MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

26 June 2026

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 21 May 2026, requesting information about the Ministry of Social Development's (the Ministry's) implementation of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on your request set out below.

- *What Artificial Intelligence is your Ministry considering implementing in the next year?*
- *What aspects or parts of the business will it be implemented? Ie how will the AI be used*

The Ministry's Leadership Team approved its AI Strategy and AI Policy in March 2026 and intends to publish both documents on its website in due course. We are providing you with these documents in advance. Please see these documents attached.

MSD has an AI policy which we use as a reference point when talking about AI, which aligns with the Public Service AI Framework.

This policy covers both generative AI (i.e. Large Language Models and related technologies, and their image-based equivalents) and non-generative AI (such as other forms of machine learning, predictive algorithms, older forms of voice recognition). This has effectively the same coverage as the Algorithm Charter, which the Ministry is a signatory to.

The Ministry has plans to implement:

- A mix of generative and non-generative AI functionality as part of our transition to a new contact centre platform, to better support our contact centre staff. Final decisions on what functionality will be used have not yet been made but are expected to include call transcription.
- An algorithm to help match job seekers with jobs as part of a new digital employment platform. This is not generative AI.
- Updated search functionality across Ministry knowledge bases, to improve discoverability of key information for all our staff.

The Ministry's Artificial Intelligence Strategy for 2026 – 2027 further sets out the Ministry's considerations for future implementation of AI.

- *Will its implementation reduce the workload or staff numbers?*

As part of Budget 2026, Cabinet has agreed to a programme of reform aimed at transforming the public service to streamline how it is organised, accelerate digital transformation, strengthen leadership and talent, and improve efficiency and productivity. Decisions to implement new contact centre and employment functionality detailed above predate the Budget 2026 decisions and specific decisions on how these Budget reforms will be achieved by agencies have not yet been made. Ministers have asked Chief Executives to work through what this means for their organisations.

- *What safety and security protocols has it had to pass to be considered acceptable for implementation?*

Any use of AI needs to comply with the Ministry's AI policy and be assessed through the Certification and Accreditation (C&A) process. The Ministry's AI policy sets out the principles, roles and responsibilities which support the Ministry to use AI.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp. 

Anna Graham
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services

Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2026 - 2027

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Introduction

Almost every New Zealander at some point in their lives will receive support from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). Artificial intelligence (AI) is changing the nature of how people engage with agencies to receive support, and how agencies and partners provide support.

Our relationship with New Zealanders is large. In 2024/25 MSD answered over 4.4 million phone calls. Over 1.4 million New Zealanders at the end of June 2025 were receiving income support.

Our strategies – Te Pae Tawhiti describes the strategic shifts MSD is making. Mana Manaaki – A positive experience every time. Kotahitanga – Partnering for greater impact. Kai takutū tatou – Supporting long-term social and economic development. Our Māori strategy Te Pae Tata and Pacific strategy Pacific Prosperity describe how these shifts will be realised for Māori and Pacific peoples. We are using AI to help us with our Target Operating Model, strategic shifts, and how we engage with clients and the community.

Our vision is to use AI to support working simpler, faster, and effectively.

Using AI for predictable and repetitive work enables our staff to spend more time focusing on complex needs and contributes towards capacity release. This AI Strategy 2026 -2027 describes how we use AI today, our vision for AI, our priorities where we will focus, and shifts and measures to support our efforts. It will unlock new opportunities for innovation, supports the Channel Strategy, and helps deliver on our Future Service Model. The use of AI tools must be led by investments in training and guidance for staff to feel empowered to use these tools safely.

Our use of AI will align to our commitment to using personal information responsibly. We will follow our Privacy, Human Rights and Ethics Framework to identify and address risks associated with how we interact with personal information using AI. AI capability is changing rapidly – which is why this strategy describes our ambition and actions to use these capabilities safely and transparently.

In 2026-2027 we will focus on five priorities – 1) Deliver tailored personalised client experiences, simplified consistent staff experiences, and easier collaboration for partners using AI; 2) Maintain public trust and confidence while using AI; 3) Invest in staff to use AI; 4) Invest in platforms that provide AI; 5) Appropriate AI governance and investment.

By automating appropriate tasks and enabling better insights, staff can focus on people, speed up decisions, and deliver accurate, consistent support that helps New Zealanders be safe, strong, and independent.

Where we are now

Current state of artificial intelligence at MSD

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

How we use AI today

Clients

- Clients have access to *artificial intelligence* capabilities in support services funded by MSD, such as Te Heke Mai's Generative-AI enhanced Cover Letter and CV creator.
- Some phone conversations between clients and staff are transcribed using traditional AI like Natural Language capabilities.

Staff

- Staff have access to *artificial intelligence* tools such as Microsoft Copilot Chat, with the 2025 Public Service Census recording 15% of MSD staff trying AI at work.
- Staff are exposed to new *artificial intelligence* capabilities in online tools such as email, collaboration, and software development.

