



# TE AKAMOUANGA KAVEINGA

## Statement of Strategic Intentions 2023 – 2027

## **FOREWORD: AKAARAVEIANGA**

At Infrastructure Cook Islands: Te Tango Angaanga o te Kuki Airani, we put people and communities at the heart of everything that we do. Whether it be through the construction and maintenance of our transport network, drainage systems; supporting airports, harbours, and water infrastructure maintenance and upgrades in the Pa Enuā; effective waste management; emergency response to ensure access on and to public infrastructure; provision of geospatial information; developing policies and plans; managing regulatory arrangements, we touch on the lives of all who live and work in our country.

This Akamouanga Kaveinga: Statement of Strategic Intentions sets out the impact that ICI aims to achieve for Cook Islanders. It sets out our purpose and what we are seeking to deliver over four years to make a material contribution to Cook Islanders wellbeing.

The Ministry will build on its achievements to date and make improvements where needed. Success will mean that our systems are robust and accountable, and that we build infrastructure to support the Cook Islands economic, social and environmental aspirations, as well as making full use of the infrastructure that we already have.

It will also mean looking to what the future may bring, preparing for the challenges like climate change and making the most of the opportunities offered by new technology. Our goals for the next four years are:

- 1. Core Public Services** – Ensure that we deliver on our core public services.
- 2. Capital Project Delivery** – Deliver well planned, quality infrastructure.
- 3. Waste Management** – Effectively manage waste.
- 4. Organisational Foundations** – Deliver optimal outcomes for the Cook Islands through our people, network, systems and services.

A final goal is a reflection on our commitment to supporting the wellbeing and resilience of our staff, who work a challenging environment. I acknowledge their dedication.

In signing this document, I recognise that I am responsible for the information on the strategic intentions of Infrastructure Cook Islands.



**Elizabeth Wright-Koteka**  
**Secretary**

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## OUR CONTEXT/ TO MATOU TURANGA

### Our purpose

*The Ministry strives to enrich our communities through quality infrastructure development.*

We engage with other government agencies, development partners and our communities to ensure that our work contributes to outcomes that align to:

- The National Sustainable Development Agenda (NSDA) 2020+ and the national vision of: *An empowered, innovative and environmentally conscious people who are grounded in our culture and languages, with the highest quality of wellbeing in life*
- The National Infrastructure Investment Plan (NIIP) 2021
- The Cook Islands Economic Development Strategy (EDS) 2030 and the vision of: *Working together to build a dynamic, prosperous and inclusive economic future for Cook Islanders, that is in harmony with culture and environment*

### The NSDA 2020+ at the core of our work

The NSDA framework is the guiding instrument for the intergenerational development of the Cook Islands. With a focus on ‘turanga memeitaki – wellbeing for all’, it takes an extended view over 100 years. The 100 years vision of wellbeing includes the ‘15 star pledge’ – areas of importance to focus on for the future. This is supported by the 25 year framework, Te Akapapa’anga Uki, with a generational focus which will set outcomes and targets to achieve for each generation. Te Kaveinga Iti and its 5 year strategies lay out more specific goals and indicators, which will monitor actions to highlight progress and areas that need more attention.

ICI encapsulates the aspirations of the NSDA framework and its focus on the wellbeing of our people. More specifically, this Statement of Intent overlaps and is consistent with the following goals of Te Kaveinga Iti:

- Goal 1: Wellbeing for all
- Goal 2: Welfare and Equity
- Goal 3: Economy, Employment, Trade and Enterprise
- Goal 4: Manage Solid and Hazardous Waste
- Goal 5: Water and Sanitation
- Goal 6: Connecting our nation through infrastructure, transport and ICT
- Goal 7: Health and Healthy lifestyles
- Goal 8: Education and Innovation
- Goal 9: Our inclusiveness
- Goal 11: Our biodiversity and natural environment
- Goal 15: Our security, a peaceful and just society

## Contributing to our people's wellbeing

The Ministry contributes to Cook Islanders wellbeing as articulated in the NSDA 2020+ framework by delivering on our four value propositions: Impact, Professionalism, Innovation and Teamwork, which sit at the heart of this Statement of Strategic Intentions.

