

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT **ANNUAL REPORT 2005/2006**
Helping New Zealanders lead successful lives



Our vision

What we want to achieve

An inclusive New Zealand where all people are able to participate in the social and economic life of their communities.

Our purpose

What we are here to do

We lead social development to achieve better futures for all New Zealanders.

Our values

The principles we will work by

People our clients are our number one priority, our people are our number one asset.

Performance we deliver evidence-based policy solutions and business results.

Professionalism we aim to be leaders in our fields.

We work together to put the interests of our clients and the organisation first.

We each own what we all do.

Partnerships we partner with stakeholders, business and communities.

Public service we commit to serve the people of New Zealand with honesty and integrity. We are accountable for what we do.

Helping New Zealanders lead **successful** lives

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT **ANNUAL REPORT 2005/2006**

Chief Executive's Foreword



The Ministry of Social Development was formed five years ago with the merger of the Ministry of Social Policy and the Department of Work and Income. The challenge was to build a new agency that brought together the best of both its predecessors.

In 2001 we measured our success in terms of efficiency and customer service; we focused on our transactions with clients. Our aim then was to get on top of and in front of every area of our business, both service delivery and policy advice. Our success in delivering efficient customer focused services, over time, has allowed us to move to an outcomes approach focused on making a positive difference in the lives of New Zealanders. Now, making a real difference to the lives of New Zealanders is at the heart of the work we do.

This commitment to an outcomes approach has required a significant change in the way we do our business. An emphasis on outcomes has involved a review of all elements of our activity as a Ministry. We can see the results of this emphasis through the work we are doing to build strong, capable families through parenting support. We are building connected communities by supporting community groups. We are getting people who can work into jobs that lead to better jobs and improved incomes. And we are making sure people who can't work receive financial assistance. Students continue to have access to the education they need for employment, but by borrowing only what they need for study and making good course choices. We are ensuring that older New Zealanders continue to participate and contribute to their communities.

The outcomes focus starts with building a better understanding of the root causes of the barriers preventing New Zealanders from taking part in the economic, social and cultural life of their communities. Through our research we are able to pinpoint where the greatest areas of need are. We then use that knowledge to inform the policies that drive our activities.

How we develop those policies has also changed as a result of our outcomes approach. The Ministry's policy and service delivery functions now operate in active partnership. Sometimes the best evidence comes from our frontline staff and managers, and their direct feedback allows us to modify or adjust programmes and initiatives while they are running. At the same time, our policy people are building a valuable resource of evidence of what actually works.

People having access to the services they need is a key contributor to improved outcomes. With a network spanning 200 communities, we are connecting New Zealanders with broad-ranging social service support. Today we look at a person's life and the barriers holding them back – such as problems with ill health, childcare and transport. We then wrap a range of services and support around them to help them move towards independence. Our leadership and close co-operation with other agencies helps ensure people are able to get all of the support they need, no matter where it has to be found.

Five years after we began, we are seeing real dividends in improved outcomes for New Zealanders. We are making progress in breaking the cycles of dependency and getting people onto the path of self-reliance. New Zealand currently has an unemployment rate of just 3.6 percent, one of the lowest in the OECD. We are now seeing decreases in the total working age benefit population, with Unemployment Benefit numbers falling below 40,000 for the first time in 20 years.

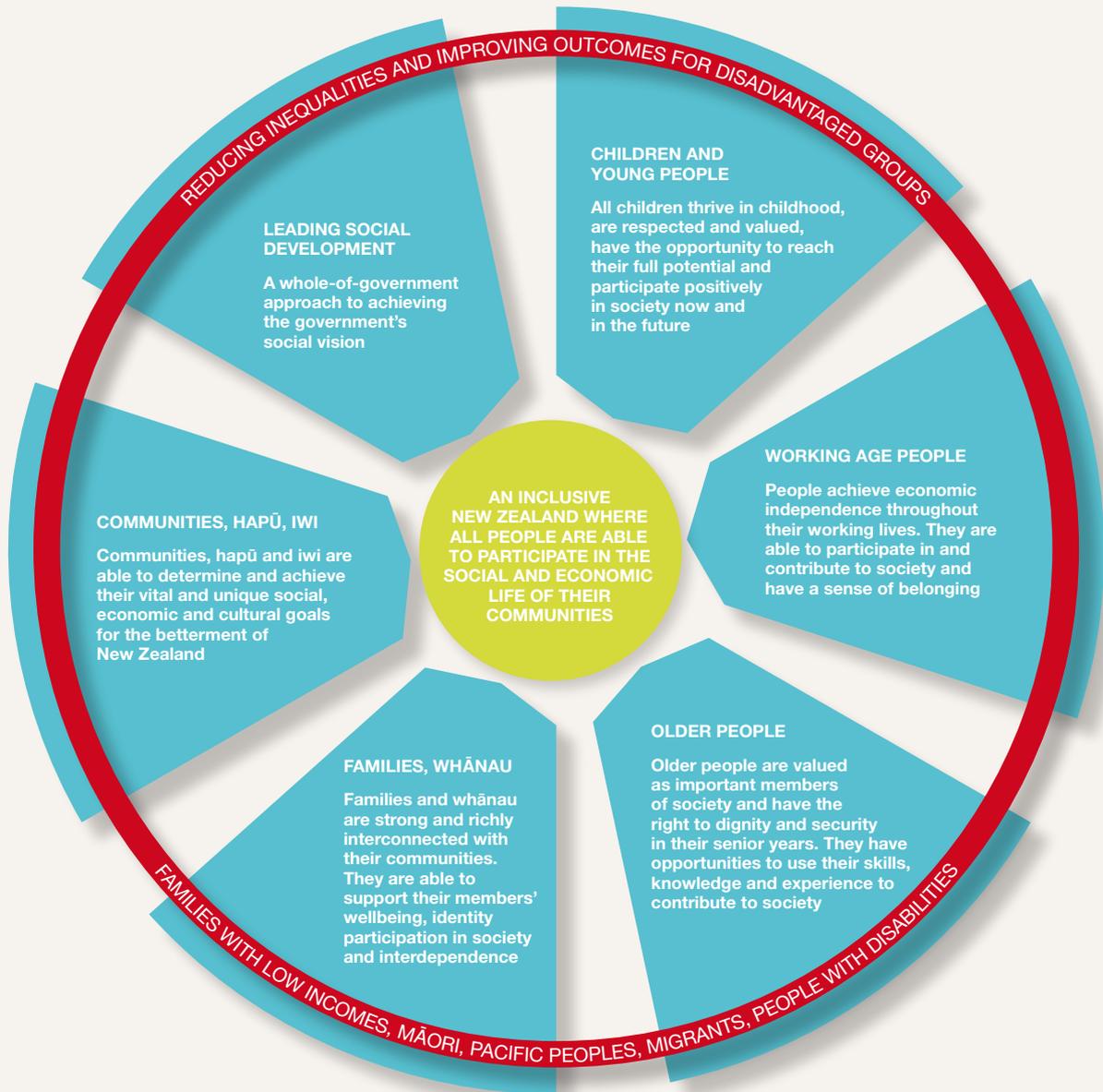
In March this year, the Government announced the merger of the Ministry of Social Development and the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services. The merger presents opportunities to use our combined policy and delivery resources to make greater progress in improving the lives of children and young people. Every child and young person has the right to be safe and secure, and we are committed to focusing our efforts and those of our social sector partners on reducing family violence, child abuse and neglect.

I am confident of our success. One thing the Ministry has learned is how to lead and manage change. Our people have embraced the outcomes focus. They have applied energy, innovation, and professionalism. I am hugely proud of their achievements.



Peter Hughes
Chief Executive

Ministry of Social Development **outcome framework**



Contents

Chief Executive's Foreword	2
● Helping New Zealanders Lead Successful Lives	7
Making a Difference through Leadership	9
Making a Difference for Children and Young People	15
Making a Difference for Working Age People	21
Making a Difference for Older People	27
Making a Difference for Families and Whānau	31
Making a Difference for Communities, Hapū and Iwi	37
A Ministry Moving Forward	41
Our Leadership Team	44
Furthering State Services Development Goals	46
Building our Capability	47
Building Consistent Performance	50
A Smaller Footprint	51
● Statement of Objectives and Service Performance	53
Statement of Responsibility	54
Report of the Auditor-General	55
Statement of Objectives and Service Performance	58
● Financial Statements	101



Helping New Zealanders lead **successful** lives



Isabel Evans

How we're making a difference through leadership

Regional Commissioner for Social Development

“We can't do this work alone.”

“Social development and economic development go hand in hand,” says Regional Commissioner for Social Development Isabel Evans. “In Auckland we work hard at binding the two together to make a difference to a person's life and future.”

As New Zealand's largest city, Auckland is a melting pot of culture and ethnicity, wealth, lifestyles and beliefs. Isabel sees Auckland's diversity as its strength. “Much of the world is represented here. We have a large and growing population aged under 25 years who are wide-ranging and mobile. These young people are our future. However, many face issues and difficulties. They need help to connect with a future of possibilities.”

But helping and supporting a young person to succeed can't be done by one agency or organisation alone. “It takes everyone working together – the young person, their family and community, and government agencies.”

Improving Outcomes for Young People in Counties Manukau is one of the many programmes currently targeting youth in Auckland. The project is drawing together the Ministries of Social Development, Justice and Education, and Police and the Counties Manukau District Health Board and a range of non-government organisations. Working collaboratively, we are building a collective response to issues such as youth violence that threaten the successful future of young people.

We are now extending the good results of this combined effort in Counties Manukau more widely in the region, with the establishment of the Auckland Youth Support Network. Under our leadership

central government agencies are today working alongside communities and local groups to make sure opportunities and improved services are readily available to Auckland's young people. “We want to ensure young people don't feel the need to push boundaries. We want them to avoid taking risks that extend them into behaviour and places that it's hard to come back from.”

