
**OFFICE OF
THE CHILDREN'S
COMMISSIONER**
annual
report **2006**



MANAAKITIA A TATOU TAMARIKI
**CHILDREN'S
COMMISSIONER**

Report of

Children's Commissioner
Te Kaikomihana mo nga Tamariki
For the year ended 30 June 2006

Presented to the House of Representatives pursuant to
Section 28 of the Children's Commissioner Act 2003
and Sections 44 and 41i of the Public Finance Act 1989.

MINISTER FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 28 of the Children's Commissioner Act 2003 and Sections 44 and 41i of the Public Finance Act 1989, I submit my Annual Report, incorporating the Financial Statements.

The report covers the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006.

I am satisfied that the Financial Statements fairly reflect the financial position and operations of the Office of the Children's Commissioner for the reporting period.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Kiro', with a stylized, flowing script.

Dr Cindy Kiro

Children's Commissioner

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VISION

The rights of every child and young person in New Zealand are recognised and each enjoys good health, education, safety and economic wellbeing.

OUTCOMES

Every child is safe and nurtured.

Every child has adequate resources and opportunities to develop.

Society's attitudes and behaviour change to become more child-focused.

LEGAL MANDATE

By statute, my Office is required to:

- Inquire into and report on any matter relating to the welfare of children by investigating any decision or recommendation made, or any act done or omitted in respect of any child.
- Monitor Child Youth and Family Services and other persons, bodies and organisations exercising a function or power conferred by the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989.
- Advise the responsible Minister on any matters relating to the administration of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989.
- Promote public awareness of children's rights and issues relating to the welfare of children and young people.
- Advocate for and on behalf of children and young people.
- Seek children and young people's views on issues and enable their voices to be heard.
- Promote the development of policies and services designed to protect the interests, rights and welfare of children and young people.
- Raise awareness and understanding of the Convention and advance and monitor its application by departments of State and other instruments of the Crown.
- Promote the establishment of accessible and effective complaints mechanisms, in key agencies, for children and monitoring the nature and level of complaints.
- Undertake research into matters relating to the interests, rights and welfare of children and young people.

The Commissioner's Report

INTRODUCTION

This has been a year of substantial change for the Office. There have been a number of staff changes, with the addition of four staff to the Auckland office, and creation of new roles such as Business Analyst, General Manager, Communications Manager and Principal Advisors in Wellington and Auckland.

We have worked hard, but also produced results. The co-hosting of a wonderfully successful conference with the Ministry of Social Development and Child, Youth and Family Services in February 2006 around Child Abuse and Neglect, the launch of the successful booklet "Children Are Unbeatable" with UNICEF New Zealand, the work done to monitor Child, Youth and Family Services and the work with the Taskforce For Action on Family Violence, to name a few.

I have established and maintained quality relationships with parliamentarians, and with government and non-government organisations (NGOs), professional and community based organisations, focused around doing better for children and young people.

The emphasis of the Office is in trying to identify the crucial issues affecting children and young people, and working with others to find solutions. This includes ensuring that children and young people are themselves involved as much as possible so as to inform quality decisions. We are concerned with both systemic and individual level advocacy to effect positive change for children and young people.

The Office and I have worked hard to engage the public in well-informed debates on difficult, but necessary topics such as child abuse and youth justice through the media, publications and public presentations.

We have tightened our internal systems while working hard on these quality relationships.

The Office also completed a complete office fit out on time and within budget, to a high standard.

My Office and I have developed a long term vision for children and young people focused around proactive, comprehensive assessments and co-ordinated responses to their needs called Te Ara Tukutuku. Much of the evidence and thinking around the Early Years and Early Intervention is consistent with this framework.

I look forward to another productive year in 2006/2007, and take the chance to thank my staff who have worked incredibly hard in the past year.



Cindy Kiro

Children's Commissioner

OUTPUT DELIVERY

My Office is funded through Vote Social Development and Vote Education. These monies have been allocated within my Office into three outputs - advice, monitoring and investigation, and public awareness and advocacy.

Output: Advice

Submissions

During this year, the Office has made a number of submissions in relation to the interests, rights and welfare of children and young people. Submissions included:

- Auckland City Council's Draft Child and Family Policy: What Auckland City is Doing for Children and Their Families, July 2005.
- Transport and Industrial Relations Committee on the Employment Relations (Flexible Working Hours) Amendment Bill, July 2005.
- Law and Order Committee on the Sale of Liquor (Youth Alcohol Harm Reduction) Amendment Bill, August 2005.
- The Crimes (Abolition of Force as a Justification for Child Discipline) Amendment Bill, February 2006.
- Minimum Wage (Abolition of Age Discrimination) Amendment Bill, May 2006.
- Health Committee Inquiry into Obesity and Type Two Diabetes in New Zealand, May 2006.
- Immigration Act Review, June 2006.

In addition to these submissions during the latter part of the year, a significant effort and investment has been made on developing a submission for the Young Offenders (Serious Crimes) Bill. This submission will be presented in the coming financial year.

Policy Advice

I have provided advice to Child Youth and Family Services during their merger with the Ministry of Social Development. This has included advice on the report on child deaths from maltreatment, the new triage model, the Youth Justice Practice Framework, the Care and Protection Practice Framework, and the Cabinet Committee on Government Expenditure and Administration (EXG) review.

I have been particularly interested and involved in specific youth justice policy issues such as young people in police cells and the Youth Justice Capability Review which involved a number of meetings with Child Youth and Family Services at which the Office provided advice and feedback on the review that was subsequently incorporated into the final document.

Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families

During the year, members of my staff and myself have been involved in the work of the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families. I am confident that the extensive work of my Office in this taskforce has been of value and will result in a comprehensive revitalisation of this critical area. The final paper was presented to Ministers in July 2006.

Young People's Reference Group

The Young People's Reference Group (YPRG) was set up in 2002 as a means of strategically focusing on children and young people by engaging them in the work of the Office.

The current group is made up of nine members; Keegan Bartlett, Kawiti Waetford, Rosemary Williams, Briar Thomp-

son, Jed Horner, Theo Aiken, Michael Bendall, Paula Wood, Nikita Heremaia.

The group met five times during the year and have been actively involved in the following activities:

- Presenting at conferences (both national and international)
- Organising forums
- Running workshops
- Providing advice to government agencies
- Communicating with their peer groups
- Providing input on submissions
- Acting as ambassadors for overseas speakers

There has been a significant shift in the way the YPRG have approached their work this year with more emphasis placed on building up their skills in negotiating the processes of legislation, increasing knowledge on youth networks, applying participation and decision making skills to their work and generally becoming more informed about the work of the Office and issues that impact on young people.

The first meeting coincided with a keynote presentation, entitled *Leaders, Reformers, Agents of Change: Young People and the Art of Citizenship*, which the group delivered at the 6th Child and Family Policy Conference – Children and Young People as Citizens, in Dunedin from 7-9 July. The group also participated in a youth forum specifically designed to obtain the views and concerns of young people living in the Canterbury region and in workshops providing advice and information to central and local government policy analysts, researchers and practitioners seeking to implement or support children's participation in decisions affecting all aspects of their lives.

YPRG MEMBER COMMENT

"During my time so far as a member of the YPRG, I know I have always been listened to. My views and ideas have always been accepted and taken on board by every staff member working with us."

YPRG MEMBER COMMENT

"The YPRG are respected by the Commissioner and her staff for our valuable position within the Office. The Commissioner promotes direct communication and always gives members the chance to have direct conversations. The group is consistently, both during meetings and outside of the occasion of meetings, given the opportunity to speak critically, honestly and openly on issues that are referred to us, and we are offered the support and resources in order to best do this."

In October, the group met for a two-day weekend meeting that coincided with Children's Day, where they supported the Commissioner in her official and informal duties. The meeting provided members with an opportunity to provide regional feedback in line with the specific advisory role of the group and to seek comment, from the members, on the new Boarding Hostel Regulations. It also provided an opportunity to allow the Office to gain young people's perspectives on the repeal of Section 59.

In January, the group met to hold a planning meeting to fully prepare for the Tenth Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect (ACCAN) that was held in February. At ACCAN the group were heavily involved in the preparation and delivery of the pre-conference Youth Forum and numerous conference activities.

The group assembled at the Youth Forum to hold workshops enabling 40 youth delegates to be immersed in conference skills, communication skills, media training

and life-skills in order to fully prepare them for the main conference. During the conference itself, members of the YPRG had ambassadorial roles with guests and keynote speakers from overseas. Some individual members of the group were also involved in critical roles during this conference including, speaking at the Powhiri, providing feedback from workshops to the full conference and introducing guests.

The final meeting for the year was held in May with the group being asked to provide advice to a number of government agencies, including Family and Community Services on their 'Child Witnesses of Family Violence Project' and the Ministry of Health HEHA (Healthy Eating, Healthy Action) team on their opinions and views on health options practiced by young people.

In addition to the meetings, members of the group also represent the Office on an individual basis. One of the YPRG members participated and represented the interests of the YPRG at the Diversity Forum organised by the Race Relations Office in August.

The group are also kept up to date with the various submissions presented by the Office and in turn they respond either individually or collectively.

