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**Prime Minister's Science, Innovation and Technology Council (PMSITAC)  
Meeting summary notes and actions**

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**Date:** Friday 22 August 2025

**Chair:** Hon Dr Shane Reti, Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology

**Attendees:**

- PMSITAC members: Dr John Roche, Komal Mistry-Mehta, Sir Peter Gluckman, Professor Merryn Tawhai, Malcolm Johns, Craig Piggott (from the start of Item1), Grant Wright
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) representatives: Nic Blakeley, Iain Cossar, Privacy of natural persons
- Apologies: Russell Frew

**1. Introductions**

- The Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology explained the purpose of this meeting and its intended outcomes.
- Previous notes and action log were reviewed and accepted.
- MBIE reiterated the conflict-of-interest process and requested declarations of any new conflicts. No new conflicts of interest were declared.

**2. Item 1: Giving effect to strategy by investing more in Advanced Technology**

*(Relevant papers: slide pack: Working towards a list of priorities and areas to deprioritise for SI&T*

*International SI&T challenges and opportunities: TRL insights and mapping)*

- Minister comments: By the end of the meeting the aim is an in-principal agreement to high level shifts between pillars.
- MBIE provided an overview of:
  - Principles and decision-making framework that can be used to guide thinking.
  - Three scenarios for shifting funding towards New Economy and Advanced Tech.
  - Indication that the next meeting will consider the implications of the chosen scenario, and how funding should be prioritised within pillars.
- Key themes of the discussion are summarised below:
  - There should be a pivot to Emerging Tech away from areas where NZ government investment is over-represented.
  - That at least \$100m needs to be shifted to the New Economy and Advanced Tech to effect significant change.

- That workforce and human capital are important considerations: PMSITAC would like more granularity of information shown against the pillars.
- The PMSITAC had a conversation about whether Advanced Tech should be regarded as a vertical pillar, or instead as a horizontal across all pillars. Remove Advanced Tech from the vertical pillar. It was agreed that it was both – an enabler of productivity growth and efficiency in the Current Economy, the Environment, and Health & Society pillars, as well as a Vertical Pillar for the development of new industries.
- How much government funding should be allocated to research that builds local capability and delivers direct or indirect economic or societal impact to NZ, vs funding world-class research that enhances NZs global scientific reputation, but primarily benefits others? What are the unintended consequences, what are the risks, impacts. What is not funded – e.g. out of Marsden and Endeavour.
- White space:
  - To be effective in supporting the shift towards a more efficient economy, it was suggested as a starting point that at least 10% of New Economy and Advanced Tech funding should be in white space.
  - There was discussion that the level of investment should relate to desired objectives: if funding for today’s economy, white space funding level would be smaller. Funding for tomorrow's economy will require a larger allocation of white space funding. Confidential advice
  - The PMSITAC agreed with the principle that funding should be agile and able to adapt quickly to change. Questioned whether white space funding could be allocated rapidly.
  - Ideas for White space funding are more likely to emerge from universities.

Action Area	Requested Information / Action
<p><b>Priorities</b></p>	<p>PMSITAC sought further advice implications of choosing Scenario 2, and a more or less ambitious approach to shifting funding across pillars.</p> <p>This should include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more granular information across the themes covered in the discussion, i.e. impacts on areas of research excellence, skilled workforce,</li> <li>• what advanced tech research is already happening across all the pillars, and group current projects against pillars.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>potential for us to miss areas of emerging competitive advantages, which would have long-term economic consequences.</li> </ul>
<b>White space</b>	<p>Need to arrive at an agreed definition of 'white space'. In addition, want to see more information on how white space fund would work, Confidential advice [REDACTED]</p> <p>Next set of analysis will include consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How this model is used by other small advanced economies</li> <li>The role of international science in any funding mechanism.</li> </ul>
<b>AI funding across government</b>	MBIE to provide information on what AI projects other agencies are funding
<b>SI&amp;T funding across government</b>	MBIE to provide a more detailed breakdown of SI&T funding from other agencies

Out of scope



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### Wrap up

- MBIE:
  - Provided an overview of the Stakeholder engagement plan.
  - Asked for feedback on the quality of the Board papers that are being provided.
- Key themes of the discussion are summarised below:
  - Stakeholder engagement:
    - Engagement plans should respect PMSITAC members time and be purposeful.
    - There are multiple related engagements under way over the coming months, e.g. on University Advisory Group and NZIAT. The role of the PMSITAC and purpose of engagements they are leading needs to be clear.
    - Members were comfortable that MBIE and the PMSITAC Deputy Chair manage stakeholder engagement, along with other members as needed
    - Members wanted to be able to meet with stakeholders they identify who can share specific expertise or knowledge of direct relevance to PMSITAC. It was agreed that these opportunities will be channelled through MBIE.
  - Board papers
    - Members confirmed that they liked the slide pack format. They would like the objective of the proposed actions to be stated at the front of the paper. The example given was that the objective for the AI funding could have been stated in the first slide.

Action Area	Requested Information / Action
Stakeholder engagement	<p>MBIE to look again at relevant SSAG submissions to understand broad themes from consultation response as part of beginning PMSITAC stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>MBIE and PMSITAC Deputy Chair to meet with relevant stakeholder groups to discuss the process and receive feedback.</p>

### PMSITAC Decisions

- The table below summarises decisions from the meeting:

Item Number	Decisions
Introduction	<b>Agreed</b> Minutes and actions from the 18 July PMSITAC meeting
Item 1	<p><b>Agreed</b> that the Emerging PMSITAC Principles were suitable and may evolve</p> <p><b>Agreed</b> that the New Economy and Emerging Tech pillar should be reframed as New Economy, with Advanced Tech a horizontal element across all pillars</p> <p>Confidential advice [REDACTED]</p> <p><b>Agreed</b> that the next steps are for MBIE to provide PMSITAC members with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>further advice on a more or less ambitious approach to shifting funding between pillars assessed against the decision-making framework.</li> <li>Information on investment prioritisation within each pillar, including identification of priority research areas</li> </ul>
Out of scope	
Wrap Up	<b>Agreed</b> that papers provided to the Board were fit for purpose, but should clearly state the objective for proposed actions

Item Number	Decisions
	<p data-bbox="432 271 1246 338"><b>Agreed</b> that MBIE and the Deputy Chair will manage stakeholder engagement along with members as needed</p> <p data-bbox="432 360 1362 465"><b>Agreed</b> that there will be stakeholders PMSITAC members identify who bring specific expertise or knowledge relevant to PMSITAC, and that these engagements will also be channelled through MBIE</p>