Isabel sees early intervention as a key to success – stepping in early to build the connections with schools, training and work to give young people a future to look forward to.

With a number of collaborative initiatives operating successfully, Isabel believes that Auckland's agencies, organisations and communities are in better shape for a co-ordinated approach than in the past. “We've found that working closely together effectively takes time, hard work and goodwill. But we've also found that it has built a united focus that is improving the lives of individuals, families and the communities we serve.”

“working closely together effectively takes time, hard work and goodwill”

Social Development builds a strong, healthy society. This means a thriving economy, an educated population, high employment, and safe, healthy families supported by strong communities.

We want the whole social sector working together to support New Zealanders.

The Government's investment in the social sector is considerable. For us to make sound decisions about where that investment is made, we need an in-depth understanding of the factors that contribute to wellbeing. And we need that in-depth understanding to help us co-ordinate services and activities to support all New Zealanders lead successful lives.

Reporting on wellbeing

Each year *The Social Report* provides a picture of wellbeing and quality of life in New Zealand. The report looks at how people are coping in 10 areas of life, including education, health, living standards, paid work and safety. Overall, the 2006 report showed that New Zealanders continue to be better off financially, healthier and better educated than 10 years ago.

The 2006 report included a breakdown of regional data, showing how outcomes vary across the country. Over time this information will help councils and other organisations working locally to monitor the impact of their planning and services.

Our approach to Social Development

Social development needs to happen at both a national and a regional level.

Ensuring our regions are better informed helps to strengthen the capacity of our regional offices in leading social development at a local level. Where previously our Regional Commissioners focused solely on income support and employment outcomes, they now have an extended brief across the social sector. They must work closely with other government agencies, businesses, and community and voluntary organisations. To direct this activity, each region launched its work plan for 2006/2007. Previously, regional plans were produced by Work and Income with a strong employment focus. The new plans emphasise a social development approach. They set out key priorities and how the organisation will respond to the needs, challenges and opportunities in the regions.

Nationally, the leadership of social development involves leading and co-ordinating social sector policy development. To do this we work closely with other agencies. One of the fora for this activity is the Health, Education, Social Development and Justice Chief Executives (HESDJ) group. We are working together to identify areas where the agencies – the four largest in the social sector – can combine their efforts to best address problems. In future this work will focus heavily on the Government's priorities for the next decade: Economic Transformation, Families – Young and Old and National Identity. The Ministry has responsibility for leading the co-ordinated approach to promote the Families – Young and Old theme.

Our focus is on making sure economic and social development reinforce each other. This is the basis of our efforts within the Social Services Cluster, a partnership with the Department of Child, Youth and Family;¹ Housing New Zealand Corporation; and the Department of Building and Housing.

This year the Cluster chief executives developed an outcomes framework to guide the future co-ordination of policies and services. Under the umbrella of 'improving social and economic outcomes for New Zealanders today and tomorrow' the cluster will focus activity on building strong and resilient families, and vibrant and stable communities. Activity includes affordable quality housing, affordable childcare, income support, and family support and social services.

What we're doing to make a difference

We're making it easier to access services

For New Zealanders living in rural and remote areas, accessing government services often involves long drives or costly toll calls. Recognising the difficulty, the Government provided funding in 2001 for the establishment of Heartland Service Centres. The centres provide a one-stop-shop offering of government and, often, community support services. The opening of the Banks Peninsula – Heartland service centre in July 2006 brought the total number of centres in rural and remote locations to 32. Two centres have been established in more urban settings – in Whangarei, where there is a large youth population, and in Hornby, a community with high needs. More centres are planned for the coming year, in Aranui, Te Anau and Helensville.

Increasing co-ordination and access to services is important in allowing us to work together to quickly find effective ways to respond to client needs.

An integrated services pilot between Housing New Zealand Corporation and Work and Income has been so successful it has been rolled out to other Housing New Zealand neighbourhood units in Auckland and modelled by Work and Income service centres in other regions.

The agencies are working together to find good housing solutions for their common clients, jobs for those who are seeking employment, and ensuring the appropriate income assistance is being provided. By working closely together the agencies are better able to help their clients resolve a wider range of issues and achieve better outcomes for families.

The Social Policy, Research and Evaluation Conference is one way that we bring together the social sector. The next Conference is scheduled for 3–5 April 2007. The conference will have a practical focus, with the aim of encouraging the use of research and evaluation in social policy and practice.

¹ Prior to the merger the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services was a full member of the Cluster.

We're co-ordinating work across government agencies

Violence within families is one of the critical social issues identified in *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*, the Government's summary of social priorities and actions. Achieving an appreciable difference in preventing family violence requires the effort of the whole social sector. In recognising this, the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families was established by Ministers in March 2005. The Taskforce is boosting the efforts of *Te Rito: New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy* by providing greater co-ordination of the Government's work to eliminate family violence. The Taskforce produced *The First Report* during 2005/2006. It contains a range of recommendations focused on changing current attitudes and behaviours, and current policies and practices.

Former prisoners face a multitude of challenges when they re-enter the community. To improve prisoners' prospects we introduced the *Offender Reintegration Programme* in September 2005, an initiative we developed with the Department of Corrections. Prisoners attend training and employment programmes while in prison and receive ongoing support once they are in work.

We're also working in the international arena

We continued to work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the disability sector to lead the development of a new United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This is the first international human rights treaty of the new millennium and broke new ground for the UN through the active participation of non-government disability sector.

Looking forward

In the near future we will continue leading a co-ordinated approach across social sector agencies.

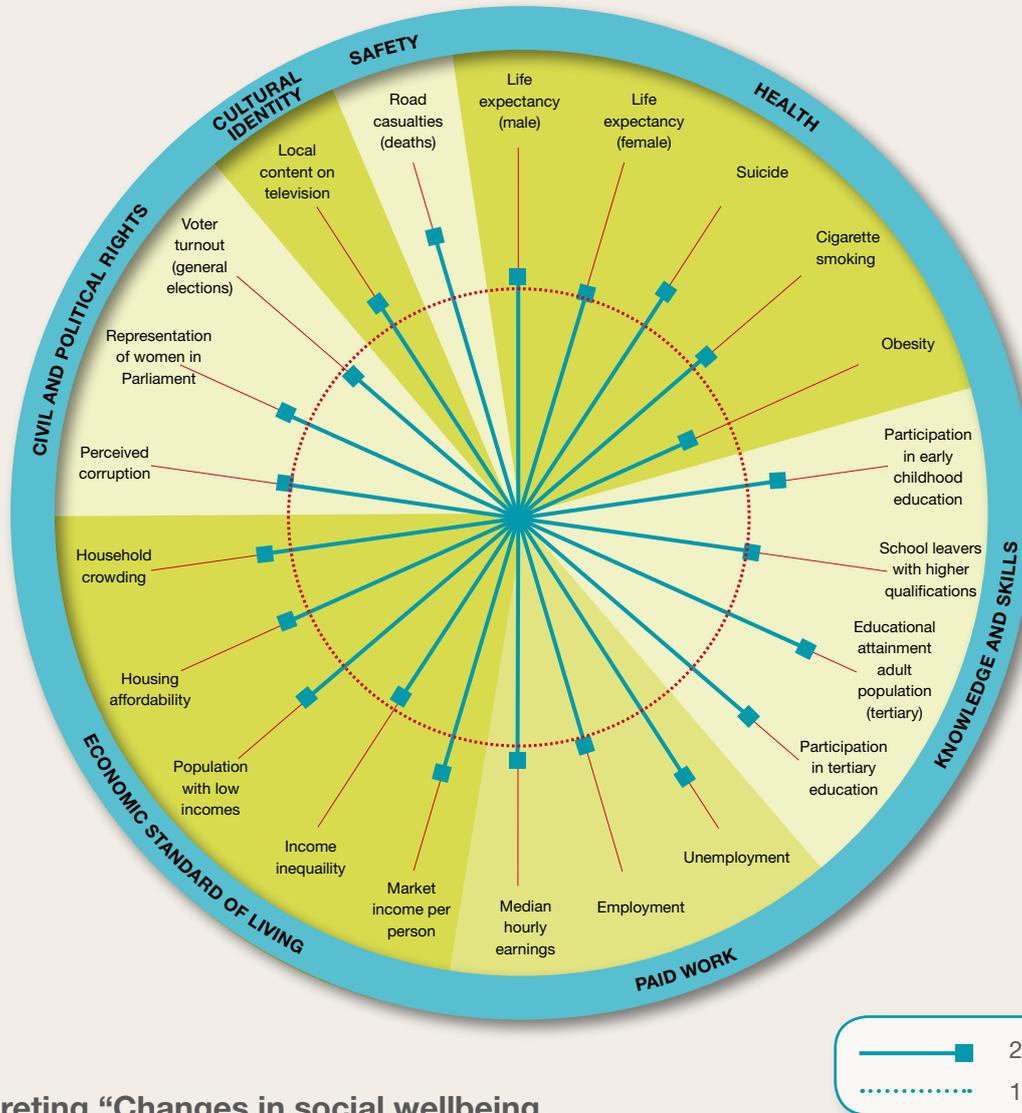
An important foundation for our work ahead is to understand what life might be like in future. We need to have a feel for the issues and challenges that will confront us so we can develop the policies that will build New Zealand's success socially. This is the focus of our Social Futures Project. The project will increase the quality of thinking about social outcomes and the key influences on those outcomes.

A key responsibility of the Office for Disability Issues is promoting and monitoring the implementation of the New Zealand Disability Strategy. Over the next year we will continue to work with government agencies and local government to ensure disabled people are valued and can participate in society.