Six of the nine young people have reached the age of 18 and are leaving the reference group. Current members of the group are providing input into the recruitment process for the creation of the next reference group at the end of 2006.

YPRG MEMBER COMMENT

"The Office undertakes significant work to ensure that there are opportunities for the views of the YPRG to be taken into consideration, both in the operations of the Office, and in its work program. Moreover, the Office has robust processes in place to ensure that this continues to be the case and staff members, as well as the Commissioner, act with the highest degree of integrity to ensure that such processes function as they are intended to."

YPRG MEMBER COMMENT

"Kua rua tau au e mahi tahi ana ki nga hunga nei o te OCC, na, mai te timatanga tae noa mai ki naianei katoa katoa o waku whakaaro, katoa katoa o waku korero kua rangona, a, kua kawea hoki ki roto i nga tumomo ahuatanga mahi o te tari, ano hoki, i roto i nga ripoata, whakaaturanga rangahau, whakaaturanga matua, tutohutanga hirahira."

Output: Monitoring and Investigation

Hospital Report

In February, the Office released a report into an investigation that was undertaken following incidents where two young children were hospitalised with suspected non-accidental injuries, and were further assaulted while in hospital. The report contained a number of recommendations for the key agencies involved - Child Youth and Family Services and District Health Boards. These recommendations have since either been adopted or are in the process of being adopted.

Aplin Report

The final meeting of agencies involved in monitoring the implementation of the recommendations contained in the investigation into the deaths of the Aplin girls was held in October. The meeting agreed that the recommendations contained in the report are now part of the work programme of the agencies involved and in some instances part of

the work of the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families. Although the meetings proved useful as a venue for the sharing of information, the initial objectives of the meetings have been successfully achieved and the agencies do not intend to meet again on this issue.

Transience Investigation

Following on from regular meetings with the New Zealand Principals' Federation and concerns voiced by key education stakeholders, the Terms of Reference for an investigation into the effects of transience on school children is being developed. Transience, as a barrier to learning, and as a 'problem' often raised by principals, has been the focus of a number of research projects carried out in recent years. A gap in previous research has been identified, in that the views of children have not been heard. The investigation that the Office will undertake will therefore focus on the experiences of transience from the student's perspective, but will correlate this with what teachers and their parents are saying about the impact on children from moving them from school to school.

Immigration Investigation

The Terms of Reference for an investigation into the rights and welfare of children and young people who are impacted by current immigration practices and the Government's reservation to the United Nations Convention On The Rights Of the Child, are being developed with the final report due to be completed during the next financial year.

Inquiry Line

The total number of calls received on the Office's inquiry line for the year was 833. Forty-one percent of calls were in relation to Child Youth and Family Services with the remaining fifty nine percent of calls being non Child Youth and Family Service calls. Non Child Youth and Family Service calls can be further broken down as follows: 34% were in relation to education, 6% were in relation to health, 34% were in relation to legal/rights matters and 26% were related to the welfare of children.

The Office is unable to respond to calls if the issue is before the court, or is in relation to a court decision. In these instances callers are referred to their local Family Court or to their lawyer, Community Law Centre, or lawyer for the children.

Calls concerning the welfare of children are wide and varied and range from Family Court matters through to benefits, finance and media.

Education calls deal with the process used in suspensions, stand-downs and expulsions and bullying and the devastating effect this can have on children.

From time to time, the Office receives child abuse notifications. Unfortunately many of these calls are anonymous and do not provide a full picture of the situation. In all cases, these calls are referred to the Child Youth and Family Services Call Centre for allocation and investigation.

Bullying Inquiry

"My daughter was bullied at school at the end of last week and will not go back. The Principal suggested I wait until Monday to see if my daughter is okay to return, but she is not."

Bullying has a huge impact on children and most schools treat it seriously. The father was advised to contact the Principal and talk the matter over with her. Most Principals will set up support services for children who have been bullied and will monitor the situation carefully. They will also address the issue with the person doing the bullying.

SUPPORT SERVICES INQUIRY

A mother is raising three children on her own, the eldest of whom is severely disabled. The two younger children had been removed from home as the older child was becoming violent. "I have many agencies involved, but no one will take responsibility for funding the support services I need. I cannot care for my child anymore and want him removed from the home."

The Office became involved in this matter, and talked to all agencies. They began to talk to each other, and finally one agency acknowledged that it was their responsibility to meet the funding required and did so. The mother is now very pleased and her disabled child will remain at home with the aid of funded support services. In addition, her other children will return home.

SCHOOL POLICIES INQUIRY

"What can I do? My son re enrolled at a school he had previously attended, however they said he could only come back when he had cut his hair. My son looks neat and tidy and has his hair tied up all the time."

This mother was advised that schools have specific policies and she would need to look at any policy the school had about hair length. However, policies cannot override any existing New Zealand Law. The Bill of Rights Act 1990 protects freedom of expression. This is generally taken to include not only speech but also what a person wears. A court of law would take this into account, when considering this issue. It was suggested that the mother and son approach the school, discuss the issue and arrive at a solution that met everyone's needs.

CHILDREN IN THE MEDIA INQUIRY

"I am most concerned," said the caller "This young child was made 'stick of the week' on a radio station recently. 'Stick of the week' means that the child is seen as stupid and naughty. The child is only three and a half years old. What can I do?"

The Office gets many complaints about the use of children in the media. It is important that people who have concerns about such matters write directly to the Broadcasting Standards Authority and to the media outlet concerned - in this case, local radio.

In May 2006, an advisor was employed on a 6-month contract to staff and review the inquiry line with the aim of determining the long-term strategic direction of this service. The review of the operation of the inquiry line will be completed by November 2006.

The inquiry line is a valuable part of the work of the Office. It is a place where the public can seek advice and assistance. Part of the inquiry line review has involved a survey of callers. Results show that the satisfaction rate of callers was very high.

Youth Justice

Youth Justice continues to be an important focus area for the Office. Particular activities during the year have been the involvement of my Office with the work of Child Youth and Family Services on their Youth Justice Capability Review, the development of their Youth Justice Practice Framework, visits to Youth Justice residences and participation in inter-departmental meetings to discuss strategies to reduce the use of police cells to detain young people. The work of this inter-departmental meeting to discuss the use of police cells will be subsumed into the work programme of the Youth Justice Long Remands Working Party.

Child Youth and Family Services

Monitoring Child Youth and Family Services is one of the core functions of the Office. To facilitate the monitoring process, a Memorandum of Understanding exists between the Office, the Chief Executive of Ministry of Social Development and the Deputy Chief Executive of Child Youth and Family Services.

One aspect of the monitoring function is achieved when I, or members of my staff, visit Child Youth and Family Service offices and residences. During the year, the Office has visited the:

- Severe Conduct Disorder Unit, Lower Hutt
- Call Centre, Grey Lynn
- Tauranga office
- Hauraki office
- Te Poutama Arahi Residence, Christchurch
- Puketai Care and Protection Residence, Dunedin
- Te Oranga Care and Protection South Residence, Christchurch
- Te Puna Wai O Tuhinapo Youth Justice South Residence, Christchurch

On a number of occasions, Office staff have been joined on these visits by Judge Becroft, Principal Youth Court Judge and/or Judge Boshier, Principal Family Court Judge. Carrying out these visits jointly has provided an opportunity for both the Judges and myself to meet with young people directly, and to provide an avenue for them to air any grievances and to celebrate their successes. My visits have enabled me to raise concerns and to seek clarification on issues. This process has been invaluable in terms of monitoring and evaluating the work of Child Youth and Family Services.

In addition to office and residence visits during the year, the Office has met with Child Youth and Family Services staff to:

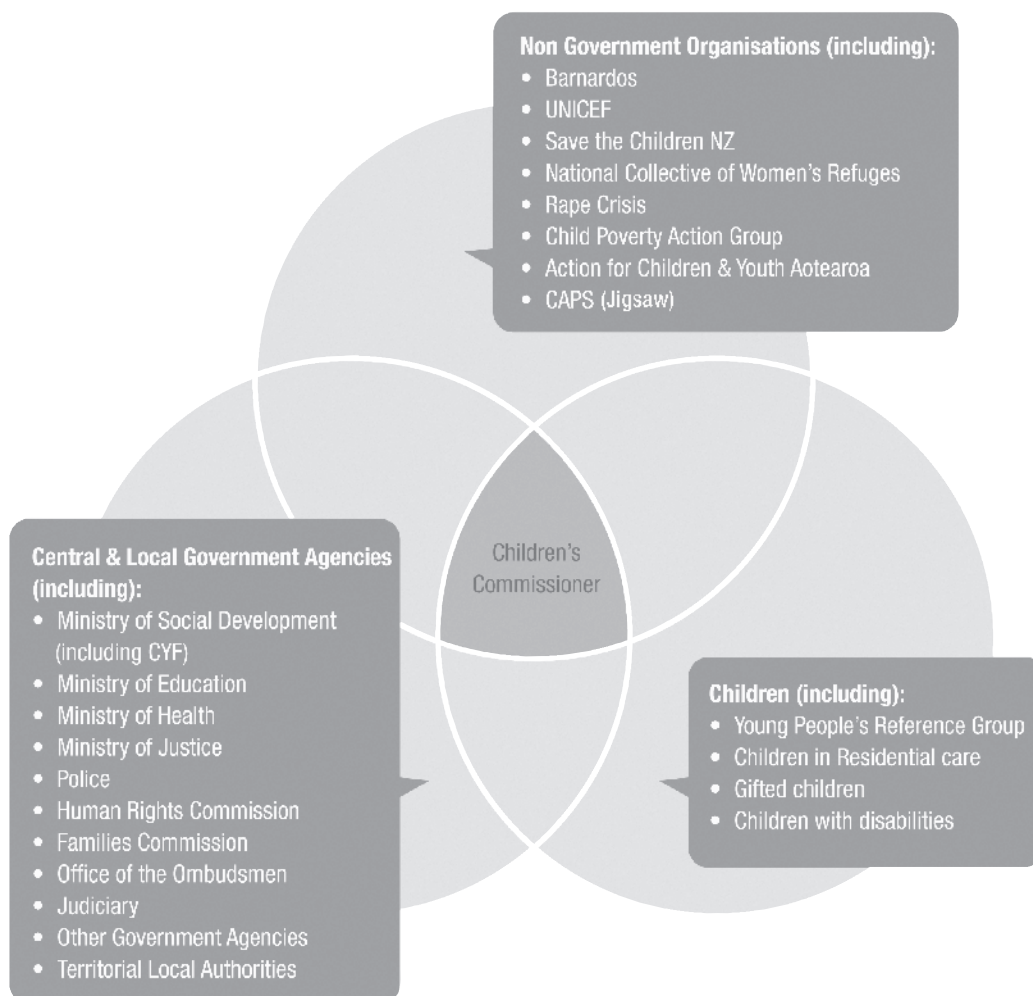
- Contribute to the workload management project by attending the steering group of this important piece of work that stemmed from the Baseline review of the Service.
- Progress the recommendations of the review of the Standard Operating Procedures for Grievance Panels.
- Attend the steering group of the Reparation Pilot Project. This project oversaw the role-out of proposed changes to the reparation sentencing options of the Children Young People and Their Families Act.
- Participate in workshops on the proposed Differential Response Model. The Office was particularly interested in the way in which the Differential Response Model is to be implemented within Child Youth and Family Services, and will continue to monitor the project as it is implemented.
- Discuss the Child Youth and Family Service complaints mechanism.
- Participate in the interview process for new Grievance Panel members for both the Epuni Residence and the Severe Conduct Disorder Unit located in Lower Hutt.
- Monitor complaints, review cases of deaths of children known to Child Youth and Family Services, notifications of removal orders, Care and Protection Resource Panel reports and Grievance Panel reports.

- Attend meetings with the Child Witnesses to Family Violence project team on the Issues Paper and participation on the panel reviewing the Requests For Proposals (RFP). Involvement by this Office will be on going during the coming financial year and will including participation in the Project Reference Group.
- Provide feedback on the Family Violence death reviews proposal.
- Provide feedback on the draft Sentencing Options Bill.
- Contribute to the discussion on the issues being raised by the EXG reviews of Child Youth and Family Services.
- Receive a presentation from the Chief Social Worker on the outcome of the work that has been done on developing a Youth Justice Framework.
- Support the rollout of both the Youth Justice and the Care and Protection frameworks.

Collaboration with Key Stakeholders

The Office cannot achieve its vision on its own, and needs to work with stakeholders including government departments, non government organisations, community groups, children and young people in order to promote children's interest, rights and welfare while maintaining independence from Government. Therefore the activities of the Office must focus on achieving change through collaborative relationships and by the processes of influence on others.

During this year I have continued to develop strong working relationships with a wide range of organisations both within and the government and NGO sectors.



During the year, the Office has met regularly with:

- The Minister for Social Development and Employment
- Ministers and Members of Parliament
- Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive for Child, Youth and Family Services
- Chief Executive for Ministry of Social Development
- Families Commission
- Human Rights Commission
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education (including Student Support, Group Special Education)
- Ministry of Women's Affairs
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Youth Development

During the year, my Office has also met and/or worked with:

- Inter-Commission Liaison group; comprising representatives from the Human Rights, Health & Disability, Families and Mental Health Commission
- Advisory Committee on Assisted Reproductive Technology
- Ministry of Youth Development Auckland Hub
- Refugee Health Action Plan; a Ministry of Social Development and Public Health initiative
- 'Keeping Kids Safer Everyday' colloquium
- Counties Manakau Tender Evaluation for Family Safety Team
- NetSafe - to hear presentations and participate in discussions regarding issues arising from access to and use of technology and electronic equipment by children, young people and their families.
- Auckland District Health Board - to discuss the participation of children in the development of primary and secondary health services for that cohort.
- TYLA - with respect to the Mad4Youth Forum about issues affecting young people in Auckland.
- Auckland Disability Support Providers Network - by participating in a panel discussion on children's rights issues for children with disabilities.
- Ministry of Education and Counties Manukau District Health Board AIMHI project team
- Auckland City Strengthening Families Team
- Otago Youth Wellness
- Scotland's Commissioner for Children
- Save the Children Fund – Swaziland

The Office has also met with representatives of the following national organisations:

- Principals' Association
- National Council of Women of New Zealand
- ECPAT NZ
- Plunket NZ
- Action for Children and Youth Aotearoa
- Child Poverty Action Group
- Methodist Mission

- Social Services Providers' Association
- NZ School Trustees Association
- Youth Workers Network
- Family Works
- Children's Issues Centre

Output: Public Awareness and Advocacy

Te Ara Tukutuku Whanaungatanga o nga Tamariki; Weaving Pathways to Wellbeing Framework

I am encouraging New Zealand to learn from and adapt the proposed Scottish plan, *Getting it Right for Every Child*. I consider that this idea has great potential benefit for all of our children and young people by making it possible to deliver more effective and co-ordinated services.

During the year, my Office has developed an evidence-based proposal of how the integrated framework "Te Ara Tukutuku Whanaungatanga o nga Tamariki; Weaving Pathways to Wellbeing Framework", for all children from birth to 17 years of age, could look in practice within New Zealand. The framework forms the technical basis of a 10-year vision for children and young people for New Zealand that would see us significantly improve the amount and quality of our investment into children and young people here.

Key elements are:

- A 10-year vision for the wellbeing of children in New Zealand
- Universal - capitalise on the good start some children will get and help to put more intensive systems and supports in place for those children and their families who require this
- Assessment for every child at four transition points:
 - pregnancy/birth
 - school entry
 - transition from primary school
 - transition from secondary school
- Whole child approach
- Physical, emotional, cognitive, social
 - Child-centred and family focused
- Partnership with children and their families
- Coordinated responses
- Shared information
- Early intervention
- Develop and build on strengths
- Workforce development

The completed framework has been presented to Ministers, most political parties, Chief Executives of large government agencies, and Chief Executives of the NGO sector.

Building a Profile in Auckland

Historically, the Office's work and its key relationships have been with central government agencies in Wellington. This meant that the decision to open a regional office in Auckland also meant it would have to forge new relationships at both a central and local government level, as well as with the wider Auckland community. The Auckland regional office has therefore dedicated a significant proportion of its resources to building awareness and understanding with key stakeholder groups.

To this end, staff in the Auckland Office:

- Have participated in public stakeholder and consultation meeting organised by Manukau, Waitakere and Auckland District Councils.
- Have held information stalls and booths at local expos.
- Have provided advice (and are members of Child Health Advisory Groups) to the Auckland and Waitemata District Health Boards.
- Delivered a wide range of speeches and presentations about the work and strategic priorities of the office, to groups, including domestic violence, Maori health and social service providers, early childhood and social worker students, community and service providers from the disability sector.
- Are members of multi-sectoral management and advisory groups for local and central government and non-government organisations.

All of these activities provide platforms for the Office to talk with and encourage agencies and decision-makers to think about children's rights and the perspectives of children – not just adults. More importantly, it builds our profile in the wider community, creating even more opportunities to interact with children and their families, and the agencies and people that work with and on behalf of children living in the Auckland region.

The Auckland office shares space with the Auckland Office of the Privacy Commissioner. This has many advantages including a better appreciation and insight into the work of the Privacy Commissioner, and issues of common interest to both our organisations.

Raising Our Profile in the South Island

The Principal Advisor - Wellington has responsibility for developing the profile of the Office in the South Island. In order to do this, the Principal Advisor, myself and other Office staff have met with a number of organisations throughout the South Island.

These visits afford an opportunity to expand our networks, and to learn more about issues for children, young people and their families in the South Island and ways in which my Office can contribute to addressing these. Some of the issues my staff will be following up include cross sectoral training for those involved in the advocacy network supporting young people facing disciplinary action in the school system, issues for migrant families whose immigration status remains unresolved, and the challenges presented by 'multi-problem' families.

Communications

During the year, a number of new resources have been developed and published.

In August, the Office published "The Discipline and Guidance of Children, Messages From Research". This resource is a review of research literature undertaken on behalf of the Office by the Children's Issues Centre.