Our Strategic Intentions are also linked to the Cook Islands Economic Development Strategy (EDS) 2030 and its objectives to:

- Improving equity and access for all
- Transforming our economy
- Developing our people and culture
- Investing in our islands
- Greening our economy

The strategies of the NSDA 2020+ framework and in particular the EDS objectives and associated initiatives, can be summarized as a direction to build up four aspects of capital – natural, human, social, and economic, the foundations for generating wellbeing now and into the future.

We have a role in building the Cook Islands long-term capital and managing related risks through our work contributing to design, engineering, construction or management of:

- Transport, waste and water infrastructure - Economic infrastructure and capital
- Hospitals, schools, cyclone shelters – Social infrastructure and capital
- The interconnections and interdependence between economic and social infrastructure – natural capital.

Our work in creating awareness of our areas of work, as well as efforts in staff development contribute to building human capital.

## Our value propositions for long term wellbeing

Our organizational values are:

**Impact** – We are performance driven to ensure outcomes that contribute to the future of the Cook Islands.

**Professionalism** – We conduct ourselves in a capable manner to provide high quality services, fulfil our commitments and take ownership of the outcomes.

**Innovation** – We are adaptable, open to new ideas and foster a culture of continuous learning.

**Teamwork** – We work collaboratively amongst ourselves, our partners in the public and private sector.

These values guide how we interact with people inside and outside the Ministry. In living our values, we give effect to the Code of Conduct of the Cook Islands Public Service, by acting in the spirit of service to the community and by seeking to be impartial, accountable, trustworthy, respectful and responsive.

## Our purpose

The Ministry is Government's principal agent for infrastructure policy and delivery. Our responsibilities currently cover the following infrastructure sectors:

- Transport – We lead on the construction of roads, airports (Pa Enea), ports (Pa Enea), drainage and bridges.
- Water – We provide support to Island Government's and communities in the Pa Enea
- Waste – We drive waste management on Rarotonga and support to Island Governments.
- Geospatial and hydrography – We are Government's primary agency for mapping to support infrastructure planning and building resilience.
- Construction – We provide the building regulatory services for the country.
- Electricity – We house the electrical inspectorate.

## Our environment

The Ministry's divisions carry out their responsibilities as determined by their annual work plans, as well as the resources appropriated by Parliament. In recent years, the Strategic Plan for Infrastructure Cook Islands 2016-2021 has assisted in shaping ICI's work plans and requests for funding during that period.

Part of the challenge in the full implementation of ICI's Strategic Plan is that planned priorities may change, depending on Government's prerogative, and funding at the desired level for projects is not guaranteed and is subject to competing priorities resulting in unanticipated changes to ICI's work plans. Extreme weather events also affect the Ministries planned work programs.

Building on the experiences of implementing the Strategic Plan for Infrastructure Cook Islands 2016-2021, ICI's Statement of Strategic Intentions 2023 -2026 also sets out the organisation's strategic direction. It outlines the future that ICI is trying to create on behalf of the Government of the Cook Islands and its stakeholders. The Statement charts what the organisation will focus its efforts on and the strategies it will pursue so that ICI can take quick action within the resource envelope that is available.

The Ministry's purpose is shaped by:

- The ambitions and intent of the Public Service, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management and Audit Office legislations
- The importance of a coordinated approach to infrastructure development
- The interplay between international and domestic policy on climate change, environment, health, education, science and disability issues
- The connections between the Cook Islands and its external partners
- Expectations of Cook Islanders on infrastructure development and earning the confidence of our public in our capabilities
- The need for economic recovery and resilience building following the experience of the COVID pandemic
- The expectations that government agencies focus on intergenerational wellbeing, and to better demonstrate and assess the impact of their work.

## OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION – TO MATOU KAVEINGA

The Ministry's Strategic Intentions defines our purpose and the effect we are seeking to achieve over a 10-year horizon. It also identifies the medium term deliverables we are prioritizing; articulates the Ministry's contribution to Cook Islanders wellbeing; and provides a basis for measuring and assessing our performance, as well as linking our priorities and resources.