There are many government and non-government agencies working to support families and communities. These services are not always consistent throughout the country. In some cases they aren't well connected; in other cases, communities themselves aren't involved. *Improving Outcomes for Young People in Counties Manukau, Auckland Youth Support Network Plan of Action 2006* is a significant commitment by government and non-government sectors to work together to improve outcomes for the young people of Counties Manukau, and other key areas across Auckland. The Plan builds on actions already initiated and spans various social sector agencies. We have found that we achieve better results when we work together with non-government agencies, communities and local government.

Such information will help us particularly in leading progress on the Government's priority of Families – Young and Old. This priority implies that all families have the support and choices they need to be safe and secure, and for every member to reach their potential. Our leadership in projects such as *The Social Report*, HESDJ Chief Executives Group and the Social Services Cluster will ensure we continue to apply our collective skills to build strong families that have every opportunity to participate in the economic, social and cultural life of this country.

Changes in social wellbeing 1995–1997 to 2003–2005



Interpreting “Changes in social wellbeing, 1995–1997 to 2003–2005”

The circle represents average performance against each indicator between 1995 and 1997, and the spokes represent the most recent performance, where possible averaged over the most recent three years (to smooth fluctuations). Where a spoke falls outside the circle, this means outcomes have improved since the mid-1990s; the further from the circle, the greater the improvement. Where a spoke falls inside the circle, outcomes in this area have deteriorated since the mid-1990s; the further the spoke is from the circle the more pronounced this effect.



14

Jana Hunt

How we're making a difference for children and young people

Youth Employment

“I left school at 16 because it was dumb.”

“And I've spent most of the last two years since unemployed and feeling negative about my life,” says 18 year old Jana Hunt.

But life for Jana is changing for the better. “Now I've seen the positive side. I've got a chance to change myself, a chance to better my life.” Jana has just begun a 20-week training course that when completed will see her become a deep sea fisher.

“I'm really looking forward to completing my training.”

Helping Jana make the leap between the dead end prospect of a life of unemployment and a positive future with opportunity is WERT. The Work Ethic Residential Training programme is a six-week live-in course run by Premier Personnel Development in the Bay of Plenty. The programme aims to place unemployed 18-24 year olds into employment or further training.

Like Jana, most of the young people participating in WERT have left school early with limited qualifications and life skills. Yet, like Jana, most WERT graduates – around 81 percent – move into further training or employment. Of Jana's intake, one went to work in an office, another has moved into trades training, two are enlisting in the army, and five – including Jana – are currently in training with the Westport Deep Sea Fishing School.

WERT is one of many youth initiatives we fund to provide practical ways to help at-risk school leavers move more smoothly into further education, training, work or other meaningful activities.

For Jana the decision to go on the WERT programme is proving a life-defining moment. “WERT was cool, it took me out of my comfort zone. I know I owe them more than I could possibly say.”

Now armed with tools to gain better employment and financial security, Jana has a whole new attitude. “My future is bigger and brighter than I could ever imagine!”

“Now my future is bigger and brighter than I could ever imagine!”

We want New Zealand children to thrive in childhood.

We want them to be respected and valued.

We want them to have the opportunity to reach their full potential and participate positively in society now and in the future.

The early years of a child's development are crucial. They are also the time of greatest vulnerability. Many New Zealand families ably manage the balancing act of a life that involves raising children. However for some, added pressures affect their ability to cope.

From experience we know that the earlier families receive support, the better the results for children. Through *Early Years: Kia Puawai*, an early intervention initiative, government is leveraging off existing services to build a comprehensive system of services for children aged zero to six years that will effectively identify and meet the needs of all young children, especially at risk children. We are working to reduce behavioural problems that can lead to criminal offending. And we are working to improve health and wellbeing, including through reducing violence within the family.

Beyond their first years, children and young people still need a sense of being valued, of being connected with others. They need support to make sound choices for their future. *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa* promotes a youth development approach to build these outcomes for young people aged 12 to 24. The Strategy underpins the work of all government agencies developing policy and services for youth. It encourages us to look at the big picture of young people's lives, giving them relevant and useful information and involving them in the decisions that affect them.

What we're doing to make a difference

We're providing help, right from the start

Research shows that intensive, in-home support programmes improve outcomes for families who need help. Through *Family Start*, trained workers visit the family home to give advice and support to caregivers of very young children. During 2005/2006 we extended *Family Start* services to 11 new sites throughout the country. We also introduced the Early Learning Programme pilot to 12 centres over 2005/2006. This programme provides financial help to *Family Start* or *Early Start* children so they can take part in early childhood education. Within just four months the programme saw an increase of 66 percent in take up of early childhood education in the trial sites.

**In 2005/2006
1,995 families participated
in *Family Start*.**

Families stay with the *Family Start* programme until they improve their circumstances and acquire skills that help them give their children the best possible start in life.

We're building strong families

Some families require the support of more than one government agency. Sometimes, some needs get overlooked as each agency focuses on dealing with their part of the problem. Within the *Strengthening Families* programme, family members get to meet with all their support agencies at one time. Then, together, we work on the solutions, ensuring all aspects are addressed. During the year we have worked on implementing recommendations from the *Strengthening Families* review, including publishing new guidelines and developing on-line reporting to support consistency across agencies.

We're supporting parents

Every child has the right to be safe and secure, and to live in a strong and loving family. SKIP (*Strategies with Kids, Information for Parents*) is another early intervention programme that builds parents' child-rearing skills. SKIP supports parents to raise their children in a positive loving way, using limits and boundaries rather than physical discipline. During the year we distributed \$1.3 million from the Local Initiatives Fund to support 64 community initiatives promoting positive parenting. We also distributed over two million resources – booklets, videos, badges, fridge magnets, posters and training modules – all carrying SKIP messages. Another of the SKIP objectives is to build the capabilities of the organisations working alongside families. In 2005/2006 we undertook capability building work with Plunket, Barnardos, Playcentre, Kōhanga Reo National Trust, Parents Centre, Birthright and REAP (Rural Education Activities Programme) Aotearoa.

Raising children can be most challenging for teenage parents. Their needs are multiple and complex. In 2005 there were 4,136 babies born to teenage mothers. We know from experience that youth-specific, co-ordinated case management improves health, development, education and welfare outcomes for teenage parents and their children. This year we secured Government funding of almost \$2.6 million for the next three years to help this parent group access community based services. This will include the appointment of specific Teenage Parent Service Co-ordinators from March 2007.

A fathering programme was devised and delivered by Te Aupouri Social Services in Kaitaia with support from SKIP's Local Initiatives Fund.

The programme ran three hours a week over six weeks and included topics such as Effective fathers, Fathering sons/Fathering daughters, Top 10 ways to be a better father, Dealing with inappropriate behaviour and Knowing when to praise your child.

Participants said:

- "I've learnt that it's easier to build boys than to fix men."
- "Our kids are counting on us to get it right – it's the small things that count to them."
- "I can't say enough about this course. It's fun, informative, challenging, caring, open and best of all it's for me, a dad!"

We're helping young people reach their potential

Young people today face many challenges as they move into adulthood. They need tools to help them make positive choices for their future. Youth Transitions Services draw together community resources to provide 15-to-19 year olds with support as they move from school to work, or training. Ten Youth Transitions Services are now up and running, providing training, mentoring, career planning, health, social, and employment services. By the end of 2006, 14 Youth Transition Services will be operating around the country.

As part of its long-term plan, the Ministry of Youth Development has widened its ability to reach young people through the establishment of four regional hubs across New Zealand. These hubs give us regional capability. We can make sure that youth development programmes and services are based on models of good practice and are able to respond to the diverse and changing needs of the youth population.

Regional hubs also promote and support youth participation, so young people can directly impact on decision making that affects them.

Youth Week, held this year from 15 to 21 May, is one way we recognise and celebrate our young people and the role they play in our communities. Sometimes, negative stereotypes undermine this role. The RE: DEFINE 2006 campaign set out to build on the progress we achieved from challenging those stereotypes in 2005, to changing them. The campaign's target audiences included media, policymakers and educators, whose influence over young people is often profound.

Ensuring such influencers hear the voices of young people is a key aim of *Aotearoa Youth Voices*. Under this branding youth participation advisors in Wellington and Auckland are working to get young people involved in government, schools, communities and local councils around the country.

StudyLink's school leaver programme called On Course, is designed to improve StudyLink's ability to share relevant information with school leavers in an engaging and motivating manner.

The programme is presented to senior secondary school students around the country each year.

The programme looks at different ways of funding tertiary study and provides specific information on Student Allowances and scholarships, as well as Student Loans and the implications of borrowing money. It also includes information about agencies that can help with the other aspects of the transition to tertiary study, such as the choice of what to study and where.

Where there are large populations of young people, more individuals are at risk of poor life outcomes. With such a high number of young people, Counties Manukau will significantly influence the future prosperity of our nation. Our research into youth gangs in Counties Manukau identified multiple reasons contributing to youth gang membership, including low incomes, lack of parental input and boredom. There is a \$2.5 million per year investment in this area over the next four years. This will continue to fund youth workers, to meet an urgent need for parenting programmes for parents of youth, and to address other critical gaps in services and programmes.

Looking forward

The viability and capability of community groups involved in the delivery of services to children and families is a strong focus for our forward work. Many organisations working at the flax roots are small and under-resourced, which can impact on their effectiveness. We are looking to build the support available to these groups by updating resources and increasing face-to-face support opportunities.

To encourage professional development in the sector, we are making available another 50 Social Work Study Awards and 50 Family Start Study Awards from February 2007. The NGO Social Work Study Awards offer non-government agency workers the opportunity to cover some of their costs if they are completing a qualification that meets social worker registration requirements. The Family Start Study Awards offer

family/whānau workers employed in *Family Start* sites to study towards diploma-level qualifications in social work, nursing, health or education.