In February, the Office released a report which detailed the findings of my investigation into incidents where two young children were hospitalised with suspected non-accidental injuries, and were further assaulted while in hospital.

COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON CHILDREN ARE UNBEATABLE

"I really liked the booklet, *Children are Unbeatable*. I thought it was excellent. I teach about factors effecting human development throughout the life span and see this could be used as a resource."

"These are great booklets for anyone working with families."

Three issues of the magazine "Children" were developed and distributed to a wide audience.

In March, a new booklet and CD, *Children are Unbeatable – 7 very good reasons not to hit children* by Rhonda Prichard was launched by the Governor-General. This is an educational tool to help people understand the risks associated with hitting children and promote positive parenting strategies. The resource was co-sponsored by the Office and UNICEF New Zealand. The launch event was held at Parliament and attended by over 250 people. Speakers included media personality, Linda Clark and Maori comedian and parent educator, Pio Terei. The event attracted a lot of positive media coverage. The initial print run of 5,000 booklets was distributed within

two weeks and subsequent reprints have been completed to meet high demand.

During this year a new resource called "More Than An Apple A Day: Children's Rights to Good Health" was developed. This was the result of a review of child and youth health strategic documents published from 2000 to 2005 that was commissioned by the Office and undertaken by Auckland University of Technology. The resource was released at the Public Health Association conference in Palmerston North in July 2006.

In June, the Office published its first Statement of Intent.

A number of our popular resources have been reprinted during the year, as the demand for them continues.

Children's Day

In the last weekend in October, Children's Day was celebrated. In the lead up to the event, my Office was involved in the Steering Group Committee which planned the 2005 event, and determined the way forward for future events. On Children's Day, I attended a number of events in Wellington and was joined by members of the Young People's Reference Group, staff and family members.

Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect

From 14-16 February, the Office, along with Ministry of Social Development and Child, Youth and Family Services hosted the Tenth Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect (ACCAN). This was the first time the conference was held in New Zealand. It was attended by over 900 participants.

A huge amount of effort and resource from my Office, including the Young People's Reference Group, was committed before and during the conference.

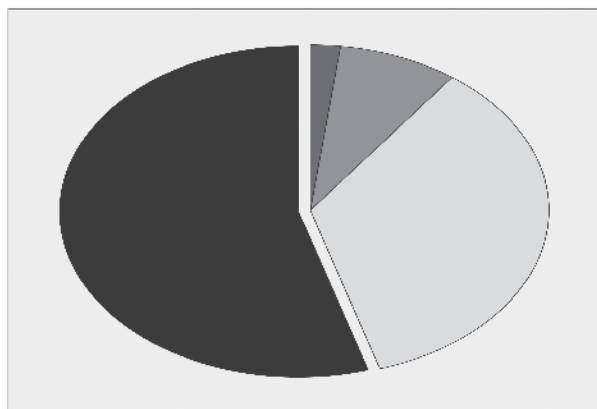
Sixty-eight young people and adult supporters attended the conference. Youth participants presented five keynote and 11 concurrent sessions. Youth delegates enjoyed networking, gaining an insight into issues associated with abuse and neglect and supporting other young presenters.

Feedback from participants, the professional community based organisations, academic communities and public has

COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANT AT ACCAN

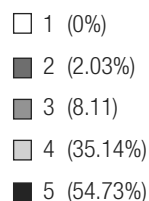
"This was one of the best conferences I've been to. I especially enjoyed the presentation by the young people in care. It really made me think about what it is like for them."

been very positive with a lot of comments supporting the involvement of children and young people in the conference as active participants rather than just observers. The conference was a financial success and my Office was able to benefit from the distribution of surplus between the host agencies.



ACCAN conference - participant satisfaction

Scale: **5** very satisfied - **1** unsatisfied



Key Presentations

I have continued during the year to proactively seek opportunities to discuss the work of the Office and to raise awareness of issues that concern children and young people.

Following the election, the Office presented briefings to a number of incoming Ministers. Following these briefings, I also met with key individuals from all political parties to inform them of the work of the Office.

A significant number of public presentations have been made during the year. These include presentations to:

- Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences
- Disabled Children's Rights Forum
- Safekids Campaign Key Agency meeting
- Newborn Metabolic Screening Advisory Committee
- Hostels Advisory Standards Group
- ECPAT NZ AGA
- NAOSCAR conference
- National Screening Symposium
- Annual Conference of The National Network of Stopping Violence Services
- Frances Clarke Memorial Awards
- Family & Community Services Conference
- Office of Early Childhood Education Adelaide, South Australia
- Youth Health Day
- Children's Issues Conference
- Otahuhu College Students with Attitude Advocacy Group
- Whitereia Polytechnic social work students
- Deputy & Assistant Principal training course on the general child advocacy issues
- PHA Post Budget forum
- Celebrating Families seminar "Strong Families Strong Children: UNCROC Focus on Families for Healthy Children"
- HESDJ (Health, Education, Social Development and Justice Chief Executive) forum

In March, I shared space with the Families Commission at the Auckland Pasifika Festival 2006. Pasifika is an annual Auckland event that showcases the art, food and cultural practices of the peoples of the South Pacific region. This year, almost 100,000 people attended this event.

Key Visits/Visitors

In February, Jaap Doek, Chairperson of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, visited Wellington to attend the ACCAN conference as a keynote speaker. He provided a half-day discussion/training session for the Office on the role of the Committee and its key rulings in relation to New Zealand. This was a fantastic opportunity for all who attended.

On 20 – 21 February, I chaired a meeting of Asia Pacific Association of Children's Commissioners (APACC). This was a valuable opportunity to meet with other Children's Commissioners and Child Guardians from around the region to share information about current and planned activities and resources.

Overseas Travel

In September, I delivered a keynote speech to a Pacific consultation on Preventing Violence Against Children in Suva, Fiji. Fifteen Pacific nations participated as part of the United Nations Study on Violence Against Children. Recommendations from this forum have been reported back to the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Children, and have also been sent to the Pacific Forum for inclusion in the Pacific Plan, which was presented to the leaders of Pacific nations (including Australia and New Zealand) at the Pacific Forum meeting in Papua New Guinea.

In June, I travelled, to South Australia to meet with their Child Guardian and to find out more about their early childhood and child protection services. South Australia have an international reputation for some of their integrated services. While there, I visited a number of Early Childhood Development centres, the Strong Families, Safe Babies, High Risk Infants Programme and the Family Home Visiting Programme, along with meeting many officials and other key people working with children. I was also able to meet the Minister for Families and Communities, Hon. Jay Weatherill.

NGO Forums

The Children's Commissioner plays a brokering role between government and non-government organisations (NGOs) by facilitating positive and proactive communication between the two sectors. I am dedicated to engaging with the NGO sector on a regular basis in the South Island, Wellington and Auckland regions to ensure that vital information is being transferred. Having strong relationships with the NGO sector allows me to keep abreast of issues that are occurring in communities all over New Zealand. It provides opportunities to hear about key issues effecting children and young people, how effectively policy from government is being implemented, where gaps are occurring for children and young people, and if issues are specific to communities/regions or are occurring systemically. The developing and strengthening of collaborative relationships assists in achieving positive outcomes for all children and young people in New Zealand.

Over the past year, the Office has hosted eight forums to discuss highly relevant issues pertaining to children and young people. These include identifying key issues in the child and youth sector, and debate around the repeal of Section 59 of the Crimes Act 1961, and the Young Offenders Serious Crimes Bill. These forums have been well attended from diverse members of the child and youth NGO sector. They provide overarching transfer of information, networking and connection to communities.

In November, a forum was held in Auckland, in conjunction with UNICEF NZ and the Institute of Public Policy (AUT). The forum's theme was the Crimes (Abolition of Force as a Justification for Child Discipline) Amendment Bill, and was

aimed at engendering support and encouragement for public submissions on the bill. Approximately 80 individuals and representatives from organisations who support repeal of Section 59 of the Crimes Act 1961 attended the forum.

In December, a further forum was held in Auckland, which was attended by 40 representatives of local government, care and protection agencies, child and youth development programmes, and advocacy organisations. The main purpose was to introduce the Auckland office staff to key stakeholder groups in the region.

The December Wellington forum focussed on facilitating networking among NGOs in the Wellington region who work with children and young people aged 0-18 years, to identify projects that NGOs are currently involved in where there may be areas of common interest and to plan the best process for the Office to engage with NGOs in 2006.

In March, the Wellington forum focused on the Crimes (Abolition of Force as a Justification for Child Discipline) Amendment Bill. The forum provided opportunities and identified strategies to address the potential obstacles to full repeal of Section 59 of the Crimes Act 1961.

An Auckland NGO forum in March was attended by 60 people representing a diverse range of NGOs. The forum continued discussion on the Crimes (Abolition of Force as a Justification for Child Discipline) Amendment Bill (repeal of Section 59 of the Crimes Act 1961) and alternatives to physical discipline. It provided opportunities for representatives from a range of Auckland-based NGOs to talk about Section 59 generally, hear the Office's perspective, share their own perspectives with the Office and obtain a progress report on the Select Committee process considering submissions.