Partners

- Partners can and do use *artificial intelligence* capabilities in the delivery of services to clients and staff governed by existing controls without dedicated AI guidance.
- Partners have created client-facing services that use *artificial intelligence* such as AI-coaches and AI-roleplays in LinkedIn Learning, and AI-enhanced Cover Letter and CV creators in Te Heke Mai.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

What we mean by AI

Predictive AI

- Predictive AI involves using data, statistical algorithms, and machine learning techniques to identify the likelihood of future outcomes based on historical data.
- For example, using natural language to transcribe calls from audio to text

Generative AI

- A type of AI system that can create or generate new content such as text, images, video and music based off models and patterns detected in existing datasets.
- For example, creating CVs and cover letters, summarising text, reformatting case notes, chatbots

Because of its rapid growth and adoption, AI capabilities are becoming mainstream capabilities that affect how people and organisations operate. These capabilities have different characteristics, uses, risks, and ways of working.

AI is already in use today within MSD. We manage the use of AI today through our existing technology and information management governance controls.

Increasingly online tools will include new AI capabilities that weren't available when the tool was procured or implemented, and this trend will increase over time.

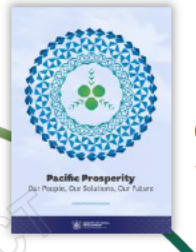
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Supporting our wider strategy

MSD's strategic direction -
Te Pae Tawhiti

Te Pae Tata – Te Rautaki Māori me te Mahere Mahi sets out how MSD will work with Māori to achieve better outcomes.

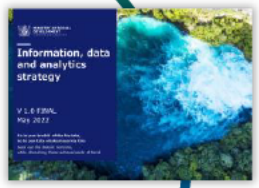
Pacific Prosperity – Our People, Our Solutions, Our Future sets out how MSD will work with Pacific communities to achieve better outcomes.



MSD's Technology Strategy guides MSD's investment across technology platforms, data and insights, security, digital service design, modern digital tools and ways of working.

MSD's Target Operating Model describes the MSD desired target state over the next decade, with changes and improvements delivered progressively.

MSD's Information, Data and Analytics Strategy communicates how we will shift our practices to enable MSD's future services model, using information responsibly for quality insights, better decisions and improved lives.



Algorithm Charter for Aotearoa New Zealand committing signatories to being transparent about how algorithms are used, ensuring public trust in data-driven decision making.

Public Service AI Framework is a vision and principles for responsible AI use in New Zealand's public service and informs MSD's AI Strategy and Policy.

New Zealand's Strategy for Artificial Intelligence describes an approach for public and private investment in AI, including responsible AI use and adoption across government and business.

Accessibility: MSD is delivering a programme to ensure the public sector is accessible for everyone and inclusive of disabled people.

AI contributes to support our strategic direction Te Pae Tawhiti, and Te Pae Tata and Pacific Prosperity, by providing new capabilities for MSD's Target Operating Model.

MSD's adoption of AI is shaped by external guidance such as the GCDO Public Service AI Framework.

Smarter, simpler, more human services

Future state for artificial intelligence at MSD

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TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

MSD vision for artificial intelligence

MSD will use AI to simplify work, speed up decisions, and improve productivity by automating appropriate tasks and providing better insights. This allows staff to focus on people, and deliver accurate, consistent support that helps New Zealanders be safe, strong, and independent.

AI contributes towards MSD's Future Service Model, by offering new ways to provide client-focused services to deliver a consistent, accurate service. As a client's support needs change, AI tools like chatbots support channels that clients prefer.

To support integrated services AI can pull information from multiple systems supporting more effective decision making. AI can enable shared views between MSD and partners, so staff and partners see the right amount of information at the right time.

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TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Why MSD should take advantage of AI

Clients

To deliver tailored client journeys

By identifying client context and pre-filling information, AI can enable personalised service paths that improve outcomes.

To provide personalised and relevant services

AI can provide contextual awareness to ensure clients see information that match their circumstances making services easier to navigate.

To deliver inclusive access for clients

Accessibility options like AI-powered voice support could be enabled to ensure no client is left behind regardless of ability or device.

To improve understanding of services

AI could enable plain-language explanations tailored to each client's situation helping understanding of service.

Staff

To enable staff to have a clear daily view of next steps

AI can provide a daily summary of overdue tasks, and suggested next actions every morning.

To speed up gathering of notes and reading of them

Draft notes from previous interactions are auto-prepared to speed up quality assurance and case review processes.

To improve accuracy of guidance

AI pathfinding tools can provide policy-aware guidance, enabling staff to provide accurate information to clients.

To deliver consistent service

AI can provide recommendations for staff which improve service consistency.

Partners

To enable partners with better insights

AI can enable querying of data using natural language providing partners with better insights.

To provide partners with simple tools to explore options

AI can provide pathfinding to partners to explore which products and services are suitable for clients in particular circumstances.

To provide tailored alerts

Partners could receive tailored notifications highlighting clients requiring outreach.