Eliminating family violence is a significant current and future priority within the Government's Families – Young and Old theme. A first step in eliminating family violence is identifying families affected by family violence. *Integrated Service Response* is a new case management initiative that will tap the existing *Strengthening Families* network to identify such families. We are rolling out the service in seven centres initially and plan to be working with the first group of identified families by September 2006.

The need for such new responses was highlighted in *The First Report* of the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families released on 28 July 2006. Building on initiatives promoted by *Te Rito: New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy* the report proposed:

- a \$14 million national awareness campaign
- enhanced powers for police to enforce protection orders
- a \$9 million boost to non-government organisations dealing with violence
- three dedicated family violence courts in the Wellington region and one in Auckland.

Combining with Child, Youth and Family will further strengthen work already underway to improve care and protection services for children and young people. The merger will also provide the opportunity to develop new responses to the demand for services, by families, agencies and the public.



Jason Blodwell

How we're making a difference for working age people

New Service Approach

“I was amazed. After just one appointment I had a job and more financial help for my family.”

Moving cities with a young family and an uncertain future is a major decision. Jason Blodwell, a 27 year old Auckland bricklayer did just that to follow his dream of becoming a quantity surveyor.

While living in Auckland, Jason registered with the Registered Master Builders Association as the first step towards his dream. Through this connection he secured a scholarship from Construction Co. to study for a trade Certificate in Brick Laying. However, the only institution in New Zealand offering the qualification was over 600 kilometres away, at WelTech in Petone, Wellington.

“In deciding to move I was unsure how I was going to support my family while studying.”

The answer to that uncertainty came within only a week of the family's move, and with only one appointment with Wellington City Work and Income Pre-assessment Case Manager, Donna Bradley.

“I was really rapt with the service I received from Donna. We sat down and I told her my situation, everything I needed and all of my concerns. Within one week I was given part-time work as a bricklayer and extra financial assistance. The whole process was really quick and effective. From that one meeting with Donna, my family and I were financially better off – awesome.”

The efficient service Jason experienced is the result of Work and Income's new service approach. New clients now go through a detailed pre-assessment process

before a benefit is even discussed. The emphasis of the process is on finding work first, whether it's full-time or, as in Jason's case, part-time. We focus on looking at what a person can do, not what they can't, and providing the help a person needs to get into, and succeed, in employment. The new approach still recognises that some people can't work and offers support to New Zealanders for whom work is not an option.

Today Jason works three days a week at a Miramar bricklaying company, where after quick promotion, he is now a supervisor. And, still following the dream, three nights a week finds Jason studying for a better future at WelTech.

“From that one meeting with Donna, my family and I were financially better off – awesome.”

We want people to achieve economic independence throughout their working lives.

We want them to be able to participate in and contribute to society.

We want them to have a sense of belonging.

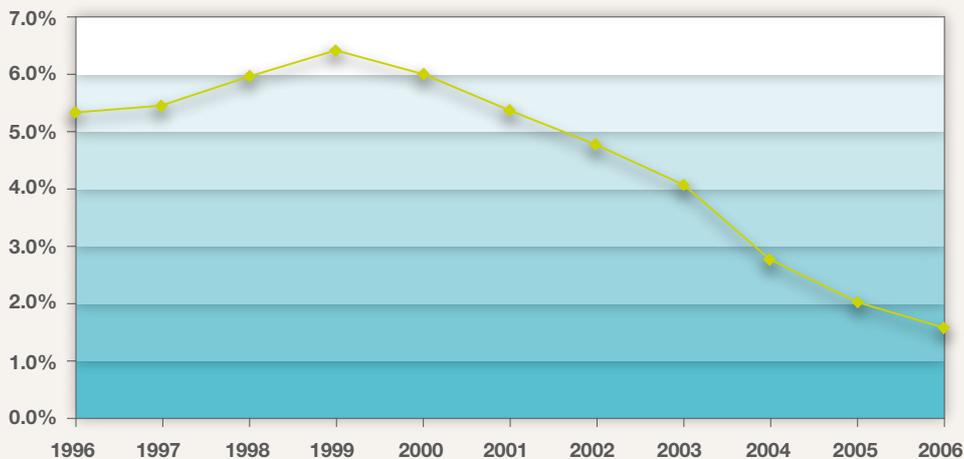
The number of working aged people receiving main benefits decreased by 10,000 (four percent) in the 12 months ended June 2006, and by 74,000 (21 percent) in the five years ended June 2006.

As at June 2006, this country had 280,000 working age people receiving main benefits. The 39,752² people on the Unemployment Benefit make up the smallest proportion of this figure. This is due to our sustained effort to make it easier and more attractive for unemployed people to move into work. But not only do we want people to get into employment, we want them to stay there and progress, so that they can enjoy increasing independence and quality of life.

Our *Sustainable Employment Strategy*, which we rolled out during the 2005/2006 year, promotes a demand-led service model. This means we are focusing our efforts on addressing New Zealand employers' needs, then working with our client base to identify and even build skills to match those needs. The Strategy is changing and developing our business. We are improving our recruitment and account management skills. We are developing technology-based tools to allow easier access and speed up services for both employers and job seekers.

2 Working aged people (aged 18–64 years)

Proportion of the working aged population receiving an Unemployment Benefit



Trends in proportion of the working aged population receiving Unemployment Benefits at the end of June, between 1996 and 2006.

Sources: IAP, numbers of working aged Unemployment Benefit recipients at the end of June. Statistics New Zealand, final population estimates, resident population aged 18–64 years, at 31 December.

The approach we are taking is seeing less New Zealanders having to rely on a benefit. We are seeing more New Zealanders improving their economic independence and social wellbeing. While we are committed to continuing with this approach we are also committed to providing social protection to those for whom work is not an option.

What we're doing to make a difference

We're focusing on work

Over the last five years we have reduced the number of working age people on income tested benefits by 21 percent. The driving force for this is our increased focus on helping unemployed people into work and helping them stay there.

In 2005/2006 we began trialling a *New Service Approach* in 12 Work and Income service centres. The real revolution of this approach is that instead of first focusing on benefit eligibility, we start with a discussion of a person's ability to work, looking at their skills, their needs and circumstances. We then identify achievable goals for that person and build services around those goals. For some this is full-time work. For others it is part-time. Some will be looking for immediate employment. For others the job search will be in the future, when their circumstances allow. Where immediate employment is the goal, we then match the client to the job opportunities to help them into work. We introduced the first elements of the model in all Work and Income service centres from May.

Where communities participate in creating their own social development solutions, the solutions are more likely to be effective. Over the last few years we have worked closely with Auckland's Pacific community to increase employment, job retention, earnings and job skills of Pacific clients. The original goal of our *Pacific Wave Strategy* was to reduce the number of Pacific people receiving the Unemployment Benefit by 50 percent, by June 2005 – a reduction of 2,766 clients. Having achieved that goal ahead of schedule, we established a new target: to further halve the number of Pacific Unemployment Benefit clients, by June 2007. Reaching this target will see an additional 1,311 clients in work.

We're making work pay for families

Participating in employment offers New Zealanders the best opportunity to improve their quality of life. For families, balancing the requirements of employment against the demands of parenting can create conflict. The Government's *Working for Families* package is making it financially easier to work and raise a family. It provides more help to low- and-middle-income parents to overcome barriers such as the need for childcare. From 1 April 2006, the third instalment of the package provided a higher income threshold. It included the introduction of a new In-Work Payment for working families. Now, some 350,000 New Zealand families – 85,000 more – are able to benefit from Working for Families assistance.

We are continuing to work on reshaping the existing social assistance system to create one that is more modern and flexible. We are looking at ways we can make employment and training programmes, and services more responsive to changes in the labour market.

Straight 2 Work programmes are developed by industry for industry, ensuring the training is relevant to the needs of the employers within that industry.

For the year ended 30 June 2006, 2,015 people participated in a Straight 2 Work programme.

We're understanding employers' needs better

With a continuing tight labour market, employers are under pressure to fill skills and labour shortages. We are working to understand better exactly what skills employers' need. This allows us to work with our clients to pinpoint the barriers and address them. We are keeping up with labour market trends and building relationships with industry and large employers. We are seeing mutual benefits result from this activity. Jointly designed training programmes are helping employers gain the skilled staff they need and Work and Income clients gaining access to sustainable job and career opportunities.

There are 26 formal corporate and industry partnership agreements.³

Corporate Partnerships

- Large employers and Work and Income work together to develop a tailored recruitment service offer that is responsive to the current and future staffing needs of employers and a constantly changing labour market.

Industry Partnerships

- Industries and Work and Income jointly design tailored employment programmes that assist to develop the skilled staff required to meet the industry's immediate and future workforce needs.

We're helping people become work fit

Gaining employment can prove especially challenging if you have a health problem. Through the PATHS (*Providing Access to Health Solutions*) programme we are drawing together public health, community mental health and welfare agencies. Our collective objective is to reduce the health barriers to employment of people receiving a Sickness or Invalid's Benefit. Solutions include clinical treatment and social support – whatever is needed to reduce or remove the barrier. We are operating PATHS in five District Health Board regions. Another five will be operating by mid-2007. The extended service will see an additional 23,588 people – and a total 66 percent of all clients receiving a Sickness or Invalid's Benefit – given the opportunity to improve their work prospects.

We're improving people's prospects through study

Education offers a strong foundation for employment. We administer scholarships that provide financial help to low-income students so they can access tertiary education. The scholarships also help the country retain graduates. The *Step Up Scholarship* helps pay the course fees of students studying an animal or human health degree, or a science or technology degree. In 2006 we awarded 240 scholarships to students taking animal or human health studies and 122 for science and technology studies. High-achieving tertiary students in their second year of study can apply for our

This year StudyLink delivered its StudyWise service to 15,000 Student Loan borrowers. StudyLink contacted students to help them make informed decisions about financing tertiary study.