Our strategic goals are:

**Core Public Services** – Ensure that we deliver on our core public services.

**Capital Project Delivery** – Deliver well planned, quality infrastructure.

**Waste Management** – Effectively manage waste.

Our organizational capacity goal is:

**Organisational Foundations** – Deliver optimal outcomes for the Cook Islands through our people, network, systems and services.

An overview of each goal is set out showing:

- Why the goal matters for the Cook Islands
- Our 10 year outcomes that articulate the impact we are intending to achieve for Cook Islanders
- The enduring work the Ministry undertakes to deliver on our outcomes
- The tangible things the Ministry is prioritizing for delivery towards our outcomes in the next 4 years
- How we are going to measure progress

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## GOAL 1: Core public services – Ensure that we deliver on our core public services

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### Why this Strategic Goal matters?

From the water we drink to the way we travel to work or school, infrastructure touches every aspect of human life. This premise underpins this goal.

Cook Islanders count on Government to provide for good roads, bridges, reliable water and waste systems, quality recreational facilities and so much more. ICI is Government's arm in ensuring that the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges are carried out, and that buildings and electrical installations are permitted and safe.

All infrastructure assets are subject to gradual wear or aging. Maintenance is needed to mitigate the effects of aging and damage. Without maintenance, infrastructure will go into decline, leading to poorer outputs and outcomes over time, the service quality of the infrastructure will fall. Maintenance of existing infrastructure supports their performance over time and sustains their quality, as perceived by the public to continue to deliver a wide range of economic and social benefits.

From ICI's perspective, road, bridge and drainage maintenance is important for:

- Safety – maintaining road networks with clear markings and properly placed signage can reduce accidents and increase safety of drivers and pedestrians.
- Cost effectiveness – regular maintenance can prevent larger more expensive repairs in the future. Potholes, cracks, and other road damages can be fixed early on before they become larger and more costly.
- Accessibility – provide quality transport infrastructure to support economic activity and enable access to employment, education, recreation and goods and services.
- Aesthetics – Maintained roads help to improve the visual appearance of communities, leading to better quality of life for residents.
- Sustainability – The negative effects of road infrastructure on the environment can be mitigated by using sustainable road maintenance practices, such as using recycled materials and conserving energy during repairs.

ICI is home to the building and electrical inspectorate that monitors compliance to the Building Control Standards and Act 1991, Cook Islands Building Code 2019, Energy Act 1998 and Energy Regulations 2006. Our regulatory functions ensure that completed construction and installations are safe.

We are also Government's primary agency when it comes to the use of geoscience and hydrography to inform infrastructure planning, maritime safety, fishing and mineral reaping, environment protection and management, national spatial data infrastructure, and climate change impacts modelling. As the implementing agency for the Information Management Policy, ICI has a critical role in coordinating with those agencies and individuals that require such information for their planning and decision-making needs.



## **Outcome 1: Our road, bridge and drainage assets deliver economic and social benefits for the Cook Islands**

The Ministry achieves this outcome by improving and maintaining the state of roads, such as the Ara Tapu, Ara Metua and link roads. The road upkeep is to ensure that all users – drivers, pedestrians, cyclists and public transport are safe and able to use the roads. Regular maintenance of roads can prevent accidents, reduce vehicle wear and tear and improve the performance of public transport systems.

Maintaining drainage network maintenance plans is important to ensure that stormwater is managed as much as possible during times of heavy rainfall. The implementation of water sensitive design requirements in development will prevent further pressure on public drainage systems and damage to roads, acknowledging also that a retrofit of the existing built environment is needed to fully combat the issue.

### **The Ministry's core delivery during the next 10 years involves continuing efforts to:**

- Maintain our road assets according to ICI's National Roads Policy
- Maintain the drainage related to our roads
- Maintain our bridges and stream structures.
- Transition to green engineering solutions

### **The Ministry's priorities for the next four years include:**

- Implementing ICI's National Roads Policy
- Implementing our annual road assets maintenance plan
- Implementing our annual drainage maintenance plan
- Implementing our annual bridge and stream structure maintenance plan
- Ensuring that our tools and machinery required to do this work is maintained and where necessary replaced and procured when required
- Developing and implementing regulations to better manage our road and drainage infrastructure eg. Working with the Ministry of Transport to regulate vehicle loads, cutting and restoration standards for roads, to penalize damages caused to road infrastructure.
- Implementing water sensitive design into development standards.

