

# 2023 Global Public HR Conference: Exploring a New Paradigm for Public HRD in Times of AI-triggered Innovation



**The Promise of AI – How does the Public Service get ‘Fit’ for the Digital Age?**

**Dr Barbara Allen**

# Outline

- Introduction
- What do citizens think about AI?
- What do HR professionals think about AI?
  - Results of a small survey
- Trust as a focal point for adaptation
- Transparency and protecting privacy must drive evolution in public sector

Tēnā koutou e hoa  
mā

Ko Mount Martin te  
maunga

Ko Ottawa River te  
awa

No toku whānau  
Airangi, Kōtarana

Ngā mihi nui ki a  
koutou







# Is AI really a threat to jobs?

- May 2023, 4000 jobs were to AI in the US
- Global consulting firm McKinsey has said 12 million American workers will need to switch jobs by 2030 as a consequence of generative AI

[Andrew Lensen, The Conversation October 5 2023](#)

# Is AI a problem for the public sector?

- Social media and rise of misinformation
- Human-like AI bots – contribute to threats

[Andrew Lensen, The Conversation October 5 2023](#)

# What do citizens think of AI? (1)

Some acceptance by citizens for AI in general services – General administration, social and education, general security and health, general infrastructure(not directed at specific individuals)

Reference: Gesk & Leyer (2022) 'Artificial intelligence in public services: When and why citizens accept its usage'



# What do citizens think of AI?(2)

Individuals consider an AI-led decision to be lower in 'red-tape', and trustworthiness than a decision by a human

Reference: Ingrams, Kaufmann & Jacobs(2021) 'In AI we trust? Citizen perceptions of AI in government decision-making'

# Human Resources Institute of New Zealand Survey 2023 (1)



- Small survey September 2023 ‘AI in HR – Threat or Opportunity’
- Current use – only 27% indicated AI currently used in HR processes
  - CV screening, learning & development, HR analytics; also candidate sourcing, Help Desk, Onboarding, workforce planning, drafting job adverts, reviewing HR policies
  - ‘starting point’

# Human Resources Institute of New Zealand Survey 2023 (2)

- Respondents indicated improved efficiency and streamlined administrative procedures were the key impacts of AI
- Over 40% believed privacy and data security were concerns

# Human Resources Institute of New Zealand Survey 2023 (3)

- 56% perceive a lack of human interaction in employment processes
- Over 30% not confident about accuracy and fairness of AI driven employment processes

# Trust

- Do citizens trust government in its use of Artificial Intelligence?
- How will HR professionals ensure citizens can trust use of AI?

# Trust

Challenges:

Abdication

Doing 'to' versus doing  
'with'

Visibility of ethics

Transparency

Training



# What does the *New Zealand Public Service Act* say about trust

PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL OFFICE  
TE TARI TOHUTOHU  
PĀREMATA

## New Zealand Legislation

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## Public Service Act 2020

If you need more information about this Act, please contact the administering agency: **Public Service Commission**

- Warning: Some amendments have not yet been incorporated

Search within this Act

- Add to web feed
- Order a commercial print
- Print/Download PDF [839KB]

# New Zealand Public Service Act: Values

*Public service values and minimum standards of integrity and conduct*

## 16 Public service values

(1) The **public service values** are to seek—

*Impartial*

(a) to treat all people fairly, without personal favour or bias:

*Accountable*

(b) to take responsibility and answer for its work, actions, and

*Trustworthy*

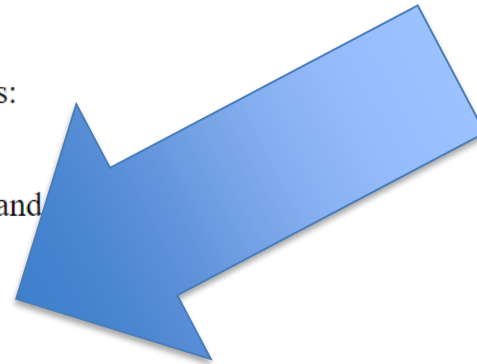
(c) to act with integrity and be open and transparent:

*Respectful*

(d) to treat all people with dignity and compassion and act with humility:

*Responsive*

(e) to understand and meet people's needs and aspirations.