³ As at September 2006

Bonded Merit Scholarship. We pay a maximum of \$3,000 per year for course fees for up to four years. Five hundred Bonded Merit Scholarships were awarded in 2006, and this will increase to 1,000 in 2007. Both Step Up and Bonded Merit scholarships require students to remain in New Zealand for a period of time after graduating.

Looking forward

Our focus on working age New Zealanders forms a strong part of our delivery on the Government's three priority themes: Economic transformation, Families – Young and Old and National identity. Economic transformation is about creating a high-income economy with opportunities for everyone. Families – Young and Old is about supporting families to be strong and safe for their members. National identity is about New Zealanders taking pride in who we are.

During the year we developed the *Integrity Outcome Framework* to change and improve the way we approach debt and the overall integrity of the benefit system. Where error, abuse and fraud occur, individual clients end up in debt. In cases of deliberate fraud a client can end up with criminal convictions and debt. In cases of errors that result in less than full entitlement being paid, a client can be placed in situations of undue hardship. This can have significant negative impacts on children, families, whānau and communities. We will continue to put more emphasis on preventing debt from happening in the first place.

As a Ministry we play a lead role in promoting Families – Young and Old and we will support families in the coming year through the continued delivery of the *Working for Families* package. We will also continue rolling out and refining our service models to ensure more working age New Zealanders are able to achieve economic independence through sustainable employment.

From 1 April 2006 Student Loans became interest free for borrowers living in New Zealand, encouraging skilled New Zealanders to keep their skills here.



John Cunningham

How we're making a difference for older people

Volunteer Community Co-ordinators

“Suddenly, after six months of retirement I found I had virtually nothing to do.”

“I lost confidence in myself. I struggled with a loss of self esteem and believed I was unable to achieve anything anymore.” But, as New Plymouth retiree John Cunningham later reflects: “how foolish can you be?”

Like many New Zealanders, John had invested the best part of four decades in work – in his case in education. “For 40 years I put all my energies almost entirely in school and other educational activities.” John says the change in social status following retirement can be devastating. “The break was huge. One day the boss; the next, a feather duster!”

Though he didn't want the school workload anymore he keenly felt the loss of contact and interaction with his colleagues. “I missed their company terribly.”

With the help of his wife Judy, John found a way out of his gloom. He got involved – very involved – in community life, initially as a resource for schools and then through joining Grey Power. “As I got older I thought keeping an eye on the interests of older people was a good idea.”

Through his work with Grey Power, John took part in the development of the *New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy* and the promotion of the International Year of Older People. This involvement led to John becoming a Volunteer Community Co-ordinator (VCC) in New Plymouth.

Forty VCCs around New Zealand make up a network of contacts linking communities with the Office for Senior

Citizens. The VCCs bring together people from different cultures and backgrounds to participate in surveys and projects that promote positive ageing. The information gathered is then used to inform policies developed for older people. In 2005 the VCCs arranged participants to help shape the design of the pamphlet *How will you get around when you stop driving?*

For John the impact of this involvement couldn't have been more transforming.

“After having nothing to do and finding retirement difficult, I became very busy and involved in the community. A new world opened up.”

John is keen for others approaching or in retirement to offer their skills and knowledge. “Voluntary organisations are crying out for volunteers and people with expertise.” In John's experience, the rewards are worth the involvement. “Retirement is a challenging time but an exciting one.”

“Retirement is a challenging time but an exciting one.”

We want older people to be valued as important members of society.

We want them to have the right to dignity and security.

We want them to have the opportunities to contribute their skills, knowledge and experience.

People aged 65 years and over make up 12 percent of New Zealand's population. This proportion is growing, and is likely to double in the next 30 years. In 2001 the Government outlined its vision to build a New Zealand where people can age positively. The *New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy* sets 10 goals for all government agencies to take on board when developing policies and programmes for older New Zealanders. These include empowering older people to make choices, providing opportunities for them to participate, and recognising the different issues facing men and women.

“Having contact with my elders, I have learnt about their life experiences in comparison to mine and the interaction with others during the workshops has also been great.”

**Angela Fogherly,
Katikati**

Each year government agencies must put forward an action plan to outline their contribution to the Strategy. Collectively this is the *New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy* Action Plan. The development of the 2005/2006 Action Plan includes input from local government. Their involvement furthers Government's objective to see the delivery of integrated policies and programmes. Seventeen councils contributed their actions, including providing better access to local transport and public facilities, hosting sporting and recreation events for older people, and encouraging older people to get involved in council decision making.

What we're doing to make a difference

We're encouraging older New Zealanders to play a part

Today's generation of older New Zealanders are healthier and are living longer. Encouraging them to keep contributing has benefits not only for seniors themselves but also for the community, and for the country as a whole. Our SAGES programme taps into the knowledge of our older people, involving them in providing one-on-one life and home skills mentoring to families and individuals in need. SAGES matches a volunteer to a family or individual. The programme both encourages older New Zealanders to continue participating in community life, and builds the strength and capacity of New Zealand families. In 2005/2006 we contracted a further seven organisations to provide mentoring services, bringing the number of providers to 15. Now, a total of 277 volunteers will be helping some 554 families.

We're keeping older New Zealanders safe

Combating elder abuse is an issue identified in *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*, the Government's strategic framework for sustainable social development. Our review of national and international literature on elder abuse and neglect has shown us that it is important for communities to commit to reduce incidences in elder abuse and neglect. We are currently funding eight providers to operate Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention Services (EANPS) in 22 sites nationally.

During the year we expanded services into Horowhenua and Taupo, and introduced a provider funding pool for specific projects and equipment purchases. We opened the pool in April 2006 and to date have distributed \$89,536 to 12 providers. We also appointed Age Concern New Zealand the national EANPS co-ordinator. The co-ordinator is responsible for helping to raise awareness of elder abuse and neglect, supporting service providers and ensuring services, resources and processes are consistent nationally.

We're making sure older people know of support

Making sure older people know about services and resources available in their area is an important part of having access to them. In 2005/2006 we teamed up with local support providers to host a series of Senior Expos. These expos provide the opportunity for a range of locally based social sector groups to display and demonstrate their services. Exhibitors range from sport and recreation organisations to health and disability support services.

The Office for Senior Citizens promotes October as *Greats and Grands* month. Children and schools are encouraged to celebrate grandparents and other older people. Many exciting activities take place during the month including 'exchange skills days' with students demonstrating their computer skills and older people teaching skills such as knitting and gardening.

Joint activities promote understanding between generations and are an important part of positive ageing.

We're valuing our veterans

The more we know about how veterans are managing, the better we can address their needs. Every two years we survey veterans to help identify improvements. In this year's survey we achieved a healthy satisfaction rating of 89 percent from the 70 percent who responded.

We are just one of a number of agencies and organisations involved in the welfare of New Zealand veterans. We worked with these organisations to encourage a co-ordinated and cohesive approach to veteran issues. As a result of our improved relationships one of our war pensions officers was invited by Veterans' Affairs New Zealand to help with the 2006 ANZAC commemorations in Gallipoli, Turkey.

Looking forward

With Families – Young and Old a Government priority, issues surrounding older New Zealanders and the policies and programmes we deliver will be a key focus for us in the immediate future.

On behalf of the Government we are working on a Card for seniors, aimed at improving older people's access to services and information from the public sector. Our current work is determining possible card format, supporting technology, eligibility criteria, entitlements, and concessions linked to the card and how we obtain these.

The increased focus on the Families – Young and Old theme has provided us with an opportunity to review the way we deliver services to older people. Given the increasing number and diversity of clients receiving New Zealand Superannuation, we need to be sure we are providing the right services. In recent years we have made significant changes to the way we deliver services to working age New Zealanders. The results are a clear endorsement of the approaches taken and we are currently reviewing approaches for the 65 and over population.



Gemma and Hoana Edmonds

How we're making a difference for families and whānau

Family Start

“Sometimes it’s just having the simple things done for you that can really make a difference.”

Gemma Edmonds moved to Whangarei two years ago. She was 19 years old and about to have her second child, with no local family support. Despite these factors, today Gemma is a confident and resourceful mother.

This positive result has taken a lot of determination and hard work by Gemma. And helping her on her way to success is the Whangarei *Family Start* programme.

“It’s been great doing the *Family Start* programme and having the support of the *Family Start* team. It really helps take the edge off stressful situations. Sometimes it’s just having the simple things done for you that can really make a difference to your daily life.”

Family Start is one of a range of early intervention programmes that provide support to New Zealand families with high needs. Evidence shows that the earlier we address problems within families the more improvement we will see in children’s health, their ability to learn and their social and emotional development. Under the *Family Start* programme, trained workers regularly visit families with very young children in their homes. Programme workers help parents to set and achieve goals so they can help themselves and gain confidence nurturing their children.

One of Gemma’s goals was to plant a vegetable garden to provide healthy food for the family and to help reduce her grocery bill. Through goal setting strategies and

Family Start support, Gemma discovered a real love for horticulture.

“When my children are older I plan to study for a certificate in horticulture. A few years ago I wouldn’t have even considered that possible.”

Whānau Whānui runs the Whangarei *Family Start* programme, with 12 staff providing advocacy, support and advice to families with high needs and young children. Over the next three years it will cater to 180 families.

“When my children are older I plan to study for a certificate in horticulture. A few years ago I wouldn’t have considered that possible.”

We want families and whānau to be strong.

We want them to be richly interconnected with their communities.

We want families to be able to support their members' wellbeing, identity and participation in society and interdependence.