### **How we will measure progress?**

- We will report 6 monthly progress on our annual roads maintenance plan as per the reporting requirements of the Office of the Public Service Commissioner
- We will report 6 monthly progress on our annual drainage maintenance plan as per the reporting requirements of the Office of the Public Service Commissioner
- We will report 6 monthly progress on our bridge and stream structure maintenance plan as per the reporting requirements of the Office of the Public Service Commissioner
- We will report 6 monthly progress on our machinery management plan as per the reporting requirements of the Office of the Public Service Commissioner

## **Outcome 2: Response and recovery from emergencies relating to public infrastructure under the purview of ICI is well executed**

Parliament provides an appropriation to the Ministry to respond in emergency situations posing threat to animal and human lives, property and public goods caused by natural and man induced events; as well as mitigate against any risks posed that can potentially develop into an emergency. The Ministry achieves this outcome by ensuring public safety and restoration of services, as it relates to the mandate of ICI.

### **The Ministry's core delivery during the next 10 years involves continuing efforts to:**

- Ensure coordination with other key stakeholders in ensuring safety, security, damage prevention, public awareness and environmental protection
- Maintain updated operational specific emergency procedures and plans
- Ensure that key employees and contractors are trained to respond appropriately
- Ensure proper designated sites are set up for safe disposal of disaster waste.

### **The Ministry's priorities for the next four years include:**

- Updating plans for emergency response and implement as required
- Providing timely response during emergencies.
- Ensuring that development rules work to reduce the effects of extreme weather events
- Developing a Disaster Waste Management Plan.

### **How we will measure our progress?**

- We will have in place emergency procedures and plans that are updated where and when necessary and reported against following emergency situations
- We will use the following indicators to measure progress:
  - ✓ emergency response incidents reported
  - ✓ emergency incidents addressed.

## **Outcome 3: Our electrical connections are safe**

ICI houses the Electrical Inspectorate function. While there has been discussion around where this function is best placed in the machinery of Government, it has yet to be moved, and the Ministry achieves this outcome by continuing with incorporating the Electrical Inspectorate function in our business. The Ministry's medium to long term intentions in relation to this outcome will be subject to the future placement of the Electrical Inspectorate.

### **The Ministry's core delivery during the next 10 years involves continuing efforts to:**

- Provide the function of the Electrical Inspectorate, improve the way that it operates and increase the coverage of its inspections to include the Pa Enea.

**The Ministry's priorities for the next four years include:**

- Improving the capacity of the Electrical Inspectorate to adequately perform the function
- Improving the resourcing of the Electrical Inspectorate to adequately perform the function
- Facilitating the review of the Energy Regulations 2006
- Providing support to the Electrical Registration Board.

**How we will measure our progress?**

- We will record the number of applications received and attended to per month to collate for our annual reporting obligations to the Office of the Public Service Commissioner
- We will record the number of complaints received and addressed per month to collate for our annual reporting obligations to the Office of the Public Service Commissioner.

**Outcome 4: Our buildings are compliant with the building code and regulations**

The primary function of our Building Inspectorate is to ensure people's health and safety in the built environment. The Ministry achieves this outcome by ensuring that all requirements of the Building Control and Standards Regulations and the Building Code are met in all types of non-exempt development. Like the Electrical Inspectorate, the Ministry's mid to long term intentions in relation to this outcome will be subject to the future placement of the Building Inspectorate.

**The core delivery during the next 10 years involves continuing efforts to:**

- Improve the capacity and delivery of the functions of the Building Inspectorate
- Improve the reach of the Building Inspectorate to cover the Pa Enea.

**The Ministry's priorities for the next four years include:**

- Reviewing the Building Act, regulations and Code
- Establishing a monitoring system for building compliance to track permits and projects, and protect consumers from builders with a history of poor workmanship or integrity issues
- Improving the capacity of the Building Inspectorate to deliver its functions
- Exploring options for and implementing an online building consent process that is tied in with the rest of the development permitting process.

**How we will measure our progress?**

- We will record the number of applications received and attended to per month to collate for our annual reporting obligations to the Office of the Public Service Commissioner
- We will record the number of complaints received and addressed per month to collate for our annual reporting obligations to the Office of the Public Service Commissioner.