In April, the first NGO forum for the South Island was held in Christchurch. The forum focussed on facilitating networking among NGOs in the Christchurch region and the wider South Island who work with children and young people, in order to identify projects that the NGOs are currently involved in where there may be areas of common interest. It was also an opportunity for the Office to start to develop an understanding around the best way to engage with NGOs in the South Island.

In June, forums were held in Wellington and Auckland. The main theme of these forums was youth justice, with particular discussion around the Young Offenders (Serious Crimes) Bill.

In addition to forums that were hosted by the Office, in February, I and a number of my staff, attended the Section 59 Forum co-hosted by my Office and the Families Commission where I presented a speech titled "Effective discipline - what Works for Children and Families".

Advancing Children's Advocacy

This year has seen a review in the way that we undertake the Advancing Children's Advocacy programme. The review has had a specific focus on:

- The effectiveness of service provision relating to the Ministry of Education funding
- Alignment with key stakeholders
- Alignment with Strategic Plan
- Recommendations for future training options

In Hamilton, 48 community members took part in the two-day programme based at the Waikato Institute of Technology. Participants came from a wide range of community and youth agencies, including several public health nurses. This is the first time the Office has carried out training in this area.

The training programme continued with established networks in the Christchurch region with a meeting being held

between a number of key government agencies and NGOs linked to schools. One of the outcomes of the meeting included a suggestion to align the advocacy network with NGO and Family Violence networks as well as attaching education advocates to the Strengthening Families programme. Further work will be done with the agencies to advance these ideas.

Research

This year, there have been two key research projects, funded by the Office. Firstly, an audit of New Zealand laws, policies and practices to assess the Government's legislative compliance with the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) and secondly research into and development of a report on restorative justice in schools titled "Respectful Schools: Restorative Practices in Education".

Feedback from the Commissioner's advisory group on the UNCROC project has been incorporated in the first phase of the work that reviewed New Zealand's legislative compliance with UNCROC. The second phase, policy compliance, is progressing as planned. The entire report will be sent to the Ministry of Youth Development for checking with government agencies and consultation in late 2006.

Work on "Respectful Schools: Restorative Practices in Education" has continued throughout the year. The Institute of Policy Studies, at the School of Government, Victoria University, carried out the research. The focus of the research is on the way in which schools can adopt a range of restorative strategies and processes that can be implemented through school policy. A number of case studies are highlighted in this work and it is anticipated the summary report, to be published by the Office, will become a functional document that Principals and Boards of Trustees can utilise as they implement restorative models. A book is also being produced, by Victoria University, and will contain the full version of the research. I am expecting the report and book to be released in the next financial year.

In addition, as part of our work to support the repeal of Section 59 of the Crimes Act 1961, the Office commissioned a survey (run by UMR Research) to determine the views of the public on physical disciplining of children and young people and has held a number of forum for the non government organisation (NGO) sector where repeal of Section 59 was discussed along with alternatives to physical discipline of children.

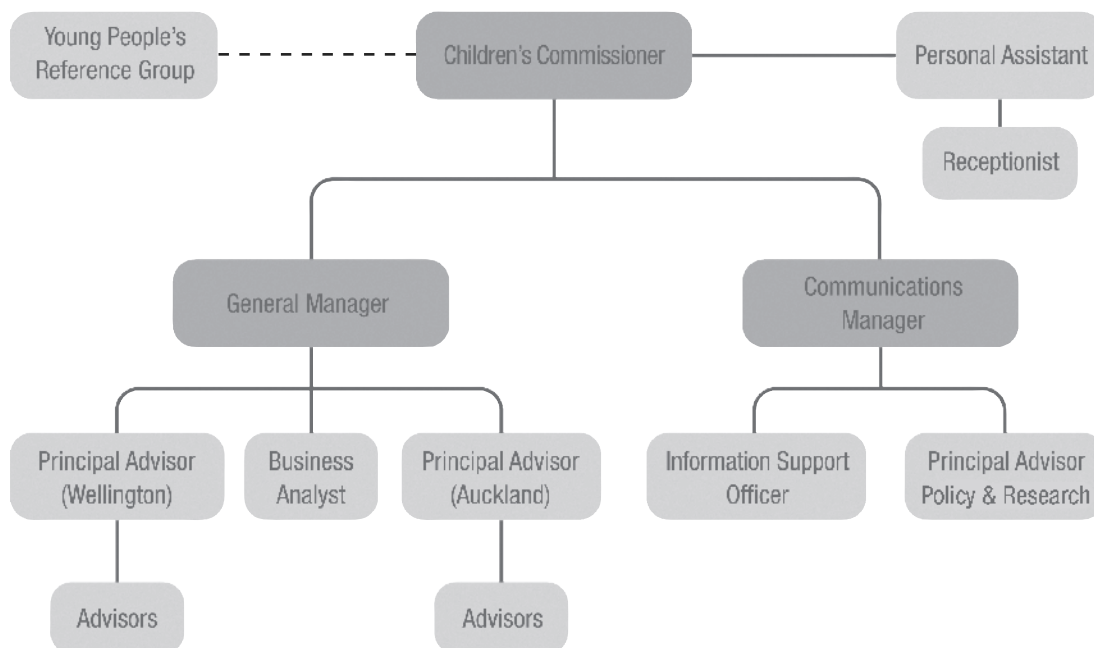
ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY

Capacity and Capability Review

During the beginning of the year, the Capacity and Capability Review of the Office was completed. The final staffing decisions resulted in the recruitment of six new staff and the departure of four existing staff. The new structure of the Office is shown below.

There are two arms within the organisational structure. The General Manager oversees the work of the Principal Advisors and Advisors in both Wellington and Auckland. Advisors carry out monitoring and investigation functions, promote children's rights, and work with communities to encourage and support child advocacy. The General Manager also has administrative responsibilities; including meeting the Office's reporting requirements. A Business Analyst supports him in this role.

The other arm is the Communications Team. This part of the organisation is focussed on strengthening our communication, research, policy and information base.



As at 30th June the positions and staff were:

Position	Staff Member
Children's Commissioner	Dr Cindy Kiro
General Manager	Gordon McFadyen
Communications Manager	Karen Howarth
Principal Advisor – Auckland	Mereana Ruri
Advisor Auckland	Manisha Bhikha
Advisor Auckland	Michelle Egan-Bitran
Advisor Auckland (0.8)	Philipa Biddulph
Principal Advisor – Wellington	Nicola Atwool
Advisor Wellington	Ngaire Sheppard
Advisor Wellington	Rod Davis
Advisor Wellington	Gillian Taylor
Principal Advisor Policy and Research	Dr Mavis Duncanson
Information Support Officer	Rebecca Blaikie
Business Analyst	Helen Scott
Personal Assistant	Robyn Brooks
Receptionist	Karen McKechnie

Auckland Office

The increase in staff in the Auckland office consolidates the Auckland team and enables wider coverage of the region. It has also assisted in key project areas revolving around early childhood education and the development of relationships and monitoring of activities by staff of Child Youth and Family Services northern sites.

Strategic Planning

Statement of Intent

The Office engaged two experienced consultants to assist us in the development of our first Statement of Intent (SOI). Staff contributed to the production of the SOI and have had input at various stages. The draft SOI was sent to key stakeholders for comment and their feedback was incorporated into the final version. The SOI sets out the results that the Office will work towards over the next three years. There has been considerable favourable comment on the SOI.

Office Work Programme

A work programme for the Office has been developed to support the aims of the SOI and Output Agreement with the responsible Minister.

During the year, the Office contracted an Auckland-based strategic consultant to assist the development of a work programme specifically for the Auckland office. This work aimed to improve the profile and performance of the Office and to identify and maximise opportunities to work effectively and collaboratively with key stakeholders in the Auckland region. The Auckland work programme will complement the overall Office work programme.

Good Employer

During the latter part of the year, work started on ensuring our compliance with the requirements of Section 118 of the Crown Entities Act 2004 to be a “good employer”.

Office Fit Out

During November and December, a fit out of the Wellington office occurred. The fit out was completed on time and within budget and has resulted in the following improvements for the Office:

- Open plan environment which has improved collaboration between staff and teams
- Creation of three dedicated meeting rooms
- Creation of dedicated library and resource rooms
- Improved facilities for staff to use during breaks
- Ergonomic furniture has helped to improve the general working environment

Collective Employment Agreements

The PSA signalled to my Office in September that they wished to negotiate a Collective Employment Contract on behalf of six of my advisory staff who are PSA members. The negotiations began in December and the agreement for the advisors was ratified in May.

Administration/Infrastructure

As a result of the office refit, a dedicated library space was established. A contract librarian was employed for six weeks to review the library to ensure all resources were recorded correctly and that systems were implemented to ensure that the library stays current.

A significant investment has been made to upgrade the information technology infrastructure of the Office. Work on the upgrade will start in July 2006 with completion expected in September 2006.

During the year, the following policies have been further developed by the Office:

- Health & Safety
- Finance
- Travel
- Fraud
- Business Continuity
- Human Resources
- Legislative Compliance

Work is underway, and will continue into the next financial year, to improve the internal information management of the Office by undertaking a review of the current database and identifying changes that are needed. A review of electronic record storage will also be undertaken to identify improvements that can be made in this area. To support these activities, an Information Management policy will be developed during the next financial year.