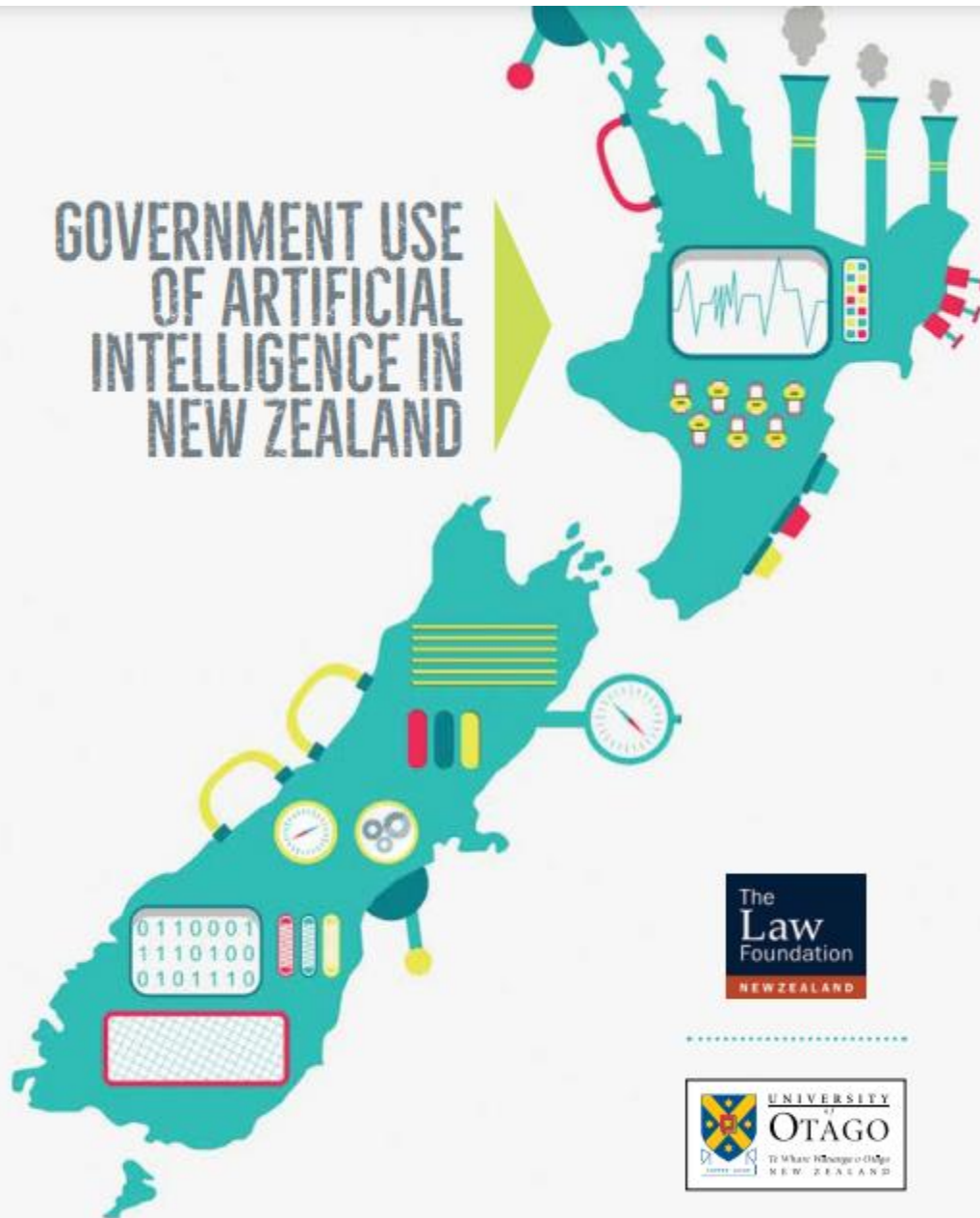
# Public Management Frameworks

	'Traditional' Public Administration' or bureaucracy	'New' Public Management'	Networked Governance	NEW PARADIGM
Environment	<b>Stable</b>	<b>Competitive</b>	<b>Evolving</b>	<i>Chaotic</i>
Human Context	<b>Homogenous</b>	<b>Atomised</b>	<b>Diverse, connected</b>	<i>Digitized</i>



We need to focus on trust

# GOVERNMENT USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN NEW ZEALAND



The  
**Law**  
Foundation  
NEW ZEALAND

UNIVERSITY  
of  
**OTAGO**  
Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtago  
NEW ZEALAND



UNCLASSIFIED

# Initial advice on Generative Artificial Intelligence in the public service

*Joint guidance from data, digital, procurement, privacy and cyber security system leaders on responsible and trustworthy use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) across the New Zealand Public Service.*

*July 2023.*

# Algorithm Assessment Report

This report summarises the self assessments of fourteen government agencies and their use of algorithms, focusing on areas that most directly impact decisions related to people.

# New Zealand Privacy Commissioner and Government Chief Data Steward

- Six principles for safe and effective use of data and analytics by government agencies
  - Deliver clear public benefit
  - Maintain transparency
  - Understand the limitations
  - Retain human oversight
  - Ensure data is fit for purpose
  - Focus on people

# Transparency

- Inspectability of algorithms
  - New Zealand tending to build government AI tools in-house – know how the tools will work
    - Example: Social Investment
- Intelligibility – beyond knowing how an AI system works – are decisions actually understood?
  - Add on an ‘explanation system’ – algorithm bolted on, simple model of how it works

# Public access to information

- Public should know what AI systems their government uses as well as how they perform
- Systems need to be regularly evaluated, summary results made available to public in systematic format

Zerilli & Gavaghan (2019) <https://theconversation.com/call-for-independent-watchdog-to-monitor-nz-government-use-of-artificial-intelligence-117589>

# Artificial intelligence and the Information Privacy Principles

**September 2023**





# Summary: Getting 'fit'

- Basic AI knowledge for all
  - Privacy, security, and ethics training for all
- Focus on 'trust'
  - Make sure there is a 'human in the loop'
  - We must always be able to demonstrate transparency and accountability
- Contribute to discussions and policy on regulatory oversight

# Thank you

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