## **Outcome 5: Development, management and use of quality geospatial information for decision making and planning towards the long-term sustainability of the Cook Islands social, economic and environmental development (Spatial Information Management Policy vision) is robust**

Geospatial information is geography and mapping. It is 'place based' or 'locational' information. It is date tied to and portrayed on a map. ICI has for many years provided the technical expertise in geospatial information to other agencies and stakeholders. As a result, ICI is the implementing agency for Government's Spatial Information Management Policy, which was endorsed by Cabinet in 2020. The Ministry achieves this outcome by continuing its geospatial and hydrography work and in the medium term, will focus on implementing and reviewing the Information Management Policy.

### **The core delivery during the next 10 years involves continuing efforts to:**

- Enhance the spatial information environment by advancing institutions, systems and personnel
- Improve the quality and management of geospatial information
- Conduct periodic reviews of the Spatial Information Management Policy.

### **The Ministry's priorities for the next four years include:**

- Developing, monitoring and reviewing the implementation plan for the Spatial Information Management Policy.

### **How we will measure our progress?**

- We will report on the implementation of the Information Management Policy via our annual reporting obligations to the Office of the Public Service Commissioner
- We will report on specific activities undertaken to achieve our outlined objectives through our internal Ministry reporting processes.

## GOAL 2: Capital Project Delivery – Deliver well planned, quality infrastructure

### Why this Strategic Goal matters?

The Cook Islands has the National Infrastructure Investment Plan (NIIP) as its overarching planning document for infrastructure. To positively contribute to the implementation of the NIIP, ICI recognises that well planned and prioritised infrastructure investment improves productivity and wellbeing and contributes to long term national sustainable growth. Therefore the Ministry sees its role as translating the NIIP into a prioritised and actionable project pipeline that can be implemented on an annual basis over time within the resource envelope that it is appropriated by Parliament. Sometimes the priorities of government may change and the Ministry will ensure that it is agile to respond to such changes.

Underpinning the Ministry's intentions for achieving this goal, is recognition of the common causes of project failure and ensuring that it addresses these issues.

Common causes of project failure		Issue	Ascribed underlying cause
1	Lack of a clear link between the project and key strategic priorities, including agreed measures of success	Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of governance</li> <li>Lack of planning due diligence</li> </ul>
2	Lack of senior management and ministerial ownership and leadership	Leadership	Lack of governance
3	Lack of effective engagement with stakeholders	Stakeholder engagement	Lack of governance
4	Lack of skills and a proven approach to project and risk management	Execution Strategy	Poor procurement and delivery management practices
5	Too little attention to breaking the development and implementation into manageable steps	Control	Lack of governance, lack of standard operating procedures
6	Evaluation of proposals driven by initial price rather than long term value for money (especially in securing the delivery of actions to achieve desired outcomes)	Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of governance</li> <li>Poor procurement practices</li> <li>Short-sightedness</li> </ul>
7	Lack of understanding of, and contact with, the supply industry at the senior levels of the organisation	Procurement arrangements	Poor procurement practices
8	Lack of effective project team integration between clients, the supplier team and supply chain	Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of governance</li> <li>Poor procurement and delivery management practices</li> <li>Lack of standard operating procedures</li> </ul>
	Under resourced project and planning division	Resourcing/HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exodus of Cook Islands people</li> <li>Lack of qualified and capable people in the local population</li> <li>No tertiary training plans for secondary school students to move into project management and engineering</li> <li>Difficulty retaining international staff</li> </ul>

## **Outcome 1: Critical knowledge for effective delivery is available**

In delivering this outcome, the Ministry recognises that there are usually several supply chains required to produce different parts of the works associated with an infrastructure project. Each of which need to be managed to realise required project outcomes. Delivery management of projects may be considered as the organisation, administration and supervision of processes which when combined into a comprehensive plan, provides the backbone of the delivery management system. The Ministry recognises that there is a need to strengthen its delivery management system, beginning from having the information available to inform the rest of the process.

Delivery management is commonly linked to an asset management system and budgeting and planning system. The asset management system which considers the entire lifecycle of the asset, informs demand management, while the planning and budgeting system prioritises projects.