THE CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2006

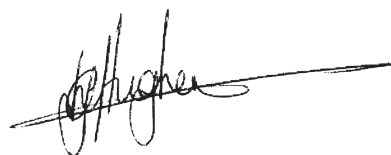
In terms of the Public Finance Act 1989, Section 42, I, Cynthia Alcyon Kiro, the Children's Commissioner:

- accept responsibility for the preparation of these financial statements and the judgments used therein;
- accept responsibility for the establishment and maintenance of internal controls, designed to provide reasonable assurances as to the integrity and reliability of these financial statements; and
- submit that these financial statements fairly reflect the Office of the Children's Commissioner's financial position, operations and cash flows as at and for the year ended 30 June 2006.



Cindy Kiro

Children's Commissioner



Gaylene Hughes

Financial Advisor

STATEMENT OF SERVICE PERFORMANCE

Output: Advice

This output relates to the provision of advice to the Minister of Social Development, other Ministers, their Departments and NGOs as appropriate given the Commissioner's statutory role as an advocate for children and investigator of serious matters affecting children's welfare, interests and rights. It also encompasses assessing the adequacy and appropriateness of existing legislation, strategies, policies, practices and procedures and recommending to Ministers such legislative amendments or reforms as the Commissioner may consider necessary or desirable. This will involve the Commissioner promoting interagency co-operation and working across a range of government agencies.

The output includes submissions where appropriate to Parliamentary Select committees examining Parliamentary Bills and/or undertaking inquiries.

The work of the Young Peoples Reference Group will ensure that children and young people are effectively engaged in the work of the Office and that their views are well represented on key Office initiatives and in the advice that it provides.

Quantity

Measure	Target	Actual
Ministerial meetings and briefings	8-10	32
Quarterly written reports to the Minister	4	4
Advice provided on legislative proposals and reforms impacting on the interests rights and welfare of children	As required	15
Network and special relationship contacts with government and non-government agencies	50	191
Identify key Youth Justice issues and engage with key players to resolve these issues across Govt. and NGO sector	As required	19
Develop a policy template to assist agencies in formulating policy consistent with a children's rights approach	Template developed	0 Not Achieved ¹
Meetings of the Young Peoples Reference Group convened to support the work of the Office	6	5 Not Achieved ²

Quality and Timeliness

Measure	Target	Actual
The adequacy of briefings and policy advice will be assessed by formal annual feedback from the Minister	Satisfactory or better	Achieved
The Minister will review the work programme and financial performance of the Office through quarterly reports and provide verbal feedback at the regular monthly meetings with the Commissioner following the established report date	Satisfactory or better	Achieved
The Manager Advocacy will review the advice provided by the Office at regular supervision sessions against the standards established for the provision of advice	Assessed as satisfactory	Achieved
Feedback from the members of the Young Peoples Reference Group indicates that their views are being considered in the work of the office and in the advice being given	Survey of YPRG indicates that members feel listened to	Achieved

Output: Monitoring and Investigation

This output relates to the performance of the Office of the Children's Commissioner in conducting its legislative responsibilities as defined under the Children's Commissioners Act 2003 to monitor the Department of Child Youth and Family Services (CYF) and other persons, bodies and organisations exercising any function or power conferred by the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989.

To assist in its understanding of the issues facing CYF, the Office will liaise regularly with key stakeholders of CYF including the Principal Family Court and Youth Court Judges.

The Commissioner will investigate matters outside the coverage of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 and will promote the establishment of accessible and effective complaints mechanisms by organisations dealing with children, and monitoring the nature and level of complaints.

The Commissioner will monitor (and advocate for) the implementation of UNCROC by government agencies, non-governmental and community organisations.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner manages a public inquiry service. The inquiries received by the Office each requires a response. The resources available to respond to these telephone calls, letters, emails and web inquiries are limited and can easily be diverted from the systemic analysis which is required to address the strategic goals the Office has established. During the year ahead, the Children's Commissioner will develop strategies to increase the Office's ability to respond to systemic issues and to streamline the Office response to individual advocacy.

The Commissioner also meets her monitoring obligations by reviewing CYF case/death reviews, section 47 Place of Safety Warrants, Care and Protection Resource Panel reports and the reports of Residential Grievance Panels.

The Commissioner has a programme of visits to CYF sites and residences scheduled for the year. This year, it is anticipated that a new responsibility will fall on the Office to establish a process for creating the Office as a "national preventative mechanism" under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Quantity

Measure	Target	Actual
Implement an agreed monitoring framework with CYF	1	1
Inquiries received by the Office	800	833
<i>Receiving and responding to CYF-related inquiries</i>	400	343
<i>Receiving and responding to non CYF-related inquiries</i>	400	490
CYF site visits and visits to Residences	10	14
Regular liaison with key CYF stakeholders	20	64
Reviewing CYF child case reviews, Section 47 Place of Safety Warrants, Care and Protection Resource panel reports and Grievance Panel Reports	30	137
Develop a Children's Charter (which incorporates child friendly complaints mechanism) to enable organisations to determine for themselves if their policies and practices comply with the provisions of UNCROC	Children's Charter developed	Not Achieved ³
Establish a programme of investigations which reflect the Office's strategic goals	Programme developed	Achieved
Establish a process for implementing the requirements that fall to the Office as a "national preventative mechanism" under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	Process established	Not Achieved ⁴

Quality and Timeliness

Measure	Target	Actual
A reviewed protocol will be agreed and implemented with new CYF management	The protocol will be agreed and implemented by CYF and OCC by Dec 2005.	Achieved
A Children's Charter will be developed by OCC, presented to, agreed by and implemented in two Govt Departments and an NGO	Agreed and implemented by June 2006	Not Achieved ³
A new process for visiting CYF residences to monitor the treatment of residents as a national preventative mechanism will be implemented according to the requirements of the legislation/protocol	Process established and implemented according to national standards by June 2006	Not Achieved ⁴
Key CYF stakeholders concerns reported to CEO of CYF if appropriate	When required	Achieved
Advocates work on responding to inquiries; Section 47 place of safety warrants, child death reviews, CPRP reports in a timely manner will be evidenced in supervision records and the database	80% compliance with timeliness standards.	80.67% Achieved

Output: Public Awareness and Advocacy

This output reflects the Office's role in increasing public awareness of children's rights and in generating public interest and debate on the issues affecting children. The Office will actively promote the awareness of children's rights through the implementation of UNCROC and through the promotion of child advocacy in the main metropolitan cities.

The Office will plan to increase the presence and visibility of the Office in Christchurch.

This year, the Office will co-host a child abuse and neglect conference in Wellington at which over 500 people are expected to attend. A particular focus of the conference will be the link between family violence and child abuse.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner will continue to work in partnership with Plunket through the "Littlies Lobby" to promote children's rights, especially for 0 to 5 year olds.

In addition to developing new resources for children, schools, government and non government organisations, iwi and other relevant organisations to support the key messages of the Office an updated and enhanced website which is child friendly and readily accessible will be further developed.

The Commissioner will also have a policy advice role with a number of government agencies and Ministers. The Commissioner will promote the awareness of children's rights, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the participation of children in policy development.

Quantity

Measure	Target	Actual
Plan for and establish a presence in Christchurch.	Plan established	Achieved
Respond to information and resource requests, this will include UNCROC related information	650	854
New and revised resources (publications, posters, information kits) produced to increase awareness and understanding of children's rights, UNCROC and children's advocacy	4	4
Establish events and develop training to communities and organisations on the interests rights and welfare of children	4	16
Develop a report card annually on the performance of New Zealand in respect of poverty, violence towards children and children's rights	Report Card developed	Not Achieved ⁵
Media interviews	150	278
Speeches and presentations	30	50
Newsletter (Children)	4	3 Not Achieved ⁶
Implement a health advocacy plan around the needs of adolescents and promote the plan to District Health Boards	Plan promoted at 4 health forums	Not Achieved ⁷
Work with NGO's to develop alternatives to the physical disciplining of children	As required	8
Meet with NGO network to identify common child and adolescent advocacy issues	4	9
Co host a conference on the impact of and responses to family violence, child abuse and neglect	Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect convened in March 2006	1 Achieved

Quality and Timeliness

Measure	Target	Actual
Evaluation from participants of events and programmes delivered rate content as worthwhile and relevant to their work with children.	90% of participants satisfied with content	97% Achieved
Information and resource requests received before 3.00pm Monday to Friday dispatched in same day's mail.	90%	73% Not Achieved ⁸
Feedback from speeches and presentations is received indicating satisfaction with presentation.	90%	Achieved
Participants at ACCAN conference report satisfaction with keynote and workshop speakers.	90%	97% Achieved