Strong families, families that are resilient, families that can look after themselves, are vital to the economic, social and cultural strength of New Zealand. Many organisations provide services to families in this country, spanning government agencies, national non-government organisations and community groups. We established Family and Community Services two years ago to help bring some focus to this heavily populated sector. Their role is to lead and co-ordinate preventative and early intervention services for families, whilst strengthening the community sector that supports families.

Family and Community Services has achieved much over the last two years. For families and whānau, its focus is on improving the range and availability of preventative services and improving access to information and advice so problems don't escalate. Programmes such as *Family Start*, *SKIP* and *Strengthening Families* are now laying the foundations for healthy resilient families. These foundations are reinforced through FACS leadership role, as it is drawing together the work and activity of the sector to collectively address issues such as family violence.

Being able to participate in paid work is reported by working parents as providing benefits other than financial. Two-thirds said that they would want to have a job even if they were able to maintain a reasonable living standard without one. This is especially high among sole (86 percent) and Pacific (81 percent) parents.³

What we're doing to make a difference

We're helping New Zealand grow strong families

A key focus of our work is the development and strengthening of early intervention services for parents, families and whānau.

Family Start is one of our ongoing programmes designed to help families meet the challenges they face in raising children. Through the programme we provide home visits and support to families with high needs. Available from the time the mother is six months pregnant, *Family Start* involves many government and non government agencies. *Family Start* whānau workers provide families with information on entitlements, give advice and support and put them in touch with other sources of support. In 2005/2006 we opened 11 new sites and rolled out a new programme encouraging more children into early childhood education.

³ Colmar Brunton (2006) *Work, Family and Parenting Study: Research Findings, April 2006*

Toddlers Without Tears is designed to help parents manage toddler behaviour. It is being piloted with Well Child providers in Central Auckland and will be trialled with a larger group of parents in July next year.

The programme consists of three free sessions for parents on child development and managing common toddler behaviour issues such as tantrums and hitting and biting.

Following the trial the programme may be introduced to all parents as part of the national Well Child schedule.

There is considerable support for families out there in communities. But people need to know about that support before they can access it. Our 211 Family Helpline pilot and our online National Directory are two tools helping to inform families of what is available, while FamilyWeb shows some of the resources available online.

The National Directory is an online search tool of services and programmes to help families in New Zealand. It assists families to find out what organisations there are to help them, and provides contact details for these organisations. This year the National Directory was relaunched with a new, more user-friendly interface, and a revised information structure.

FamilyWeb provides access to a collection of online resources on personal and family-related topics. We launched the site this year with resource material for parents on raising children (0-12 years). We have since added links to resources on supporting young people (13-20 years), growing older and supporting your marriage or relationship. We plan to add another three topic areas and will be keeping all content up to date.

We are also doing the developmental work for a proposed new longitudinal study of New Zealand children and families. These studies track children from birth onwards. A research design has been proposed and field testing has started in the Auckland region, focusing on recruiting participants and data collection tools. This study has the potential to provide a secure information base for the development of future policy relating to children, young people and families.

We're aiming to improve New Zealand families' standard of living

Low income, debt and unemployment can strain a family's resilience. Ensuring low- and medium-income families have an adequate standard of living is the aim of the *Working for Families* package, announced in the 2004 Budget. The three-year package makes it easier for families to work and raise children. *Working for Families* offers a mix of initiatives including increased help with childcare and housing costs. On behalf of Government, we worked with Inland Revenue to introduce on 1 April 2006 a new In-Work

www.familyservices.govt.nz

Payment for working parents. This initiative ensures work pays more than a benefit for sole parents working more than 20 hours a week and couples working more than 30 hours a week. We expect that, when fully implemented in 2007, *Working for Families* will reduce child poverty by 70 percent.

Our evaluations of the *Working for Families* package show us that we are reaching the people who need it.

Over the past year we have helped New Zealand families manage when they find themselves unable to cope financially. We provide recoverable assistance and advance payment of a client's benefit when they need to meet essential costs for items like school uniforms or power bills. We ask that clients repay this in a sustainable way that avoids putting them under further financial strain or hardship. In the last financial year the uptake of this assistance has increased from \$110.8 million to \$112.9 million.

At the same time we are helping people stay out of debt through our Benefit Integrity Services Early Intervention and Prevention initiatives. Over the year, our focus on intervening early to prevent clients from getting into debt as a result of error, abuse or fraud saw the amount of beneficiary debt established reduce from \$198.3 million to \$189.3 million. Most importantly we are making sure that we get benefit entitlement right from the start.

We're supporting families to be free from violence

New Zealand communities today are a rich tapestry of cultures. The diversity of our population brings with it a range of expectations and traditions to daily life including family roles and parenting. The *Strong Pacific Families Strategy* aims to build strong Pacific families living free from violence. The Strategy stems from the Pacific strand of *Te Rito: New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*, the Government's framework for preventing family violence. We are working to build awareness and ownership of family violence prevention issues among Pacific leaders, with the aim of encouraging community action. We are currently working in four regions – Christchurch, Porirua, Manukau and Waitakere – and have held workshops with community leaders to set priorities for each region.

Persistent problems – such as family violence – require us to keep investigating new solutions. We are helping to lead new responses to family violence under the direction of the *Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families*. The *Family Violence Intervention Programme* is one such new response. Based in selected Work and Income offices, this programme enables people to disclose family violence to their case manager and gain the information and support they need. Nearly 4,000 Work and Income staff have been trained to 'recognise, respond and refer' by asking clients

about family violence, responding to disclosures by providing appropriate assistance and referring clients to family violence service providers for support. A client resource kit has been produced and in the year ahead we plan to improve the programme's training package. We will also work with all organisations involved to determine the most effective use of funding provided to deal with the expected increase in referrals.

Looking forward

From 2 October 2006, the income thresholds for childcare assistance will increase, making work more possible for families. We see giving parents the choice to work with more affordable childcare as a win-win for families and employers alike.

Our merger with Child, Youth and Family will enable us to strengthen significantly our early intervention services to New Zealand families and whānau. We will be well placed to ensure our policy and Child, Youth and Family services support each other in order that we gain the maximum benefit from our resources.

Families will be a priority. Communities with high numbers of families will soon benefit from the establishment of *Early Years Services Hubs*. The hubs are an intervention service focused on the health, wellbeing and education of young children. We will also be appointing 10 child advocates to provide support to children and young people aged up to 17 years who witness family violence. These positions are in the East Coast, Waitakere, North Shore/Rodney and the Hauraki. We are planning the next round of consultation to choose the areas for the next 10 advocate positions.



Adam Awad

How we're making a difference for communities, hapū and iwi

Settling In

“We try to help those trying to help us by identifying what’s working and what isn’t.”

Like many refugees, Somali Adam Awad arrived in New Zealand not knowing what the future held, but with high hopes.

Adam says refugees also arrive here with high health and wellbeing needs because of where they have come from and what they have been through. “But we want to lead healthy, creative lives. We want to contribute to New Zealand’s future.”

Five years later, today Adam helps other refugees make the transition to life in New Zealand as chair of the Refugee Changemakers Forum.

The Forum has played an active role in shaping the *Wellington Regional Action Plan for Refugee Health and Well-being*. The Plan is a blueprint for all agencies providing services to refugee communities. Under the plan, specific agencies are responsible for implementing more than 70 programmes. An inter-sectoral working group that includes refugee representatives then monitors the way services are provided and the Plan’s effectiveness overall.

Adam sees the Forum’s involvement with the Plan, and that of other groups, as a way of ensuring services meet refugees’ needs. “We try to help those trying to help us by identifying what’s working and what isn’t, by pointing out gaps in services and identifying opportunities for more effective use of resources and energy.”

The Plan is one of 38 projects supported during 2005/2006 by our *Settling In* initiative. The focus of *Settling In* is to help refugees and migrants settle well in New Zealand by building their capabilities to develop their own solutions to the challenges they face.

Many of the contributing groups see the collaborative way the Wellington plan was developed as important as the Plan itself. The development process brought together many people and organisations. This contact has created professional friendships, highlighted issues and opportunities, and given rise to innovative solutions.

For Adam, he most values the sense of trust developed by all those participating in the Plan. “It gives us hope. And no matter where refugees come from or what happened to us, it’s hope that keeps us going.”

“It gives us hope. And no matter where refugees come from or what happened to us, it’s hope that keeps us going.”

We want communities, hapū and iwi that are able to determine and achieve their vital and unique social, economic and cultural goals.

Strong, thriving communities whose members are valued and connected are the backbone of a dynamic and vital country. Community organisations play a vital role in building a sense of value and connection. And many people and organisations are investing in a wide range of activities that build the wellbeing of New Zealand communities. There is huge potential for collaboration between government and communities as we work towards shared goals and objectives. For the government sector to support this activity, we need to have a good understanding of New Zealand's communities and the groups that are working in them.

The Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector was established in 2003 to help gain a better understanding of and build a stronger working relationship with the sector. A key part of the Office's work is promoting good practice by government agencies involved with community and voluntary organisations. The *Good Practice in Action* programme makes available two online toolkits to help public agencies who are funding groups and to help agencies providing support to groups. The tools help public servants engage successfully with community, voluntary and Māori organisations.

What we're doing to make a difference

The Office for Disability Issues is leading a cross-government Review of Long Term Disability Supports, to identify the support services disabled people need to live ordinary lives.

www.odi.govt.nz

We're making it easier to deal with government

Community groups contracted by several agencies to provide services can find the multiplication of administrative and reporting requirements overwhelming, both in terms of time and running costs. Under the *Funding for Outcomes* initiative we are working to build better co-ordination across funding agencies. Our aim is to lessen the administration burden on community groups without reducing accountability. The *Good Practice in Action* seminars run by the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector is also helping to build greater co-ordination by providing opportunities for the sharing of information and best practice.

