

Subject: FW: Potential questions for Scrutiny Week
Date: Friday, 13 June 2025 at 5:21:36 PM New Zealand Standard Time
From: Wendy McGuinness
To: Greta Balfour
Attachments: Re: Potential questions for Scrutiny Week.pdf

From: Wendy McGuinness [REDACTED]
Date: Friday, 13 June 2025 at 15:03
To: [REDACTED]

Cc: Lauren Hynd [REDACTED], Josie McGuinness [REDACTED]

Subject: Potential questions for Scrutiny Week

Kia ora,

Potential questions for Scrutiny Week

Please find attached the McGuinness Institute's latest piece of research and suggested questions, which may be of value during the upcoming Scrutiny Week (16–19 June 2025). We are aware that your committee will be hosting sessions with the intention of delivering better outcomes and building confidence in public institutions. To support this work, kindly see below key research alongside recommended questions to ask officials. I would appreciate it if this email could be forwarded to all committee members.

Key research that may prove useful:

The Institute's [Government Department Strategies \(GDS\) Index](#) is designed to help strengthen the effectiveness, responsiveness, measurability, comparability and durability of GDSs through greater public consultation, engagement and ownership. We have recently published the [2024 GDS Index Handbook](#), which includes all 195 GDSs in operation as at 31 December 2024. The Handbook is a pdf and can easily be searched by department and by strategy. The [Government Department Strategies Index Handbook – He Puna Rautaki](#) ranks each strategy based on the clarity and completeness of its documentation (rather than on the quality of the strategy itself). Each GDS is assessed using the Institute's [Transparency Scorecard](#), which evaluates how well the strategy document articulates six key elements that allow readers to understand and assess the strategic approach.

Recommended questions to ask officials (split into three key categories: strategy, artificial

recommended questions to ask officials (split into three key categories: strategy, artificial intelligence and long-term thinking):

A. STRATEGY

1. How are current strategies working/not working? Do obstacles exist? How can Parliament help?
2. Are there too many or too few strategies? Why?
3. To what extent do the existing strategies align and contribute to the nine [targets of Government](#)?
4. Do strategy gaps exist?
5. Are there specific conflicts between strategies?
6. What new strategies are being worked on?
7. What did departmental officials learn from their Long Term Insights Briefing (see pdfs of [LTIBs](#) by department)? How have their LTIBs shaped their work?

B. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

8. How is the department using AI? How are risks being managed and benefits being harnessed?
NB: You may be interested in an article, [Why AGI Should be the World's Top Priority](#) (May 2025), by Jerome C. Glenn. Glenn is the CEO of [The Millennium Project](#) and his article discusses three types of AI and why we should work hard today to manage the negative impacts of AGI in five years' time. It sets out why we need to consider the different types of AI (including artificial narrow intelligence [ANI], artificial general intelligence [AGI] and artificial super intelligence [ASI]).
9. Do officials consider a Public Service Commission Submission Register should be developed, ideally using AI for both submissions and analysis? How would they suggest this operates?
NB: In the Institute's experience, there are a tsunami of submissions in May and June of each year, which leads to submission fatigue. A register would ensure the public would know what submissions are due and when, and officials would know where repetition or tight timeframes exist and can extend or manage accordingly. The Institute has also recently published a think piece (May 2025), [Unlocking Government Documents with AI](#), which explored how AI can be used for standardising and improving the quality and assurance of Government documents.
NB: Standardising documents involves establishing and maintaining consistent formats, terminologies, and procedures for creation, editing, access and storage.
10. How are departments ensuring official documents are not easily compromised or manipulated using tools such as AI? How are they working to ensure the public can trust key documents?

C. LONG-TERM THINKING

11. How are officials using [foresight tools](#) in their work?
12. Are officials aware of the [OECD anticipatory governance guidance](#) (just released in May 2025)? How are they integrating this guidance into their work?
13. Do officials believe a review of New Zealand's anticipatory governance is appropriate? Why or why not?
NB: The Institute would strongly support such a review.
14. Do officials consider the existing committees have necessary processes in place to engage with officials and guide their work? Why/why not?
15. How would regular meetings with officials provide more guidance and direction for departments and other government organisations?

16. Do officials consider that a new committee should be established to meet at least annually to review pandemic plans (and the upcoming phase 2 COVID-19 Inquiry report)?

NB: The pandemic had a very wide range of impacts across society, many of which are not yet fully understood. We need to ensure that Parliament has a core number of MPs over the issues, challenges and plans for future pandemics. It is critical officials are able to respond and navigate the country through the next pandemic.

17. Do officials support legislation along the lines of the [Welsh Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)? Why or why not?

NB: This is a landmark piece of legislation in Wales that aims to ensure that public bodies consider the long-term impact of their decisions on the well-being of future generations. It outlines seven well-being goals and places a duty on public bodies to work towards these goals, promoting sustainable development and improved well-being across Wales.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Warm regards,
Wendy

PS: We have attached a pdf of this email in case of any potential formatting issues.

Wendy McGuinness

Chief Executive

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The McGuinness Institute is a non-partisan think tank working towards a sustainable future, contributing strategic foresight through evidence-based research and policy analysis.

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