Notes to the text

- 1 This work has been reprioritised for the 2006/2007 financial year. The review of UNCROC (which is required to inform this project), has proven to be time consuming and reliant on the response from government departments. This important piece of work is fundamental to the work of the Office and underpins a number of projects. Because of the delay in completing this work, there has been some slippage on projects this year.
- 2 Meetings were held on July 6th/9th (YPRG involved in the Children's Issues Centre conference), October 29th/30th, January 16th/17th (preparation for ACCAN conference), February 13th/15th (participation in ACCAN conference), and May 13th/14th. Due to the spacing of the meetings to coincide with key activities for the group, it was not feasible to schedule six meetings during the year.
- 3 Work has begun with Child Youth and Family Services to assist them in the development of a Children's Charter. There have been several meetings and a draft charter has been provided to the Office for comment. The review of UNCROC, has proven to be time consuming and reliant on the response from government departments. This important piece of work is fundamental to the work of the office and underpins a number of projects. Because of the delay in completing this work, there has been some slippage on projects this year.
- 4 This work has been delayed until advice is provided from Government on their expectations of the Office to implement this protocol. Legislation has yet to receive its final reading in the House before the protocol can be ratified. This ratification is likely to occur early in 2007.
- 5 Priority has been given this year to the development and promotion of the integrated plan "Te Ara Tukutuku Whanaungatanga o nga Tamariki; Weaving Pathways to Wellbeing Framework" which was new work that this Office has undertaken during the year and is not part of the Statement of Service Provision. The review of UNCROC, has proven to be time consuming and reliant on the response from government departments. This important piece of work is fundamental to the work of the office and underpins a number of projects. Because of the delay in completing this work, there has been some slippage on projects this year.
- 6 A decision to produce issues of the Office magazine in conjunction with key activities (i.e. the ACCAN conference) led to a difference in the planned and actual publication timeframe, this resulted in only three issues being produced this year. We are planning to produce four issues in the 2006/2007 financial year.
- 7 Plan was promoted in a forum at Public Health Association Conference in Palmerston North 5-7 July 2006. Copies were mailed to each DHB with a covering letter in August 2006. The Plan will also be promoted in forums at Involve – the conference of the NZ Association for Adolescent Health and Development in November 2006, the Paediatric Society conference in November 2006 (abstract submitted but yet to be reviewed by conference committee) and the Child Health Summit at Canterbury District Health Board in October 2006.
- 8 While all information and resource requests have been actioned a number of factors have impacted on timeliness. Following the Capacity & Capability Review the person responsible for distributing resources left the office and no resource was available until an appointment was made. The position now has other functions which impact on the timeliness measure.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Statement Of Accounting Policies For The Year Ended 30 June 2006

Reporting Entity

The Children's Commissioner is an Independent Crown Entity in terms of the Crown Entity Act 2004. It was established under the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 and is continued by the Children's Commissioner Act 2003.

The financial statements that follow, report on the activities of the Children's Commissioner for the year ended 30 June 2006.

These statements have been prepared in accordance with the Public Finance Act 1989 and the Children's Commissioner Act 2003.

Measurement Base

The financial statements have been prepared on an historical cost basis.

Accounting Policies

The following particular accounting policies which materially affect the measurement of financial performance and financial position have been applied:

Accounts Receivable

Accounts receivable are stated at their expected realisable value.

Budget Figures

The budget figures are those approved by the Children's Commissioner at the beginning of the financial year.

The budget figures have been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice and are consistent with the accounting policies adopted by the Commissioner for the preparation of the financial statements.

Revenue

The Children's Commissioner derives revenue through the provision of outputs to the Crown, for services to third parties and income from its investments. Such revenue is recognised when earned and is reported in the financial period to which it relates.

Goods and Services Tax

The Statement of Financial Performance, Statement of Movements in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Commitments and Statement of Contingent Liabilities are exclusive of GST. The Statement of Financial Position is also exclusive of GST except Accounts Receivables and Accounts Payables.

Taxation

The Children's Commissioner is exempt from Income Tax.

Research Activities

Research costs are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

Fixed Assets

Office Furniture, Fittings and Equipment, Motor Vehicles and Leasehold Improvements are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Fixed Assets are brought into the Fixed Asset Register for items above \$1,000.

Depreciation

Fixed assets are depreciated at rates that will write off the cost, on a straight-line basis, of the assets to their estimated residual value over their useful life. The depreciation rates of major classes of assets used in the preparation of these statements are:

Office Furniture, Equipment & Leasehold Improvements	20.0%
Computer Equipment	20.0% – 33.0%
Motor Vehicles	30.0%

Financial Instruments

Revenue and Expenses in relation to all financial instruments are recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance. All financial instruments are recognised in the Statement of Financial Position.

Statement Of Cash flows

Cash means cash balances on hand, held in bank accounts, demand deposits and other highly liquid investments in which the Commissioner invests as part of its day-to-day cash management.

Operating activities include all activities other than investing and financing activities. The cash inflows include all receipts from the sale of goods and services and other sources of revenue that support the Commissioner’s operating activities. Cash outflows include payments made to employees, suppliers and for taxes.

Investing activities are those activities relating to the acquisition and disposal of current and non-current securities and other non-current assets.

Financing activities are those activities relating to changes in equity and the debt capital structure of the Commissioner and those activities relating to the cost of servicing the Commissioner’s equity capital.

Provision For Annual Leave Entitlement

Annual Leave is recorded on an entitlement basis.

Leases

The Children’s Commissioner leases its office premises. As all the risks and ownership are retained by the lessor, the lease is classified as operating lease. Operating lease costs are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

Commitments

Future payments are disclosed as commitments at the point a contractual obligation arises, to the extent that they are equally unperformed obligations. Commitments relating to the employment contracts are not disclosed.

Contingent Liabilities

Contingent Liabilities are disclosed at the point at which the contingency is evident.

Changes In Accounting Policies

There have been no changes in accounting policies since the date of the last audited financial statements, other than the change made in order for assets over \$1,000 to be recorded in the Fixed Assets Register (previously \$500).

All policies have been applied on a basis consistent with other years.

The Commission will adopt NZIFRS (NZ International Financial Reporting Standards) from 1 July 2007. An explanation of how the transition to NZIFRS will affect the reported financial position and financial performance of the Commissioner is detailed in Note 11.

The Children's Commissioner

Statement of Financial Performance

for the year ended 30 June 2006

Notes	Actual 30/6/2006 \$	Budget 30/6/2006 \$	Actual 30/6/2005 \$
REVENUE			
Crown	2,003,112	1,953,111	1,850,667
Other	18,132	15,000	12,620
Interest	61,298	20,000	43,456
Total Revenue	2,082,542	1,988,111	1,906,743
EXPENDITURE			
Personnel Costs (1)	1,220,085	1,287,528	1,037,911
Operating Costs (2)	546,058	507,750	534,063
Other	17,553	18,000	21,301
Depreciation	53,307	38,499	29,011
Project Expenses	203,445	290,222	194,816
Total Expenses	2,040,448	2,141,999	1,817,102
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	42,094	(153,888)	89,641

The attached notes and the Statement of Accounting Policies should be read in conjunction with these financial statements.

The Children's Commissioner

Statement Of Movements In Equity

for the year ended 30 June 2006

	Actual 30/6/2006 \$	Budget 30/6/2006 \$	Actual 30/6/2005 \$
Taxpayers' equity brought forward As at 1 July	601,496	657,610	511,855
Net operating surplus/(deficit)	42,094	(153,888)	89,641
Total recognised revenues and Expenses for the year	42,094	(153,888)	89,641
Taxpayers' equity as at 30 June 2006	643,590	503,722	601,496

The attached notes and the Statement of Accounting Policies should be read in conjunction with these financial statements.

The Children's Commissioner

Statement of Financial Position

as at 30 June 2006

Note	Actual 30/6/2006 \$	Budget 30/6/2006 \$	Actual 30/6/2005 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and Bank			
- Current Account	80,139	17,343	42,015
- Ready Access Account	751	150,000	150,827
- Term Deposits	508,620	250,000	518,283
- Child Abuse Account (4)	10,254	10,000	10,228
Prepayments	1,519	1,500	1,600
Accounts Receivable (5)	14,044	20,000	21,927
Total Current Assets	615,327	448,843	744,880
Fixed Assets (3)	315,081	194,879	51,445
TOTAL ASSETS	930,408	643,722	796,325
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable (6)	224,577	85,000	131,011
Annual Leave Entitlement	43,966	35,000	42,122
GST Payable	18,275	20,000	21,696
Total Current Liabilities	286,818	140,000	194,829
TAXPAYERS' EQUITY	643,590	503,722	601,496
TOTAL FUNDS EMPLOYED	930,408	643,722	796,325

The attached notes and the Statement of Accounting Policies should be read in conjunction with these financial statements.