We're building inclusion

On 10 April 2006, the New Zealand Sign Language Act became law, making New Zealand Sign Language an official language of this country. This event represented a huge step in acknowledging the Deaf community's presence, their rights and their equal value in society. The Act also set out principles to guide how government departments should use New Zealand Sign Language. We, along with the Ministries of Education, Health and Justice,

and public broadcasting agencies will begin to implement the Act in the 2006/2007 action plan for the *New Zealand Disability Strategy*.

We're building more effective co-ordinated services

Local Services Mapping is another initiative that we are leading to improve services for communities. *Local Services Mapping* is a planning tool that helps government agencies and communities carry out a stock take of the services in an area. We then use the information gathered to work out how together we will improve the delivery of those services to better meet local needs. The end products of the planning exercise are a profile report and action plan for each area. Of the 28 areas currently involved, we have to date completed profile reports for 10 areas. But already the exercise is improving relationships and planning co-ordination between the participants, and is resulting in a more efficient use of resources.

We're building stronger community capability

Many of the community and voluntary organisations at work in our communities are small. Often they lack the robust systems and processes needed to meet their strategic goals. We know that good quality support can relieve some of the burden and allow these groups to focus on what they do best – getting out there and helping New Zealanders.

Finding out where they can get the support they need is a first step. In August we published *Managing Well: resource for community and voluntary organisations*. This is a catalogue of over 120 resources, websites, newsletters, manuals and information sheets, including a directory of organisations whose support will help build administrative and operational effectiveness.

The community and voluntary sector works hard to comply with their legal requirements. In order to assist them to come to grips with the wide range of legislation affecting their sector, the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector worked in partnership with the New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations to produce *Keeping it Legal E Ai Ki Te Ture*. The resource provides information on a very wide range of topics, including what it means to be an incorporated society or charitable trust, through to legal obligations to volunteers and contractors. It has been enthusiastically welcomed, with 7,000 copies distributed and thousands of hits on the website.

The effectiveness of our *Strengthening Families* programme relies heavily on local input. Under the *Local Collaboration Initiative*, local management groups oversee the programme now in 54 areas around New Zealand. The groups typically include health, education, welfare, justice, housing, employment and local government representatives as well as members from community and iwi organisations. During 2005/2006 we worked with Local Management Groups and Strengthening Families Co-ordinators to identify improvements we can make to *Strengthening Families* as a model for future collaborative service delivery.

“Sharing the load of gathering together research and hard data to guide the future of development of the Kaikoura district has not only saved us time and money, but ensured the community’s views have been included.”

Kaikoura District Council Mayor, Kevin Heays

www.keepingitlegal.net.nz

Like many of our community initiatives, *Settling In* has a dual purpose. Firstly it provides support services to refugees and migrants to help them settle here. It also builds refugee and migrant's capability to develop their own solutions. This whole-of-government project operates in seven regions around the country. We funded a range of projects in 2005/2006 including a programme for Somali parents on bringing up teens in New Zealand, a Newcomers Network in Nelson, a programme for isolated older Asians in Auckland and a number of training and skills building programmes.

Through the *Community Initiatives Fund* we provide support for innovative social development projects run in communities by community leaders. The projects aim to make a positive difference for communities and families. Projects approved for funding this year include:

- an exchange between East Coast/Te Tai Rawhiti and Wellington/Poneke youth.
- a one year project to assess the issues faced by Somali women
- a project to assess the issues older Chinese people faced
- Adaid, a free online advertising service for not-for-profit groups
- a youth assistance programme providing direction to Westland young people.

Looking forward

Much of our future work will continue building the capabilities and capacity of community and voluntary organisations. This will include providing more operational support and guidance to the local management groups of *Strengthening Families*. Already we have work underway to increase support, strengthen professional development of programme co-ordinators and improve monitoring and feedback. We are also looking to improve co-ordination within the sector by expanding *Local Service Mapping* to a further 14 areas around the country and this will ensure plans are translated into action. We are also committed to promoting good practice across the government agencies to continue improving our working relationships with the sector.

A Ministry moving forward

The Ministry today

After the merger with the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services (1 July 2006) the Ministry has over 9,000 employees in 200 sites. The Ministry is now this country's largest government department and more importantly, as a result of the merger, we have strengthened our ability to help New Zealanders.

What we do

We provide advice, develop policies and deliver social services to improve the lives of New Zealand's children, young people, families, working age people and older people. We achieve this improvement using a social development approach – providing 'here and now' support for people needing assistance, and investing today for the long term.

Currently, we support more than one million New Zealanders in living successful lives by providing:

- income support, employment services and New Zealand Superannuation through Work and Income
- care and protection of children and young people, youth justice co-ordination, adoption information and community organisation funding, through Child, Youth and Family
- Student Allowances and Loans
- services to rural clients
- leadership and co-ordination of services.

We secure and administer funding for activities through five votes:

- Vote: Child, Youth and Family Services (from 1 July 2006)
- Vote: Senior Citizens
- Vote: Social Development
- Vote: Veterans' Affairs – Social Development
- Vote: Youth Development.

Over the 2005/2006 year we were responsible for administering \$14 billion in assistance to New Zealanders. This includes \$6.3 billion in New Zealand Superannuation, \$5.7 billion in social security benefits and \$1.434 billion in student loans, allowances and payments.

How we are organised

The Ministry is organised in to three broad clusters – policy; service delivery; and corporate, governance and risk. This structure allows our people to:

- get the big picture of what is going on in their cluster areas and the Ministry as a whole
- identify, compare and benchmark good and best practice
- network internally.

How we operate

Our approach is whole-of-Ministry. All of our services and activities are aligned, strongly led and tightly focused on the social development outcomes that matter.

To get the most from us, it shouldn't matter what part of the Ministry ordinary New Zealanders contact, they should be able to access any and all of our services. Under the leadership of Regional Commissioners for Social Development we are making our service more flexible and co-ordinated so that people have easy access to whatever service they need.

Our approach is not limited to the Ministry alone. We want to see the whole social sector working together to support New Zealanders. Taking the whole-of-government approach, we work with other government agencies, local government and communities to co-ordinate policies and services. Our ultimate goal is that there is no 'wrong door' into government services.

Our organisational structure **at a glance**



Our Leadership Team

The Ministry's Leadership Team is central to our governance framework. They provide a hub of expertise that ensures all the Ministry's efforts are focused on our strategic direction. The team meets regularly to consider issues of strategic importance.



Peter Hughes, Chief Executive

"We understand that we are here to help New Zealanders get on with their lives."

Peter heads the Ministry's Leadership Team, its governance committees and strategic forums. He has a cross-sectoral leadership role in which he chairs the:

- Health, Education, Social Development, and Justice Chief Executives' Group
- Social Services Cluster Chief Executives' Group, which comprises the Department of Building and Housing, the Housing New Zealand Corporation and the Ministry
- Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families, which advises the Family Violence Ministerial Team on how to make improvements to the way family violence is addressed.



Marcel Lauzière, Deputy Chief Executive, Social Development Policy and Knowledge

"We promote the importance of strong linkages between evidence, policy and practice to foster social success in New Zealand."

Social Development Policy and Knowledge monitors and advises on strategies that will improve the social wellbeing of New Zealanders. We provide an evidence base for social policy and services, and we lead cross-sectoral initiatives.



Nicholas Pole, Deputy Chief Executive, Social Services Policy

"We have the capacity to address long-standing and emerging social issues – and the potential to make a real difference in the lives of all New Zealanders."

The Social Services Policy group is leading the Families – Young and Old theme by providing social policy advice on children, families and communities, young people, working age people and older people. The Ministry of Youth Development is also in this group.



Patricia Reade, Deputy Chief Executive, Work and Income

"I am passionate about providing high-quality public services for New Zealanders that will stand the test of time and I am pleased to be in a position to help enable this."

Work and Income provides income support and employment services throughout New Zealand and offers a single point of contact for New Zealanders needing work-search support, income support and in-work support. We also manage Enterprising Communities grants to help community organisations design and implement projects that will create skills and job opportunities for people who find it hard to get work.



Tony Gavin, Deputy Chief Executive, Specialist Services

"We focus on what makes a positive difference to people's lives and we work to make it happen."

We provide services to a varied group of clients who have specific needs, including students, veterans and people who may be able to receive a pension from overseas, or New Zealand Superannuitants who are living overseas. Through Integrity Services we protect the integrity of the benefit system by preventing and reducing benefit error, abuse, fraud and debt.



Ray Smith, Deputy Chief Executive, Child, Youth and Family

“Our country’s wellbeing is dependent on happy, healthy and well-adjusted families. We are always working with this goal in mind.”

Child, Youth and Family works towards reducing the reoccurrence of abuse and neglect when children and young people have been harmed; and towards reducing reoffending where children and young people have committed crimes. Our ability to achieve this depends on us working closely with other government agencies and our community partners.



Richard Wood, Deputy Chief Executive, Family and Community Services

“Helping families to help themselves builds connected communities and helping communities to achieve their goals, supports families to be strong.”

Family and Community Services (FACS) was established two years ago to lead and co-ordinate services that support families, to strengthen the family services sector, and to provide more co-ordinated prevention and early intervention services. Two years on FACS has a major role in funding service providers. From 1 July 2006 we will be responsible for managing contracts with over 400 service providers that support families.



Christine Stevenson, Deputy Chief Executive, People, Resources and Capability

“The Ministry needs the right people, technology and resources so that we can make a difference for New Zealanders.”

People, Capability and Resources comprises three business groups that provide essential background support for all the Ministry’s work. We develop and implement the Ministry’s HR strategy, including learning and development opportunities for staff. We also provide strategic financial advice on planning, budgeting, reporting and consultancy, and we manage IT services to support the Ministry.