To receive simplified collaboration

Tasks important to partners and MSD such as co-creating job descriptions and job listings can be made easier and quicker using AI.

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TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

The need for AI

In the future our people will have...

- fewer systems and apps to navigate, and forms that auto-fill with existing data

- one source with all the client's latest information, supporting them as they support the client

- more time to focus on people who need extra support to move towards work and independence

- integrated interactions with clients, helping with all their employment, income and housing needs

- all the guidance they need to do their job in one online location

- consistent processes to help support and manage obligations and remedies, including sanctions when needed

- plenty of support as we implement changes over time.

1.0 Digital experience

People and partners empowered to access information and services across all channels

2.0 Service enablement

Enabling a single view of our clients to understand needs and provide high quality personalised services

3.0 Unified technology ecosystem

Actively enabling the unified partner technology ecosystem which will underpin the future of digital government and NZ public services

4.0 Enabling better insights

Enabling personalised services and an organisation that leverages insights to improve services, operations and policy

5.0 Digital workplace

Empowering our people with modern tools to work productively and collaborate easily

6.0 Digital workforce

Digitally adept, agile and collaborative, embodying a culture of learning and innovation

To deliver the future described in MSD – services for the future, AI is woven through as a supporting capability requiring investment in staff and technology. The six themes in the MSD Technology Strategy reference AI capability investment.

AI has the potential to enhance the productivity of staff significantly and improve the experience of clients. Staff will be involved in decisions to use AI capability. In addition, this requires dedicated investment in staff training, organisational readiness, and technology capabilities. This AI Strategy describes work to improve our capabilities over the next two years to meet our wider goals.

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TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Five AI priorities to support our technology shifts

1.0 Digital experience	2.0 Service enablement	3.0 Unified technology ecosystem	4.0 Enabling better insights	5.0 Digital workplace	6.0 Digital workforce

Priority 1 - Deliver tailored personalised client experiences, simplified consistent staff experiences, and easier collaboration for partners using AI

Priority 2 - Maintain public trust and confidence while using AI

Priority 3 - Invest in staff to use AI

Priority 4 - Invest in platforms that provide AI

Priority 5 - Appropriate AI governance and investment

To support our Target Operating Model and meet our technology shifts described in the MSD Technology Strategy, we have five AI priorities over the next two years.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Priority 1

Deliver tailored personalised client experiences, simplified consistent staff experiences and easier collaboration for partners using AI

The challenge

- Clients receive an inconsistent service that varies depending on the channel. Clients are asked to repeat information, and experience decisions being made with reduced accuracy.
- Staff can't easily see all the information about products and services, and find it difficult manually capturing and reading notes, and switching between systems to understand the client context.
- Partners receive a fragmented complex service without easy access to insights about the client.

Why artificial intelligence

- AI can enable personalised service that improve outcomes using language tailored for a client's circumstances.
- AI can draft notes auto-prepared from previous interactions speeding up quality assurance and case review processes.
- AI can review large amounts of text information, and generate insights, which can help partners understand their relationship with MSD.
- AI knowledgebases can provide policy-aware guidance, enabling staff to provide accurate information to clients.

The approach

- AI-powered transcription, client note creation, and client note search can create more consistent notes, allowing staff to concentrate on the conversation with clients
- AI-pathfinding and knowledgebase search can recommend to staff next best actions, and provide interactive guidance on eligibility and entitlement criteria
- AI can quickly create new content for partners such ~~such~~ as employer profiles, job descriptions, and job ads in the Digital Employment Service

The outcome

- Clients receive more accurate personalised guidance using the language that works for them
- Staff can fully concentrate on the conversation with clients rather than manually writing client notes, and can see next best action guidance and deliver service quicker to clients
- Staff have increased productivity reading and creating documents
- Partners have more insight about clients, and tasks important to us such as writing employer profiles, job descriptions, and job ads are drafted using AI, reducing effort

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Priority 2

Maintain public trust and confidence while using AI

The challenge

- To show how we plan to use AI responsibly to improve service
- To understand concerns about using AI with information of importance to Māori and Pasifika
- We want to create inclusive service experiences including for disabled people

Why artificial intelligence

- Generative AI is new, and we want transparency on our rationale for, and how we'll responsibly use AI
- AI creates new opportunities but also risks associated with training and bias of information of importance to Māori and Pasifika
- AI can create new types of user experience, such as voice-powered chatbots, that better cater for disabled people

The approach

- Publish the MSD AI Strategy, AI Policy, and significant AI initiatives on our website, and get AI guidance from the GCDO
- Engage with National Beneficiary Advocates Consultative Group (NBACG)
- Engage with the Public Service Association
- Use our existing engagement with Māori and Pasifika and understand concerns of using AI
- Engage with Disabled People

The outcome

- The community, and GCDO understand our rationale and responsible usage of AI
- We support our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, through a joint understanding of how AI can use information of importance to Māori
- We build a community view of how AI can enhance service for Pasifika, and disabled people

