

21 October 2016

Transparency International New Zealand

Transparency International welcomes progress in bringing more open government

Yesterday State Services Minister Paula Bennett announced New Zealand's second Open Government Partnership (OGP) National Action Plan for 2016-18 (NAP).

This plan is a solid roadmap to achieving more openness in government.

This NAP delivers a strong positive message on the importance of transparency and the need for new initiatives:

- "We know that it takes attention and diligence to maintain and advance the principles of openness and transparency that are cornerstones of New Zealand's approach to government."
- "Rather than building off existing government programmes of work, these commitments set out targeted, discrete pieces of work that will make a difference to openness, transparency, and accountability, and will foster greater public participation in government."

The NAP includes the following key commitments:

- Commitment 1: Open Budget - presenting budget data in ways that make it easy to understand.
- Commitment 2: Improve access to official information by publishing responses to requests on government websites and developing principles for more proactive release.

- Commitment 5: We will build a flexible and enduring platform for engagement between the New Zealand government and New Zealand communities around the Open Government Partnership.
- Commitment 7: Improving policy practices. We will improve knowledge of tools and techniques policy makers can use to create more open and user led policy.

We applaud the State Services Commission team in its work to create an inclusive process, engage citizens and make bold recommendations to arrive at an acceptable and achievable result.

This is progress on the previous plan. It is essential that resources are allocated within our public sector to support their work in achieving these commitments. Of particular interest is adequately resourcing Commitment 2 in order to effectively improve access to official information.

"We can't allow lack of funding or the coming election cycle to distract us from this process," Says Janine McGruddy, Transparency International New Zealand's Chief Executive. "The OGP process is continuous. Not only is it critical to New Zealand's democracy and reputation to implement this NAP, we need to start immediately on our 2018 NAP. In order to assume leadership in the OGP this third NAP will need to incorporate much broader citizen involvement and additional new ambitious recommendations."

TINZ is determined to support - and prod - the government and actively promote broader civil society involvement.

Background information for journalists

1. **Media contact:**

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2. **Official media release**

State Services Minister Paula Bennett's media release [Second Open Government National Action Plan](#)

3. **NZ OGP Website**

New Zealand's new official OGP website: <http://www.ogp.org.nz>

4. **Open Government Partnership**

The Open Government Partnership was launched in 2011 to provide an international platform for domestic reformers committed to making their governments more open, accountable, and responsive to citizens. Since then, OGP has grown from 8 countries to the 66 participating countries. In all of these countries, government and civil society are working together to develop and implement ambitious open government reforms. <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/>

5. **Transparency International**

Transparency International is a global civil society coalition leading the fight against corruption. It compiles a number of measures of different aspects of corruption including the Corruption Perceptions Index, the Global Corruption Barometer, and the Bribe Payers Index. Information on Transparency International can be found at www.transparency.org and detailed information on the Corruption Perceptions Index can be found at www.transparency.org/cpi.

6. **About TINZ**

Transparency International New Zealand (TINZ) is the local chapter of the global organisation - <http://www.transparency.org.nz/>. TINZ works to actively promote the highest levels of transparency, accountability, integrity and public participation in government and civil society in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands.

Transparency International New Zealand provides a free [Anti-Corruption Training Tool](http://transparency.org.nz/Anti-Corruption-Training) (transparency.org.nz/Anti-Corruption-Training) designed by leading experts in the field, and enables organisations to provide training for their personnel. This was developed in partnership with the Serious Fraud Office and BusinessNZ.

Transparency International New Zealand published the [Integrity Plus 2013 New Zealand National Integrity System Assessment](#) and is actively engaged in the implementation of its recommendations.