

OPEN GOVERNMENT DATA PROGRAMME JULY 2017:

Submission on Prototype Dashboard for public performance reporting

20 October 2017

Transparency International New Zealand (TINZ) welcomes development of a dashboard as a means of providing civil society with an overview of government agencies' performance. We also welcome the opportunity to comment on this prototype dashboard as follows:

- (1) We perceive the prototype dashboard to comprise 3 components, namely 'Progress to July 2017' table, 'Key Insights' diagram, and the 'Yes Responses' spider diagram.
- (2) The six 'Focus Areas' provide a reliable segmentation of agencies' activities, and their depiction with coloured icons is very successful for communication.
- (3) The succinctness of each Activity Description within Focus Areas is most useful. However, TINZ recommends further editing to achieve consistent reflection of true on-going intent of each agency's activity. Examples for improvement include "Published open data" (past tense implies subsequent cessation!) and "Attempt to re-use existing..." (rather vague!).
- (4) TINZ recommends that public access be provided to the survey questions and/or response matrices underlying each Activity Description, to foster greater understanding of the validity of the dashboard information.
- (5) TINZ strongly recommends increasing the granularity for Performance measurements by either:
 - a. replacing the proposed 3-level scale with a much sharper 5-level scale (similar to the Maturity Model) or,
 - b. at the very least by splitting the proposed mid-level measure into its two distinct halves to create a sharper 4-level measurement scale.
- (6) TINZ strongly recommends that the 3 dashboard components be further developed to display progress trends over months/years, for each Focus Area and each Activity Description. The current prototype components appear designed to provide only snap-shot information.
- (7) TINZ recommends the 'Progress to July 2017' table be partitioned into 6 rows (one for each Focus Area) to provide instant appreciation of progress in any single Focus Area. Whereas partial clarity is currently provided by placement of icons in appropriate Performance columns, the vertical positioning of similar coloured icons appears chaotic, e.g. the scattered placements of several purple "\$" icons.
- (8) It is most concerning that correlation between findings in the dashboard's three components is not readily apparent (as would be expected using the same set of underlying data). Is there an explanation for this? For example, in the 'Yes Responses' spider diagram the 12% score for 'Knowledge & Skills' contradicts the zero score for 'Mostly "Yes"' within the 'Progress to July 2017' table.
- (9) TINZ recommends the useful 'Key Insights' diagram be strengthened in two ways:
 - a. by avoidance of meaningless statements, e.g. "90% of agencies have released data", which offer near-zero confidence in actual performance;
 - b. reduce layout confusion by vertical sequencing of the Focus Areas similar to other dashboard components rather than as currently scattered.

(10) TINZ strongly recommends that the performance trends of each individual government agency be made publicly accessible, to strongly motivate agencies' accountabilities for their timely progress in comparison with all other agencies.

In conclusion, TINZ applauds the development of the prototype dashboard and looks forward to its further enhancement in order to reliably inform civil society of the government's progress towards its overall 'open data' goal.

Please contact David.Dunsheath@tinz.org.nz (Mob +64 27 248 9488) or Suzanne.Snively@tinz.org.nz (Mob +64 21 925 689) if you have any queries.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Suzanne Snively', written in a cursive style.

Suzanne Snively, ONZM
Chair, Transparency International NZ
+6421925689