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Priority 3

Invest in staff using AI

The challenge

- Getting staff comfortable with using AI safely
- Getting staff familiar with AI tools and how they work
- Getting staff to know what types of things can and can't be done with AI
- Getting staff comfortable with how to test out new innovations

Why artificial intelligence

- Generative AI has different characteristics from other tools that require training to use responsibly and safely
- Generative AI capabilities are quickly part of all software available online, and staff need guidance on what is safe or permitted to use these capabilities

The approach

- Provide safe use of AI training to all staff, leveraging internally produced training and training from Public Services Commission
- Provide how to use chatbots and AI safety guidance to all staff
- Encourage use of approved AI tools, and constrain use of unapproved AI tools
- Build AI Community of Practice to share new AI innovations

The outcome

- Through training, staff feel supported and confident using AI. When mistakes are made that involve AI, MSD will treat that as a learning opportunity to work with staff to improve processes to further provide support and confidence to staff when using new AI capabilities
- Staff understand which tools and capabilities are approved and can be safely used at MSD

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TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Priority 4

Invest in platforms that provide AI

The challenge

- Our chosen platforms for Digital Employment Service, Cloud Contact Centre, and Service Experience Platform have AI capabilities that need implementing
- Our corporate productivity platforms for collaboration, knowledge management, and document editing have AI capabilities that need implementing
- Traditional software configuration and development is complex and costly and AI presents an opportunity to become more efficient

Why artificial intelligence

- AI has become core capability in these platforms, so we need to take advantage of that capability
- AI-enhanced software development provides the potential to reduce maintenance costs of our Heritage systems, and increase the speed of delivery of MSD - services for the future

The approach

- Rollout Salesforce Einstein and Agentforce to improve service for Clients, Staff, and Partners
- Rollout Azure AI Foundry as a safe space to build and run internally-developed AI use
- Rollout Copilot Chat for all users, and M365 Copilot and Copilot Studio for corporate use of AI
- Rollout Snowflake to enable simple text searching of large volumes of data

The outcome

- We have an AI Architecture showing how our AI capabilities across Heritage and MSD - services for the future work together in a cohesive integrated way
- We have a modern AI foundation that enables service improvements for clients, staff, and partners

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TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Priority 5

Appropriate AI governance and investment

The challenge

- Vendors and partners are increasingly using AI to provide service to MSD and clients
- To ensure new AI capabilities deliver business value requires investment for investigation
- There are finite resources to govern new AI capabilities

Why artificial intelligence

- Generative AI has different characteristics making it possible to generate false data
- There is a large demand for AI enablement within MSD - services for the future
- All online software is starting to contain AI capabilities we could take advantage of

The approach

- We'll leverage our Emerging Technology team and Innovation Framework to triage, and seek investment for new AI opportunities
- We'll use our existing Emerging Technology Advisory Group for dedicated AI governance, supported by other governance committees as AI capabilities transition from proof-of-concept into production

The outcome

- We apply right-size AI governance that evaluates high risk and high impact capabilities but doesn't unduly restrict lower risk innovations
- We accelerate AI initiatives to deliver value faster
- We can monitor the output of AI and ensure it maintains quality required over time

Strategy into action

Artificial intelligence actions for 2026 - 2027

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

AI vision, priorities, and qualities

MSD's AI Vision

MSD will use AI to simplify work, speed up decisions, and improve productivity by automating appropriate tasks and providing better insights. This allows staff to focus on people, and deliver accurate, consistent support that helps New Zealanders be safe, strong, and independent.

Our vision is realised through these priorities

MSD's AI priorities

- Deliver tailored personalised client experiences, simplified consistent staff experiences, and easier collaboration for partners using AI
- Maintain public trust and confidence while using AI
- Invest in staff to use AI
- Invest in platforms that provide AI
- Appropriate AI governance and investment

MSD's AI qualities

- AI-enabled innovation
- AI transparency and explainability
- AI quality & safety
- Inclusive AI client experiences
- Human-centred AI
- Enterprise AI tools
- AI aligned with environment
- Responsible AI approach

Having a set of AI qualities will help us develop our AI capabilities in a way that aligns with our MSD organisational values.

We show Manaaki by caring about the wellbeing and success of people by engaging with staff on introducing and implementing AI, and by investing in staff to use AI. We show Whānau through building inclusive experiences that work for all New Zealanders. We show Mahi tahi by working with our partners and other agencies to build joined-up experiences with AI. We show Tika me te pono by being transparent and responsible in our use of AI.