The Ministry's capital projects can be organized within:

- Programmes – the grouping of a set of related projects in order to deliver outcomes and benefits related to strategic objectives which would not have been achieved had the projects been managed independently; and
- Portfolios – collection of projects or programmes and other work that are grouped together to facilitate effective management of that work to meet a strategic objective.

**The core delivery during the next 10 years involves continuing efforts to:**

- Improve delivery management of projects
- Strengthen planning
- Strengthen asset management
- Strengthen procurement
- Strengthen project governance

**The Ministry's priorities for the next four years include:**

- Undertaking an infrastructure assessment in the pa enua to determine status of assets, identify need for more infrastructure or to modify or to maintain the functionality of existing infrastructure
- Implementing resource allocation to assess if the capital projects can be managed by ICI
- Continuing the roll out of the asset management program
- Improving procurement capacity, implementation and oversight
- Improving project governance and standard operating procedures
- Organising projects into programmes and portfolios

**How we will measure our progress?**

- Pa Enea assessments complete and priority pipeline of projects in place
- Asset management program fully functional and informing decision making

- Procurement compliant with government procurement policy and procedures
- Standard operating procedures in place

## Outcome 2: Value for money infrastructure

Value for money in common language usage refers to something that is well worth the money spent on. Put differently, value for money is the attainment of a most desirable or satisfactory outcome namely that the value proposition that was set for the project at the time that a decision was taken to invest in a project is as far as possible realised. It is about maximizing actual outcomes and impacts and spending money well and wisely.

The Ministry will achieve this outcome by ensuring that the best results are obtained from the money spent or maximum benefit is derived from the resources available. It is about striking a balance between the four “Es”, namely: economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity.

The critical starting point in delivering value for money with ICI infrastructure projects is, in the first instance aligning projects with strategic objectives, priorities, budgets and plans and thereafter during the planning phase, clearly define expected outcomes, the parameters of timelines, cost and levels of uncertainty i.e. the value proposition or promise of measurable benefits resulting from the project. This frames the value for money proposition that needs to be implemented when the decision is made to proceed with the project, thus establishes “economy” and identifies “equity”. The end point is to compare the projected outcomes against the actual outcomes, to confirm the “effectiveness” of the project in delivering value for money. Implementation sits in the middle of “economy” and “effectiveness”. It needs to be executed “efficiently” to minimize time delays, scope creep and low productivity, and to mitigate the effects of uncertainty on objectives. This is how the Ministry will work towards success with this outcome.

### **The core delivery during the next 10 years involves continuing efforts to:**

- Strengthen planning – what inputs are required to achieve a desired outcome
- Strengthen implementation – how well inputs are converted into outputs
- Strengthen project close out – how well do outputs achieve desired outcomes
- Increase initiatives for foreshore protection and other forms of climate change adaptation.

### **The Ministry’s priorities for the next four years include:**

- Reviewing, refreshing where necessary, and implement current sector assessments and implementation plans for:
  - Roads including footpaths and cycle lanes
  - Bridges and stream structures
  - Drainage
  - Water and sanitation support for the Pa Enea
  - Pa enua harbours
  - Pa enua airports
- Develop project pipeline for foreshore protection

- Ensuring that all required processes are well documented and stored, and that financial requirements are compliant with Cook Islands MFEM Act.

**How we will measure our progress?**

- We will use the following indicators to measure our progress:
  - Number of Plans completed and current
  - Number of projects undertaken and on target



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## **GOAL 3: Waste Management – Effectively manage waste**

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### **Why this Strategic Goal matters?**

Waste management is essential and has the following benefits:

- Protects the environment
- Enhances public health
- Conserves natural resources
- Minimizes Green House Gas emissions
- Creates job opportunities
- Increases energy efficiency
- Enriches the quality of life

The Ministry is charged with the management of solid waste and the septage ponds for sewage treatment on Rarotonga and waste management policy development. In the coming years, the Ministry will continue to manage solid waste and the septage ponds effectively within the resource constraints that it has.

