

11 December 2020

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister
Private Bag 18888
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160

Tēnā koe Prime Minister,

Congratulations on being elected to New Zealand's 53rd Parliament.

We are delighted to provide you with a complimentary copy of our signature book *Nation Dates*. We publish this book every three years, working away at it while MPs and candidates are preparing for the elections and travelling the country meeting with voters. The book is orange to illustrate our non-partisan approach to public policy. Past MPs and policy analysts often refer to it as the 'orange book' and have found it very useful for speech writing and quick referrals to significant events in terms of governance and policy. If you want to find a key date, our goal is to provide it. Each date belongs to one of 70 threads that link related events together and create historical patterns. In this edition, each thread now belongs to one of nine domains, selected from the 12 domains in Treasury's Living Standards Framework.

The book looks deeply into the patterns and threads that shape our future. We are therefore delighted that the Public Service Act 2020 (passed in August 2020) put in place New Zealand's first foresight instrument for government departments (a long-term insights briefing to be tabled in the House). For the first time, a chief executive can publicly report on what they think and see in terms of long-term trends, risks and opportunities relevant to their department. This is not an additional strategy or planning mechanism that focuses on the means to an end but a new instrument that focuses purely on foresight as a way to explore possible futures. This is an instrument that brings the public service in line with international best practice and ensures New Zealanders, including all MPs, can learn what a chief executive thinks and sees when they look out long-term.

In addition to the book, we will email our annual newsletter to you next week. It includes links to more information about our activities over the last 18 months, as well as our 'brief to the incoming government'. The email will also contain a link to an article written in August 1900 by 31-year-old West Coast MP Patrick O'Regan for *The New Zealand Illustrated Magazine*. His article 'One Hundred Years Hence' may be useful as you reflect on what you would like New Zealand to look like in the year 2100. If you are interested to learn more about foresight tools or hear more about what we do and the ways we work and collaborate, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for the work you will be doing over the next three years to advance the wellbeing of all New Zealanders and for the actions you will take to protect our environment for future generations. We wish you a relaxing summer break and a productive 2021.

Ngā manaakitanga,



Wendy McGuinness
Chief Executive