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TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Artificial intelligence qualities

We deliver inclusive AI client experiences respecting Te Ao Māori, Pasifika, and accessible client needs

We invest in and have access to modern enterprise-wide tools to operationalise AI

We build an innovative culture supported by training and opportunities to learn AI

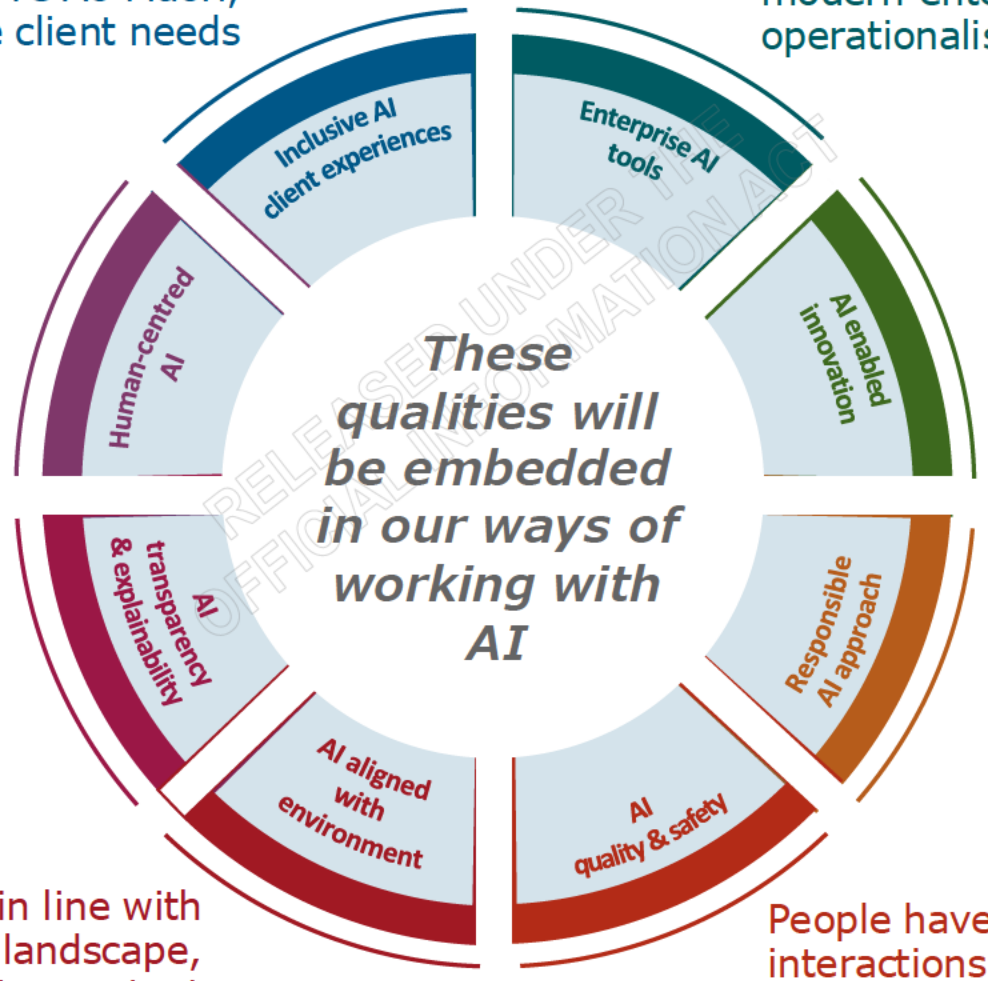
We create innovation for clients, staff, and partners regularly using AI

People understand what information has gone into AI and can explain the outcomes

We apply governance to ethical, responsible, and safe uses of AI

We develop our uses of AI in line with our peers, the regulatory landscape, and public sector context

People have safe confident interactions with AI and understand risk, characteristics and quality



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TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Measuring success of AI

Our vision is realised through these priorities

MSD's AI priorities

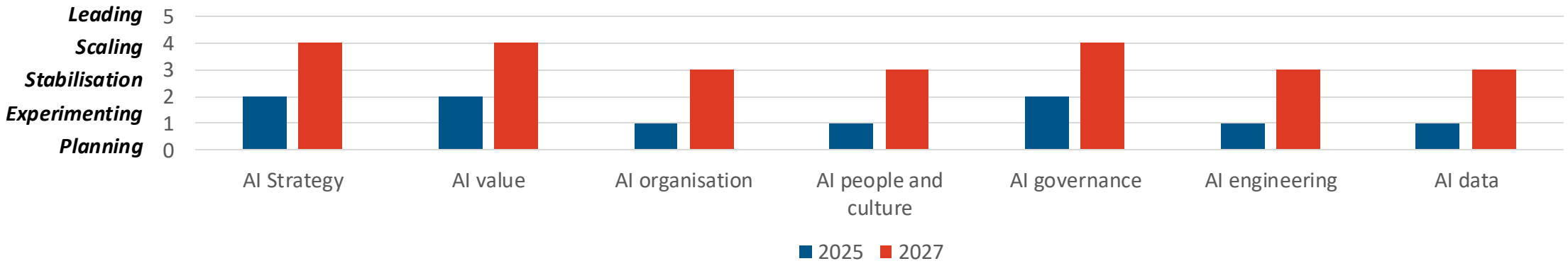
- Deliver tailored personalised client experiences, simplified consistent staff experiences, and easier collaboration for partners using AI
- Maintain public trust and confidence while using AI through assurance
- Invest in staff in using AI
- Invest in platforms that provide AI
- Appropriate AI governance and investment