A Solid and Hazardous Waste Bill has brought together pre-existing waste related legislation from under the Environment Act 2003 and the Public Health Act 2004 and filled the gaps in the legislation. This places the enforcement of waste management rules under three agencies including ICI. To reduce confusion, a challenge identified in Strategy, it is planned to have a single enforcement agency. At this time, that single agency has not been identified.

### **Outcome 1: Waste prevention, waste reduction, sorting, recycling and reuse is an integral part of minimizing waste**

Effective communication between organisations interested in waste management and the public is essential to the efficient operation of waste management services. The public need to know what services are available, and the schedule and requirements of that service, in order for those services to be efficiently used. The public are also more likely to undertake waste sorting and recycling activities if they know what happens to waste that is sent for sorting and recycling, and the associated environmental benefits. Incentives to cooperate with activities also encourage wider participation.

An effective way to improve attitudes towards waste reuse and recycling is to integrate waste management education into school curriculum and particularly teaching children about the causes and consequences of waste disposal and highlighting the importance of waste prevention, reuse and recycling. Local authorities and/or waste management organisations can facilitate this by undertaking outreach activities, sending representatives to local schools or inviting schoolchildren to facility tours or open days, etc.

The Ministry will achieve this outcome by ensuring that well designed and developed awareness campaigns may contribute to waste prevention, reduction, reuse and overcome the two main barriers to recycling; the lack of knowledge where information about proper waste segregation is communicated to the public and changing attitudes and perceptions and keep people motivated to avoid and sort waste.

Awareness alone does not achieve complete cooperation. Providing incentives and making it easier to sort between waste and recyclables and access services is integral to a successful waste management system. The Ministry has created an Advance Recovery and Disposal Fee (ARDF) Scheme. This scheme places the cost of disposal and recycling on commodities when they enter the country. A refund portion is included on commodities that are recyclable and that contain hazardous material. The refund portion encourages separation and return to participating depot centres. The other portion funds logistical and processing costs to ship materials to recyclers and safe destruction facilities overseas and on island tipping costs.

The Ministry will also support the efforts of businesses and organisations who want to work in this space both through contracts under the ARDF Scheme as well as working partnerships.

Prevention strategies are to prohibit the import of difficult to manage products and packaging, those that pose harm to human life and the environment and those that have friendlier alternatives. This is through a regulation under the Solid and Hazardous Waste legislation.

**The core delivery during the next 10 years involves continuing efforts to:**

- Strengthen awareness approaches to waste prevention, reduction, reuse and recycling
- Build on the integration of waste management into the school curriculum
- Build partnerships in waste management with the private sector and other organisations
- Lead the development and implementation of the National Waste Strategy.

**The Ministry's priorities for the next four years include:**

- Working with other stakeholders to implement awareness programs
- Implementing the Advance Recovery Disposal Fee (ARDF) Scheme to continue exporting recyclables offshore through contracts with the private sector
- Expanding our integration with the education sector
- Ensuring that waste is collected as programmed
- Providing support to the Pa Enea where applicable
- Improving our data collection on waste and recyclables received at the waste management facility.

**How we will measure our progress?**

- We will use the following indicators to measure progress:
  - Volume of different waste streams received at the waste management facility
  - Volume of recyclables exported
  - Financial accounts of the ARDF Scheme
  - Litter clean up statistics

## **Outcome 2: Our waste management facility is well run**

Our waste management facility is where we sort and dispose our waste. It comprises of a landfill, recycling station and septage ponds for sewage treatment. Currently, our landfill is predicted to have 10 years of operations if the current volumes of waste and the compacting process are maintained. This

means that we will have to look to other alternatives in dealing with our waste. The Ministry will achieve this outcome by ensuring that we maximize our use of the waste management facility, while putting in place an alternative option for our landfill.

We will apply circular economy principles in managing waste. This means we will work with relevant stakeholders to control what is imported through the ARDF scheme as it expands to cover more products and recover as much materials as possible for recycling and reuse. The residual waste is dealt with through technology, landfill or sending offshore for destruction.

**The core delivery during the next 10 years involves continuing efforts to:**

- Manage effectively our waste management facility as per the Management Plan to collate for our annual reporting obligations to the Office of the Public Service Commissioner
- Procure and implement an alternative solid waste storage
- Incorporate circular economy principles in our work.

