



BRIEFING

Further decisions regarding Gracefield Innovation Quarters

Date:	11 December 2024	Priority:	High
Security classification:	Sensitive	Tracking number:	BRIEFING-REQ-0007440

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Judith Collins KC Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology	Agree Confidential advice to Government [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has been made on GIQ's future. Agree that the most appropriate future host for the Measurement Standards Laboratory is the Earth Sciences public research organisation and to progress this arrangement.	17 December 2024

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)				
Name	Position	Telephone		1st contact
Gina Williamson	Manager, Innovation Policy	04 901 8203	Privacy of natural persons [REDACTED]	✓
Todd Fortune	Associate Policy Advisor, Innovation Policy			

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

Minister's office to complete:

☐ Approved

☐ Declined

☐ Noted

☐ Needs change

☐ Seen

☐ Overtaken by Events

☐ See Minister's Notes

☐ Withdrawn

Comments:



BRIEFING

Further decisions regarding Gracefield Innovation Quarters

Date:	11 December 2024	Priority:	High
Security classification:	Sensitive	Tracking number:	BRIEFING-REQ-0007440

Purpose

To seek your agreement on the Confidential advice to Government and the transfer of responsibility of the Measurement Standards Laboratory (MSL) as Callaghan Innovation is disestablished as an innovation agency.

Recommendations

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) recommends that you:

- a. Confidential advice to Government
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e. **Agree** that the most appropriate future host for MSL is the Earth Sciences public research organisation (PRO), or to GNS Science prior to its consolidation with NIWA into the Earth Sciences PRO, and to progress this arrangement.
- f. **Note** that changes to regulations are required to give full effect to a transfer of MSL, and the functions of MSL may need to be included in relevant PRO legislation. We will seek necessary subsequent decisions to give effect to the transfer from you in due course.

Agree / Disagree

Noted



Gina Williamson

Manager, Innovation Policy

Labour, Science and Enterprise, MBIE

11 / 12 / 2024

Hon Judith Collins KC

**Minister of Science, Innovation and
Technology**

..... / /

Background

1. The Government has decided to disestablish Callaghan Innovation and redistribute its most important functions to other parts of the SI&T system and to stop others [ECO-24-MIN-0242 refers].
2. Callaghan Innovation owns and manages the GIQ site and hosts the MSL business unit, in addition to Callaghan Innovation's core innovation functions.

Confidential advice to Government



Future Home for MSL

The Earth Sciences PRO is the most appropriate entity to host MSL

9. We previously provided you our initial view that the Earth Sciences PRO is the most appropriate entity to host MSL and that it is largely interdependent with GIQ [BRIEFING-REQ-0004411 refers]. Further analysis has confirmed this view.
10. The Earth Sciences PRO has a strong role in stewardship science, hosting public good science service delivery platforms, such as GeoNet and Metservice. This enables Earth Sciences PRO to make appropriate and long-term decisions on MSL and ensures a sense of belonging with MSL's staff due to the consistency in purpose and culture. This arrangement will also allow MSL to operate independently as required by legislation and have adequate scale to support back-office functions for MSL.

MSL as a standalone entity or hosted by another entity are not suitable or viable arrangements

11. The other PROs were considered but determined to be not appropriate. The Bioeconomy PRO is focused on commercial activity and the Health and Forensics Science Service PRO is more strongly sector facing with a lack of scale. It is not possible to transfer MSL to the Advanced Technology Research Organisation because it will not be established by the time that Callaghan Innovation is disestablished as an innovation agency.
12. MSL as a standalone entity or being hosted by MBIE or a university were also considered as there are international examples of these arrangements. As a standalone entity, MSL would lack scale and have significant operational costs due to requiring back-office support, which is currently provided by Callaghan Innovation. MBIE has limited expertise to manage scientific services and assets and to make appropriate, long-term decisions on MSL. Being hosted in MBIE would also make MSL ineligible for the Marsden and Endeavour research funds. A university is not an appropriate entity to host MSL due to the significant importance to government that underpins most economic activities, enforcement of regulations and international trade.

Commercial Information

15. The Measurement Standards Regulation 2019 (the Regulations) will need to be amended prior to the transfer of MSL as it defines MSL as the laboratory of Callaghan Innovation. This is to prevent the risk that the Chief Metrologist and their delegated persons at MSL lose their authority to verify the measurements of physical quantities, as the MSL's definition is used in two places in the Regulations, clauses 7(2)(a)(i) and 8(2)(a). We estimate that these changes

Commercial Information

Next Steps

16. We will progress a Cabinet paper and preparation for legislation to give effect to decisions as outlined above. We intend to provide you a draft Cabinet paper by early February.