Successfully delivering our priorities results in these outcomes

MSD's AI measures

- Client and partners can take advantage of AI to receive service, and staff can make decisions faster with accurate data
- AI governance and assurance processes are followed regularly, with significant initiatives published online and widely consulted
- All staff have AI training, and feel empowered leading to increased use reported in the DIA Public Sector Survey
- AI capabilities accelerate MSD – services for the future and help reduce the transition cost
- A regular pipeline of AI use cases move swiftly through our Innovation Framework and governance committees

There are seven AI capabilities that MSD will concentrate on maturating over the next two years. We will assess ourselves annually to track our increasing AI maturity over time.



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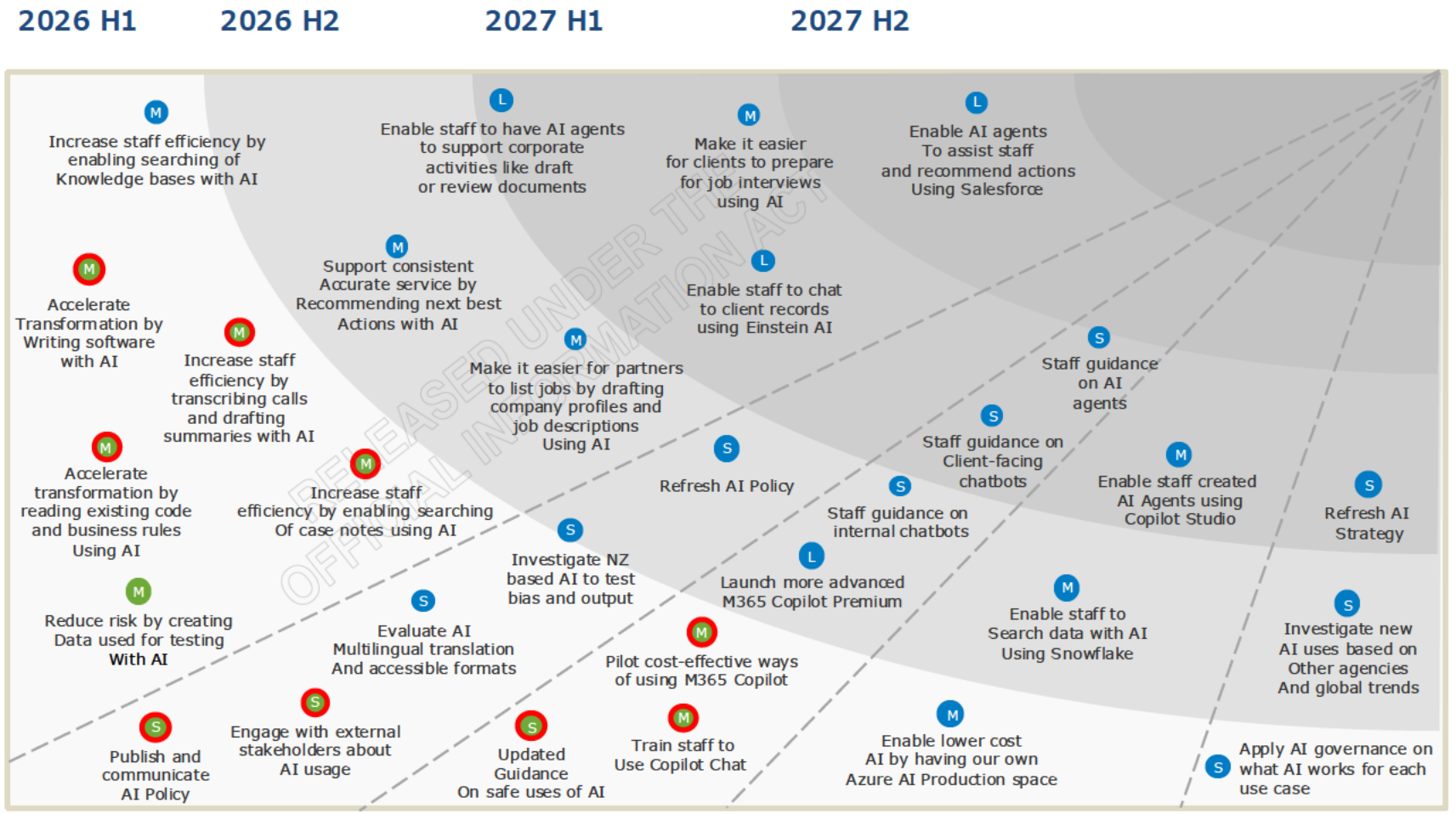
MSD AI Roadmap 2026-2027

Deliver tailored personalised client experiences, simplified consistent staff experiences, and easier collaboration for partners using AI



Legend

- S Proposed – small estimated investment
- M Proposed – medium Estimated investment
- L Proposed – large estimated investment
- In progress
- Indicates high priority initiative.