**The Ministry's priorities for the next four years include:**

- Continuing to manage our landfill effectively
- Continuing to manage our septage ponds effectively
- Procuring and constructing our residual waste management plant
- Upgrading our recycling centre to improve efficiency.

**How we will measure our progress?**

- The difference before and after compaction of the landfill
- 6 monthly progress reports on the activities of the Waste Management team.

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## **GOAL 4: Organisational Foundations – Deliver optimal outcomes for the Cook Islands through our people, network, systems and services**

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### **Why this Organisational capability goal matters?**

Our Organisational foundations are our people, our networks, our systems, and our corporate services. Continual evaluation and investment is essential to positioning the Ministry to sustain delivery as government priorities, technology, and the world changes around us. Our ability to respond to evolving business needs and adapt to future challenges, relies on our ability to work as one inclusive and integrated Ministry. Our corporate support needs to be responsive to business needs.

The Ministry strives for clear strategic direction, well governed work programmes, and robust approaches to managing risk and evaluating impact. The aim is to give confidence to our stakeholders that we are delivering results and value for money for the Cook Islands.

We will continually monitor our environment and work to maintain and adapt our operating model, strategies, and frameworks as needed, to ensure our staff are supported to deliver effectively, efficiently and safely.

### **Outcome 1: The Ministry functions as a happy, healthy and high performing community**

Through this outcome, the Ministry aims to ensure our organisational culture and behaviours align with the Ministry's values – Impact, Professionalism, Innovation, Teamwork. We will endeavor to support our people through development opportunities and performance feedback; investing in building capability that creates great managers and authentic leaders; and working to ensure our people feel cared for, valued, and confident.

Our work will ensure the Ministry prioritises the health, safety and wellbeing of our people, and demonstrably values diverse and inclusive thinking, people and behaviours.

#### **The core delivery during the next 10 years involves continuing efforts to:**

- Provide and enhance human resources services and advice in support of the Ministry's delivery
- Undertake people and line management responsibilities
- Engage in learning and development

#### **The Ministry's priorities for the next four years include:**

- Ensuring that we improve tools for human resource support
- Exploring and engaging in opportunities for learning and development.

#### **How we will measure our progress?**

- We will report on progress towards our priorities and core work through our reporting obligations to the Office of the Public Service Commissioner.

## **Outcome 2: The Ministry ensures it delivers the best achievable outcomes for the Cook Islands from the resources invested in it**

Through this outcome, we work to ensure clear strategic direction, sound planning, and robust performance evaluation, to enable the Ministry to deliver demonstrable results. In doing so, we ensure investment of resources that provide positive outcomes for our people are prioritised to deliver on the Ministry's strategic intentions and agreed service levels and standards.

We aim to achieve our outcomes by striving for excellence in governance, financial management and leadership. We will work to lift the Ministry's performance through investments in organisational improvement and well managed change. Risks are identified, mitigated and managed in ways that are proportionate to impact and support innovation.

### **The core delivery during the next 10 years involves continuing efforts to:**

- Improve Ministry governance, assurance, compliance and risk management systems
- Undertake strategy development, research, data analysis, strategic resourcing, planning, performance monitoring and evaluation
- Provide Ministerial and Parliamentary Services

### **The Ministry's priorities for the next four years include:**

- Working towards getting our financial accounts in order and receiving an unqualified audit.
- Changing public perception of ICI from one of negative to positive connotations.

### **How we will measure our progress?**

We will report on progress towards our priorities and core work as per our obligations with the Office of the Public Service, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management and Parliament.

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## **Implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review**

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For each goal, the Ministry's Outputs/Divisions will articulate and implement activities relevant to the achievement of our priorities. These will be outlined in the Ministry's Annual Business Plan. Monitoring performance occurs through a variety of ways - via the Office of the Public Service 6 monthly reporting, the Ministry's weekly output progress reports to the Head of Ministry, the Head of Ministry's Ministerial weekly briefing and the Ministry's Senior Management updates and meetings.

The priorities in this Statement of Strategic Intentions will be reviewed periodically through the annual business planning process and as the need arises, for example, should new functions be added or existing functions be removed from the Ministry, or should the prerogative of Government change within the timeframe of this Statement.