The Children's Commissioner

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year Ended 30 June 2006

	Actual 30/6/2006 \$	Budget 30/6/2006 \$	Actual 30/6/2005 \$
Cash Flows from Operating Activities:			
Cash was provided from			
Crown	2,003,112	1,953,111	1,850,667
Other Income	15,015	15,000	12,620
Interest Income	72,296	20,000	28,517
	2,090,423	1,988,111	1,891,804
Cash was disbursed for Supply of Outputs	1,895,070	2,082,000	1,718,810
	1,895,070	2,082,000	1,718,810
Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities	195,353	(93,889)	172,994
Cash Flows from Investing Activities:			
Cash was provided from			
Fixed assets sales	0	0	0
Cash was distributed to			
Fixed Asset purchases	316,942	160,000	23,255
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities	(316,942)	(160,000)	(23,255)
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	(121,589)	(253,889)	149,739
Add: Opening Cash Balance	721,353	681,232	571,614
Closing Cash Carried Forward	599,764	427,343	721,353
Closing Cash comprises:			
Westpac			
• Current Account	80,139	17,343	42,015
• Ready Access Account	751	150,000	150,827
• Term Deposit	508,620	250,000	518,283
• Child Abuse Account	10,254	10,000	10,228
	599,764	427,343	721,353

The Children's Commissioner **Reconciliation Of The Net Surplus/(Deficit)** **To Net Operating Cash Flow** **for the year ended 30 June 2006**

	Actual 30/6/2006 \$	Actual 30/6/2005 \$
Net Operating Surplus for Year	42,094	89,641
Gain on Sale of Assets	0	0
Add/(less) Depreciation	53,307	29,012
Movements in Working Capital		
(Increase) Decrease in Accounts Receivable	7,882	(14,939)
(Increase) Decrease in Prepayments	80	1,854
(Decrease) Increase in GST	(3,422)	8,005
Increase in Accounts Payable	93,568	58,559
Increase (Decrease) in Annual Leave Payable	1,844	862
Net Working Capital Movements	99,952	54,341
Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities	195,353	172,994

The attached notes and the Statement of Accounting Policies should be read in conjunction with these financial statements.

The Children's Commissioner

Notes To The Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2006

(1) Remuneration and Fees

In accordance with s28 of the Children's Commissioner Act, including (3) (a) (b) (c) and (d), the following is reported:

The total value of the remuneration and other benefits of the office holder during the financial year for the Children's Commissioner Acts are:

Dr Cindy Kiro	\$178,500
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Staff in the salary band of \$100,000 or over including other benefits:	Nil
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In total four staff received redundancy payments on termination of employment following a restructuring of the Commission:	\$84,000
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Committees established that received fees are paid for:

Young Peoples Reference Group with nine members from 1 July 05 to 30 June 06 paid by OCC:	\$9,920
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(2) Operating Costs

	30/6/2006 \$	30/6/2005 \$
Accountancy Fees	32,500	32,144
Auditors Remuneration	16,000	15,000
Contractor Fees	57,522	32,516
Printing and Stationery	13,373	28,516
Publication Expenses	109,062	117,968
Rent and Rates	137,591	119,155
Telephone, Tolls and Facsimile	40,899	55,844
Travel and Accommodation	76,295	92,243
Other	62,816	40,677
Total Operating Costs	546,058	534,063

(3) Fixed Asset Schedule

The following provides details of the cost of Assets less Accumulated Depreciation:

2005/2006	Cost \$	Accumulated Depreciation \$	Book Value 30/6/2006 \$	Depreciation for 30/06/06 \$
Motor Vehicles	22,529	17,460	5,069	6,759
Office Furniture, Equipment & Leasehold improvements	348,341	93,912	254,429	32,600
Computer Equipment	134,021	78,438	55,583	13,948
Total Fixed Assets	504,891	189,810	315,081	53,307

2004/2005	Cost \$	Accumulated Depreciation \$	Book Value 30/6/2005 \$	Depreciation for 30/06/05 \$
Motor Vehicles	22,529	10,701	11,828	5,069
Office Furniture, Equipment & Leasehold improvements	141,580	132,149	9,431	3,446
Computer Equipment	239,758	209,572	30,186	20,496
Total Fixed Assets	403,867	352,422	51,445	29,011

(4) Child Abuse Account

The Child Abuse Account was established to assist organisations operating to reduce the incidence and effects of Child Abuse in New Zealand. The funds form part of the Commissioner's equity but are held in a separate bank account.

	30/6/2006 \$	30/6/2005 \$
Opening Balance	10,228	19,894
Donations Received	0	212
Interest Received	76	122
Bank Fees	(50)	0
Donations Made	0	(10,000)
Funds Held as at 30 June 2006	10,254	10,228

5) Accounts Receivable

Accounts Receivable are as follows:

	30/6/2006 \$	30/6/2005 \$
Sundry Debtors	14,044	21,927
Total Accounts Receivable	14,044	21,927

(6) Accounts Payable

	30/6/2006 \$	30/6/2005 \$
Accounts Payable - Trade	145,968	109,679
Accruals	78,609	21,332
Total Accounts Payable	224,577	131,011

(7) Statement Of Contingent Liabilities As At 30 June 2006

There were no contingent liabilities as at 30 June 2006. (2005: Nil)

(8) Statement Of Commitments As At 30 June 2006

	30/6/2006 \$	30/6/2005 \$
As at 30 June 2006 lease commitments were as follows:		
• less than one year	57,315	113,716
• one year to two years	4,045	70,542
• over two years	0	0
Total	61,360	184,258

As at 30 June 2006 capital commitments were as follows:

• for the next 12 months	nil	nil
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There are no other material agreements, contracts or other understandings which commit the Children's Commissioner to any new and future expenditure.

(9) Financial Instruments

Financial Instruments which potentially subject the Commissioner to credit risk principally consist of bank balances and accounts receivable.

In the normal course of business, the Commissioner incurs credit risk from debtors. There are no significant concentrations of credit risk and the Commissioner has a credit policy that is used to manage this exposure.

The Commissioner does not require any collateral or security to support financial instruments.

The fair value of the financial instruments is equivalent to the carrying amount disclosed in the statement of financial position. The Commissioner has no exposure to currency risks, and the financial instruments are not interest rate sensitive.

(10) Related Party

The Commissioner is a wholly owned entity of the Crown. The Commissioner has entered into a number of transactions with Government Departments and Crown Agencies on an arm's length basis and where those parties are acting in the course of the normal dealings with the Commissioner. These transactions are not considered to be related party transactions.

There were no other related party transactions.

(11) Adoption of International Financial Reporting Standards

In December 2002 the New Zealand Accounting Standards Review Board announced that New Zealand International Financial Reporting Standards ("NZIFRS") will apply to all New Zealand reporting entities for the periods commencing on or after 1 January 2007.

The Commissioner will adopt NZ IFRS for the financial year commencing 1 July 2007.

The Commissioner is a Public Benefit Entity and will adopt the Crown financial policies as advised by the Treasury. It is anticipated that the adoption of NZ IFRS will have minimal impact on the Commissioner's financial results and financial statements.

AUDIT REPORT
TO THE READERS OF THE
CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2006

The Auditor-General is the auditor of the Children's Commissioner (the Commissioner). The Auditor-General has appointed me, Clare Helm, using the staff and resources of Audit New Zealand, to carry out the audit of the financial statements of the Commissioner, on his behalf, for the year ended 30 June 2006.

Unqualified opinion

In our opinion the financial statements of the Commissioner on pages 29 to 45:

- comply with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand; and
- fairly reflect:
 - the Commissioner's financial position as at 30 June 2006;
 - the results of the Commissioner's operations and cash flows for the year ended on that date; and
 - its service performance achievements measured against the performance targets adopted for the year ended on that date.

The audit was completed on 19 October 2006, and is the date at which our opinion is expressed.

The basis of our opinion is explained below. In addition, we outline the responsibilities of the Commissioner and the Auditor, and explain our independence.

Basis of opinion

We carried out the audit in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, which incorporate the New Zealand Auditing Standards.

We planned and performed the audit to obtain all the information and explanations we considered necessary in order to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial statements did not have material misstatements, whether caused by fraud or error.

Material misstatements are differences or omissions of amounts and disclosures that would affect a reader's overall understanding of the financial statements. If we had found material misstatements that were not corrected, we would have referred to them in our opinion.

The audit involved performing procedures to test the information presented in the financial statements. We assessed the results of those procedures in forming our opinion.

Audit procedures generally include:

- determining whether significant financial and management controls are working and can be relied on to produce complete and accurate data;
- verifying samples of transactions and account balances;
- performing analyses to identify anomalies in the reported data;
- reviewing significant estimates and judgements made by the Commissioner;
- confirming year-end balances;
- determining whether accounting policies are appropriate and consistently applied; and
- determining whether all financial statement disclosures are adequate.

We did not examine every transaction, nor do we guarantee complete accuracy of the financial statements.

We evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements. We obtained all the information and explanations we required to support our opinion above.

Responsibilities of the Commissioner and the Auditor

The Commissioner is responsible for preparing financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand. Those financial statements must fairly reflect the financial position of the Commissioner as at 30 June 2006. They must also fairly reflect the results of its operations and cash flows and service performance achievements for the year ended on that date. The Commissioner's responsibilities arise from the Public Finance Act 1989 and the Children's Commissioner Act 2003.

We are responsible for expressing an independent opinion on the financial statements and reporting that opinion to you. This responsibility arises from section 15 of the Public Audit Act 2001 and the Public Finance Act 1989.

Independence

When carrying out the audit we followed the independence requirements of the Auditor-General, which incorporate the independence requirements of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of New Zealand.

Other than the audit, we have no relationship with or interests in the Commissioner.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clare Helm". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Clare Helm
Audit New Zealand
On behalf of the Auditor-General
Wellington, New Zealand