Maintain public trust and confidence with using AI

Invest in staff to use AI

Invest in platforms that provide AI

Appropriate AI governance & investment

Our purpose

Manaaki Tangata, Manaaki Whānau

We help New Zealanders to be safe, strong and independent

Artificial Intelligence Policy

Last Review Date:	March 2026
Next Review Date:	March 2027
Approved by:	Leadership Team March 2026
Owner:	GM Information, Privacy, and Security (CISO, CPO); GGM Improvement, Systems, and Technology

Purpose

This policy defines the principles, roles, and responsibilities which support the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) in ways that best support its aims while upholding it responsibilities to the New Zealand Government and public.

The principles found in this policy set the governing direction and intent for the Ministry's use of AI. Underpinning this policy are standards, patterns, processes, and guidance material which collectively operationalise the principles in this policy and align the Ministry's Information culture and decision-making.

Policy Statement

The Ministry holds and uses information about people that impacts their lives. Information is taonga, and as its stewards we must both use it responsibly and protect it while it is in our care.

Considered and effective use of AI has the potential to strengthen public services and deliver better outcomes for all New Zealanders. However, if used without proper consideration and appropriate controls, AI can cause harm quickly and at wide scale to both Government and public. The Ministry has a responsibility to manage these risks, and to use AI systems in ways that are human-centric and that create value for New Zealanders.

Scope

This policy applies to all AI systems (see definitions).

This policy applies to all Ministry staff including contractors; and all activity conducted by third parties on behalf of the Ministry.

Policy principles

The following principles must be understood and followed to ensure alignment with the purpose of this policy.

1. **The Ministry invests in AI strategically and uses it in line with its values and commitments**

   The Ministry invests in AI (and its ongoing maintenance and assurance) where there is a clearly identified business need that is most effectively met through this technology. AI systems are used where they can best support our strategic goals, and only where they can be shown to align with our commitments under the Public Service AI Framework, Data Protection and Use Policy, and Algorithm Charter[1]. Investment into AI systems is paired with investment into Ministry staff, so that its value is best realised and our staff are best positioned to use it safely.

2. **AI systems, and any information assets they consume or produce, are fit-for-purpose to improve outcomes**

   AI systems are appropriate for their intended use and have the necessary accuracy and reliability required to consistently produce expected results. These systems are used only where the information they rely on is of sufficient quality to meet those requirements. Accuracy and reliability requirements are set and assessed against each individual use case, and only used where these requirements are met.

3. **AI systems must be managed in line with their risk profile and potential for harm**

   AI systems are assessed for potential material impact and only deployed if they have been approved by the Ministry's AI Assurance Officer after due consideration of their potential benefits, risk, and alignment with our values (and where relevant, informed by consultation with key stakeholders). Once approved, they are regularly monitored to ensure that these risks remain managed and that quality is maintained, and if issues are identified corrective action is taken. Assurance of AI systems is ongoing and risk-based, and builds on the Ministry's other assurance frameworks, including certification and accreditation.

[1] Public Service AI Framework; Data Protection and Use Policy (DPUP); Algorithm Charter for Aotearoa New Zealand

4. The Ministry is transparent with its use of AI systems and AI generated information

Transparency on the use of AI is important for maintaining public trust. The Ministry publishes information about any AI systems it has assessed as having potential material impact, including who is responsible for them and how they are used and why. The Ministry also publishes general information about how we use AI even when there is no potential impact.

AI generated information can vary in reliability and needs to be used with caution. Where information is created primarily or solely by AI systems, that information is marked as such. If that information is used (including to inform decision-making), any resulting information is also marked to show how AI was involved. Being clear about how and when AI information is used is a key component of using AI systems responsibly.

5. Responsible use of AI systems is everyone's responsibility

Ministry staff are responsible for their own use of AI systems, use approved systems, and only use them in ways that align with our values and which keep people and their information safe. Information sourced from AI systems is always used with care and only relied on where it has been verified. Ministry governance and processes play a key role in providing a layer of protection over the potential harms from AI systems, and our awareness of information risk and its acceptable use is just as important.

Responsibilities

Person/Party	Responsibilities
All Staff	All staff are responsible for: • Complying with the Ministry's information and technology policies and standards; • Following any guidance, processes, or procedures for the use of AI systems; • Completing any required training before using AI systems; and • Using AI responsibly in line with this policy.

Person/Party	Responsibilities
Managers	All managers are responsible for: • Ensuring their teams are familiar with the Ministry's requirements under this and other policies; • Understanding and communicating with their teams Ministry expectations around the use of AI systems; and • Modelling good information practice through their actions and behaviour.
Leadership Team	The Ministry's leadership team is responsible for: • Setting strategic direction for our investment in, and use of, AI systems in support of the Ministry's overarching strategic objectives; and • Championing the responsible use of AI systems.
Information Governance Committees	Information Governance Committees are responsible for Overseeing and tracking the achievement of the Ministry's strategic objectives, including how those objectives are being met through our use of AI systems. These governing bodies also have oversight of: • Information and technology guardrails for AI systems; and • Ministry decisions about ensuring there are adequate systems, processes, and controls in place to identify and manage information risk. These committees are further described in the Ministry's Information Governance Policy.