Helene Quilter, Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate and Governance

“Effective governance helps keep an organisation on track to achieve its goals and to make a real difference in the lives of New Zealanders.”

Corporate and Governance manages corporate planning and reporting, communication, media, ministerial servicing and legal functions. We provide appointment and monitoring advice on the crown entities responsible to the Minister for Social Development and Employment. We also look after the Ministry’s relationship with Beneficiary Advocates.



Graeme Carruthers, Deputy Chief Executive, Risk and Assurance

“We provide independent assurance of its systems, processes and controls to deliver effective and efficient services to all New Zealanders.”

Risk and Assurance oversees the Ministry’s risk management approach. We also provide internal audit and assurance services, prevent, detect and investigate internal fraud, and ensure effective security strategies are in place.

Furthering State Services Development Goals

In March 2006 the State Services Commission (SSC) launched a set of six development goals. These goals seek to lift the performance and service delivery of the State Service.

State Services Development Goals

Employer of choice

Ensure the State Services is an employer of choice – attractive to high achievers with a commitment

Excellent state servants

Develop a strong culture of constant learning in the pursuit of excellence

Networked state agencies

Use technology to transform the provision of services for New Zealanders

Co-ordinated state agencies

Ensure the total contribution of government agencies is greater than the sum of its parts

Accessible state services 'no wrong door'

Enhance access, responsiveness and effectiveness, and improve New Zealanders' experience of State Services

Trusted state services

Strengthen trust in the State Services, and reinforce the spirit of service

Our progress to date

As a major government agency, we support the State Services Development Goals and the SSC in implementing strategies that underpin those goals.

We have built a strong reputation as **an employer of choice** and reinforce this through good employment practices and the fostering of **a culture of learning and development**. We encourage our people to broaden their skills through leadership and study programmes and secondments.

We are focused on improving our service delivery to clients. Our **'no wrong door' policy** is well advanced. Through our relationship with Inland Revenue and initiatives such as Heartland Services and Strengthening Families we ensure services are more accessible.

New Zealanders can have **confidence in the integrity** of our people. We have put in place transparent processes and policies and have a zero tolerance towards staff fraud and misuse of information. This provides a good springboard in achieving the 'trusted state services' goal.

We support the 'co-ordinated state agencies' goal through our **leadership and co-ordination** across the social sector, especially in co-ordinating the government's Families – Young and Old theme. Our co-ordination and leadership occurs not only at a high strategic and policy level, but also through Regional Commissioners for Social Development and the Heartland Services.

We are committed to **better using IT** to improve service delivery to our clients. StudyLink uses IT extensively to deliver its services to students via the web. At the same time we recognise not all clients can access high technology tools and work to achieve a balance across client needs.

Building our capability

The Ministry's business is a people business. We impact the lives of over one million New Zealanders. For us to make a difference in those lives we rely on our people having the skills, abilities and commitment to deliver on our desired outcomes.

Our focus on being a good employer includes promoting equal opportunities. We continue to employ a diverse range of staff that complement the range of services and corporate functions we provide.

Isabel Evans was recognised as the Pacific Business Leader of the Year in June 2005, at the Pacific Business Awards and we were awarded the Mainstream Employer of the Year in December 2005. This reflects our commitment to the EEO Policy to 2010 Future Directions of EEO in the New Zealand Public Service.

Attracting and keeping the right people

Ensuring we have the people with the skills and abilities is a key priority for us, especially in today's tight labour market. We continue in our efforts to provide a work environment that is attractive to current and future employees. During 2005/2006, a joint PSA/Ministry working party reported on work-life balance issues and suggested ways we could further support employees with family commitments and promote healthy lifestyles. An online survey of Ministry people aged 40 years and older on ageing, work and retirement also identified initiatives that will help us better manage and retain older workers.

At the other end of the spectrum, the focus of our graduate recruitment programme this year was on recruiting graduates who will develop our future capability in policy, research, corporate, and information technology. To support this work we set up a graduate talent bank as part of an e-recruitment trial so graduates can register their interest in future applications.

Growing leaders

Effective managers – both current and those readying to move into leadership roles – are critical to our ability to deliver. Our Leadership Development Framework defines what effective leadership looks like in the Ministry and provides a suite of programmes to grow and develop leaders. During 2005/2006 we piloted a Framework process to identify the strengths, development needs and career aspirations of senior staff. The end product of the process is an individual development plan for each person to guide their growth and development.

To further strengthen our leadership capability, we focused this year on providing practical tools and support to managers. We extended our range of in-house leadership and management development workshops, which focus on encouraging leaders at all levels to create work climates that promote excellence. We also increased support for on-the-job learning, with a number of our managers either undertaking or completing NZQA level qualifications. In 2005/2006, 43 Ministry managers completed NZQA qualifications. Since February 2003, 250 Ministry managers have completed qualifications.

Strengthening our people

We are committed to supporting our people to do their jobs well and develop their potential.

During 2005/2006 we introduced a range of measures to build staff capability, including tailored performance management systems and opportunities to gain nationally recognised qualifications. Specialist Services' staff are additionally benefiting from the introduction of a capability framework and toolkit. The framework outlines the general requirements and pathways for building skills and knowledge. Specialist Services staff can use the framework and toolkit to help them build and develop the skills they need for specific roles.

Our governance of performance and risk

The Ministry's Leadership Team operates a collective model of decision making. They set a single, integrated plan of action for the organisation that crosses policy and delivery boundaries.



Subcommittees of the Leadership Team, chaired by the Chief Executive, have been established to oversee management of organisational performance, large projects, and priority work. This ensures that these matters all receive the scrutiny they need from senior management. To support this work we have developed best practice models for significant projects and large IT projects.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Ministry's Audit Committee operates independently of the Chief Executive and has the mandate to look across all the Ministry's activities. It is chaired by one of three external people, who have among them extensive experience in public and private sector financial and risk management, governance, and management of large projects including IT projects.

Work and Income continued to bring talented young people into the organisation through the cadet programme and also grow their potential through structured on-the-job learning. Work and Income also strengthened their management development programme to ensure all new frontline managers have the foundation management skills need to perform on the job.

We focused more on meeting the training and development needs of National Office staff and managers this year through the introduction of a new performance management approach. Business area managers were further encouraged in this task through a programme of coaching and ongoing support.

The right support tools

Skilled and able people, and effective and efficient systems are equal elements in the delivery equation. We reviewed our HR information systems and tools to identify enhancements that would support informed and effective decision making and simplify management processes. We also evaluated an e-recruitment tool to support a simple and seamless end-to-end recruitment process and will introduce this in 2006/2007.

Building consistent performance

Being the country's largest government department with an annual budget of around \$1.1 billion presents unique challenges and responsibilities. To ensure we perform consistently across the Ministry, we have in place a governance framework promoting effective performance and risk management. A major feature of this framework is governance committees. Each is chaired by the Chief Executive. Each focuses on our performance Ministry-wide, ensuring our IT and research and evaluation programmes are focused on achieving government priorities. The committees are supported by best-practice models for governance of large projects and a Ministry-wide audit and risk programme.

Day to day, we manage performance and risk through our audit programme and risk management approach, and through the control environments that operate in each business unit. We have put in place a risk management approach that gives senior managers a clear view of their risks so they can manage them consistently and actively.

Growing risk-smart

The delivery of benefits, loans and other payments carries substantial risk. Across the Ministry we work hard to lessen the likelihood of failure, error or disruption and also to lessen the harm should any of these events happen. Our approach towards managing risk involves building a culture of risk awareness and action. We want all our people to be risk-smart and to work within a risk-smart culture so that when things go wrong, consistently the right things happen. In other words, when there is a problem, we own it, fix it, and learn from it.

A number of critical success factors underpin our culture:

- all our people know what their risk management responsibility is
- we protect and maintain our reputation and image at the highest standard
- risk management is an integral part of the Leadership Team's focus, and all members can confidently articulate risk status and strategies across the Ministry
- risk management is continuously reviewed and improved
- internal and external stakeholders are confident that we manage risk within acceptable levels.

“The Committee is able to contribute a wide range of knowledge and experience to test the Ministry’s risk assurance framework, ensuring that the Ministry’s decision-making processes are robust.”

**James Ogden,
external member and chair
of the Audit Committee**

A smaller footprint

We are committed to improving the sustainability of our activities to lessen our footprint on the environment. One way we put this commitment into practice is through participation in the government-wide Govt³ programme. This programme focuses on four key areas:

- recycling/waste minimisation
- buildings
- transport
- office consumables and equipment.

Much of our current contribution to Govt³ is focused on procurement, improving the energy efficiency of our buildings and reviewing practices such as ground and air travel. However, we recognise there are things our staff can do that will make a real difference, for example:

- turning off computer monitors at the end of the work day to save power
- turning off lights when meeting rooms are not in use
- reducing paper use/using the double-sided feature of printers and photocopiers wherever possible.

We are confident that our efforts can both reduce the demands of our operations on the environment and improve our efficiency and effectiveness overall.

Our Ministerial and Executive Services (MaES) unit has initiated a project under Govt³.

Called MaES³, the first stage of its work, focuses on paper usage – the Paper Plan for Change. The team is focusing on reducing, reusing and recycling paper. Examples of the changes have included:

- using electronic copies of documents, both within the team and for copies going to other teams, to reduce paper usage
- double-sided printing as a standard
- development of rules for reusing paper and collection points for reusable paper.

Prior to the project, the team used an average of 30 boxes of paper every three months. The team aimed to reduce paper usage by 50 percent within one year.

After nine months of the project being in action (to 30 June 2006), the team has reduced paper to 18 boxes used per quarter – a reduction of 40 percent.

