### Why do the Briefings exist and what do they do?

- We need to make sure that Aotearoa New Zealand considers and is ready for the future.
- The Public Service Act 2020 requires government departments to produce Long-term Insights Briefings once every three years.
- The Briefings will help us collectively as a country to think about and plan for the future.
- They will identify and explore long-term issues that matter for our future wellbeing.
- Each Briefing will explore a different topic – decided by the government department or departments, after community consultation.

### Why should I get involved?

- The future is everyone's responsibility, affecting us and future generations.
- Everyone can have their say on what topics the Briefings should cover.

### What do I need to know?

- Government departments will be seeking the community's feedback on what topics should be covered in the Briefings. They will also be seeking the community's feedback on the content and detail of the Briefing.
- The final Briefing will be published for everyone to access.

### How will the Long-term Insights Briefings be used?

- The Briefings are not current government policy.
- They will be developed independently of ministers.
- The Briefings are to provide information and insights that could be used in the future by anyone. For example, they may inform:
  - government agencies, their policy advice and the public services they deliver
  - government policy decisions and how they're implemented
  - the policies of political parties
  - the decisions and actions of local government
  - the decisions and actions of members of the public, iwi, businesses, and our wide range of other non-governmental organisations.

### Why does this matter?

- No one knows for sure what the world will be like in the future.
- The Briefings help us as a country to start thinking about the future and what will matter most for the long-term wellbeing of people in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- They will help all of us to make decisions about the future.

The Long-term Insights Briefings from the first round are available on Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission's page [Published Briefings](#). Below are some examples of good practice in the areas of engagement, use of futures thinkings tools and methods, pros and cons analysis, and accessibility. These are not comprehensive lists, only a few selected examples.

### Engagement

- The **Justice sector** received feedback from more than 2,600 participants through surveys and consultation submissions. This demonstrates the potential for joint Briefings to achieve engagement with higher numbers of people by combining the consultation efforts of multiple departments.
- **Education Review Office** interviewed around 650 people from 40 ethnic communities across New Zealand. They also surveyed over 1,800 learners and their families from ethnic communities.
- **Ministry for Primary Industries** held internal workshops and interviewed 33 industry and wider sector leaders and innovation ecosystem and industry bodies. Over 100 people and organisations engaged in the consultation through workshops, meetings, and submissions.

### Use of futures thinking tools

- The **Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment** used the Futures triangle (history, present, future) and the Futures cone. Future scenarios and trends were used to capture the next 30 years or so until 2050.
- The **Ministry for Primary Industries** used future scenarios and pathway modelling to explore possible future consumers of 2050. Six personas were fleshed out with stories to explore trends and demographic changes.
- **Department of Conservation and Land Information NZ** held a futures-thinking workshop using a scenario-sketching tool by the Global Business Network, to produce options for potential futures, and a log of risks and opportunities associated with these.

### Pros and cons analysis

- **The Treasury** demonstrated the potential for a wide breadth of analysis to be more easily incorporated when the Briefing is combined with an existing statutory reporting document. In this case, the data collection and reporting cycle already underway for another report was able to fast-track their Briefing development and minimise the impact on organisational resources.
- **Inland Revenue** set out a range of possible reform options and unpacked their pros and cons at regular points. This analysis was thorough and data-based, often presenting multiple facets of consideration.
- **Ministry of Transport** explored the risks and benefits of a range of issues.

### Accessibility

- The **National Security Group**'s Briefing was translated into Te Reo Māori, Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Samoan, and Spanish, to reach a more diverse range of population and ethnic groups.
- The **Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment** released their Briefing in the additional formats of an accessible HTML web version and an A3 summary.
- **Department of Internal Affairs** applied a wide range of accessibility considerations to the design of their Briefing, including colour contrast ratios that met requirements, and a well-polished, simple format.
- **The Ministry for Culture and Heritage** produced the Briefing in 13pt font – ideal for ease of reading. Colour contrasts were clear and compliant, and theirs was the only PDF to be installed with a range of technical accessibility features (meta data, tagged reading order, bookmarks, and alt text).