Person/Party	Responsibilities
AI Assurance Officer (AIAO)	The Ministry's AI Assurance Officer is accountable for assuring the Ministry's use of AI systems and is responsible for: • Assessing and where appropriate approving the use of AI systems, contingent on those systems also meeting all other Ministry requirements (including certification and accreditation); • Seeking external expertise where required to support this assessment; • Providing direction on the development of suitable guardrails to manage AI risk; • Setting requirements for the monitoring of AI systems and ensuring that appropriate reporting is carried out; • Overseeing the ongoing assurance of AI systems; and • Communicating externally on the Ministry's use of AI systems through directing the publication of information about these systems, reporting to DIA on AI use, and engaging with counterparts in other agencies on shared initiatives. At the Ministry, the AI Assurance Officer is the DCE Organisational Assurance and Communication. The requirements of this role are derived from the GCDO's AI Assurance Framework.
Emerging Technologies Advisory Group (ETAG)	The Ministry's Emerging Technologies Advisory Group is responsible for: • Providing advice to the AI Assurance Officer and to Information Governance Committees on the potential use of AI systems; • Enabling the Ministry to safely innovate with AI through providing guidance on proposals to key stakeholders; and • Supporting the development of suitable guardrails for AI systems.
System Owners of AI systems	Each AI system must have an identified System Owner, who is responsible for: • Ensuring that the AI system is monitored and that where issues are detected that these are addressed; • Ensuring that any technical controls required for that AI system remain in place and effective; and • Ensuring that the AI system remains compliant with all applicable Ministry policies and standards, including certification and accreditation.

Person/Party	Responsibilities
Information Asset Owners	Information Asset Owners are responsible for: • Understanding how and why the Information Assets they are accountable for used or produced by AI systems; and • Ensuring that any risks to those Information Assets through those AI systems are appropriately monitored and controlled.
Improvement, Systems, and Technology (IST)	Improvement, Systems, and Technology are responsible for: • Investing in and maintaining AI systems in line with Ministry strategy and policy; • Developing and maintaining guardrails for the integration of AI systems into the Ministry's technology environment; • Supporting System Owners to carry out their responsibilities; and • Working with other business groups to identify where business needs could potentially be met through use of AI systems.
Information, Privacy, and Security (IPS)	Information, Privacy, and Security are responsible for: • Leading assurance over the Ministry's use of AI systems through our information assurance framework and activities; and • Developing and maintaining guardrails for the responsible use of information with AI systems, including as this pertains to privacy, human rights, and ethics.
Strategy and Insights (S&I)	Strategy and Insights are responsible for: • Developing and maintaining guardrails for the development, refinement, and maintenance of AI models; • Developing and maintaining guardrails for the use of AI systems in analytics and reporting; and • Developing and maintaining guardrails for data used or produced by AI systems, including code developed to transform or assess that data.

Definitions

Word/ phrase	Definition
AI system	AI systems are defined as in the Public Sector AI Framework. An AI system is a machine-based system that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments. Some examples of AI systems are Generative AI systems (such as ChatGPT), predictive models, and computer vision systems.
Algorithm	A procedure or formula for solving a problem or carrying out a task. All AI systems involve algorithms, and as such, requirements in Ministry policies that apply to algorithms also apply to AI systems.
Guardrails	Guardrails are the rules and guidance that keep us safe and delivering value in a direction consistent with organisational strategies and aspirations. A Guardrail could be any documented, approved, and re-usable material which is referenced to understand "what good looks like." Some examples of guardrails are policies, standards, guidance, processes, blueprints, and patterns.
Material impact	Material impact is as defined in the Algorithm Charter. An AI system has potential material impact if it could reasonably be expected to affect the rights, opportunities, or access to critical resources or services of individuals, communities, or other groups in a real and potentially negative or harmful way, or that could similarly influence a decision-making process with public effect.

Related policies

Policy or guardrail	Description
Information Governance policy	Policy requirements for how the Ministry governs information, including where it is used with AI systems.

Policy or guardrail	Description
Privacy, Human Rights, and Ethics policy	Policy requirements for how the Ministry uses information responsibly, including where it is used with AI systems. Includes specific requirements for the use of algorithms.
Information Security policy	Policy requirements for how the Ministry maintains the security of information, including where it is used with AI systems.
Acceptable Use of Technology policy	General policy requirements for staff use of Ministry systems.
Automated Decision-making Standard	Additional requirements for the use of automation (including through AI) in decision-making in some circumstances.
Certification and Accreditation Standard	Requirements for the certification and accreditation of systems.