

## What is a Statement of Service Performance (SSP)?

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One of the key features of the new reporting standards is the requirement to include non-financial information in your report in the form of the **Statement of Service Performance (SSP)**. For a lot of charities this will be a new type of reporting in addition to your financial information that you used to submit. The SSP sets the context for the financial part of the report and shows the reader the awesome work your charity has been doing throughout the year. It's been so interesting reading some of the reports being submitted and finding out what cool stuff you all get up to!

The two key components of an SSP are **Outcomes**: What the entity is seeking to achieve in terms of its impact on society, and **Outputs**: the goods and services that the entity delivered during the year. Please note that charities using the Tier 4 standard are only required to report their outputs; the outcomes are optional. So what do these terms output and outcome actually mean?

SSPs have been in the public sector for a long time now so some people are familiar and comfortable with the concepts but for others it's still all a bit confusing. Never fear we are here to help! I had coffee with a former colleague this week who is helping to prepare the Performance Report for her local church, and she had a really good way of explaining the SSP to her Church Pastor which I thought others might find useful as well.

The question my colleague asked her Pastor was “If the Church disappeared off the face of the earth tomorrow, what would be missing from our community?” For this particular church, they run worship sessions and bible study classes weekly, they have a music group for pre-schoolers, they have a youth group for the older kids, and they are making a big impact with their budgeting courses. These are all examples of outputs. They probably do a lot more things so it is up to them to choose the most relevant and significant activities for their organisation.

So the next question is – why do you do those activities and what are you hoping to achieve by doing them? At a high level, the purpose of all of these activities would be to improve the quality of life for people through engaging in activities as part of the church. However, they could be more specific. For example, the purpose of the pre-school music group is to teach preschool children music. The purpose of the budgeting service would be to help the alleviation of poverty through education. These are examples of outcomes.

With the examples above, you can see a clear link between what the church is trying to achieve, and the activities they are undertaking to get there. It's good to be able to see the connection between the two, but you are not required to prove that the output led to the outcome.

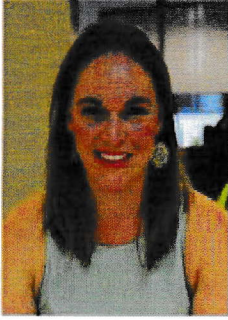
From the reports I've looked at so far, and the questions we've been asked, I've put together a few tips that might help you when you write your SSP:

- There are no minimum or maximum numbers of outputs or outcomes. Think about what is most relevant for your organisation.
- The information is meant to be non-financial and therefore supplements the financial information. It is not useful to provide the dollar value of what you spent on the output. It is more useful to know how many people you reached, or how many times you carried out the activity.
- Some outputs aren't quantifiable. Only put a quantity if it makes sense to do so. If not, just write a description.
- Outcomes are not a description of what you have done (looking back), they are a description of what you are trying to achieve (looking forward).
- Charities Services isn't judging your performance as a charity by what you put in this report. What's important is that the reader gets a really good understanding of what your organisation is about and what you have been up to.

In time we will be identifying some great examples of reports that charities have prepared and will post these on our website. In the meantime, we have a couple of fictional performance reports which you may find useful to look at for [Tier 3](#) and [Tier 4](#).

As always, please contact us if you have any questions on 0508 CHARITIES or [nrs.charities@dia.govt.nz](mailto:nrs.charities@dia.govt.nz)





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