Internal Assurance

Terms of Reference:

Objective

The objective of this review is to:

- Undertake a stocktake of MBIE's technology project portfolio to confirm whether core governance, project governance, assurance, reporting, escalation, financial and delivery controls are in place and operating effectively, aligned to best practice and to identify where immediate intervention is required.

Background

The BCU review identified a number of failings with the project, including:

- Poor governance discipline
- Insufficiently robust business case and requirements definition
- Poor visibility and escalation of risks
- Weaknesses in financial transparency and whole-of-life cost understanding
- Misalignment between assurance findings, governance decision-making, and reporting to Ministers

In response, MBIE has committed to conduct a stocktake of the investment portfolio, this review forms the Internal Assurance response to deliver those commitments.

Scope

The review will focus on in-scope projects, assessing the financial and delivery controls and alignment to best practice across the following control domains:

1. Investment definition and viability
    - Investment rationale and business case discipline
    - Scope and requirements definition
    - Ongoing assessment of project viability and “offramp” decisions
2. Governance, accountability and decision-making
    - Governance structures (including Steering group)
    - Roles and responsibilities (including Business owner and SRO and level)
    - Quality and traceability of key decisions
3. Risk, assurance and escalation
    - Risk management and escalation practices
    - Independent and internal assurance coverage
    - Alignment between assurance findings, governance decisions, and escalation
    - Assessing compliance with Cabinet and Treasury expectations for the Investment Management System (IMS), including requirements relating to governance, assurance, and reporting.
4. Delivery performance and confidence
    - Delivery against scope, time, and budget against baseline

- Number and/or frequency of change requests
- Dependency management and delivery realism
- Closure report – was it timely, were original benefits realised

5. Financial oversight, control and reporting

- Financial oversight, control and transparency
- Reconciliation of scope, cost, and timing changes
- Visibility of funding movements and whole-of-life cost positions to governance and Ministers
- Vendor-related risks, disputes, early warnings, and escalation of contractual issues

6. Reporting, capability and benefits

- Is Executive and ministerial reporting in place
- Turnover of key roles
- Benefits identification, ownership, measurement

Scope exclusions

- BCU

Approach

The review will include a stocktake of all live, in-flight technology projects focussing on ensuring best practice standards are being met and gaps in meeting these standards are identified. As well as capturing live projects from MBIE's Project Management Office (PMO), Internal Assurance will cross-check MBIE's Financial Management system for any project codes which are technology-related. Internal Assurance will confirm whether BAU activity including minor enhancements, and maintenance will be excluded.

MBIE currently applies a structured project delivery approach aligned to PRINCE2. For the purposes of this review, Internal Assurance will assess practice against defined New Zealand public sector benchmarks, including Treasury Better Business Case guidance, Cabinet investment and stewardship expectations, Gateway and Risk Profile Assessment (RPA) frameworks, and relevant Office of the Auditor-General and Cabinet Office guidance. Engagement with GDDA, Treasury, NIFF, Infracom, Crown Infrastructure Delivery and other agencies will be used to validate and calibrate these benchmarks and to identify leading practice in application.

The Internal Assurance review will be subject to a concurrent external quality assurance to provide independent confidence in the approach, findings, and conclusions.

Deliverables

Internal Assurance will deliver:

- A stocktake of all current technology projects
- High level findings summaries

Findings will be reported to the CE and Minister of Economic Growth and Immigration and other Ministers if required.

Timing

The review will commence on 19 June 2026 and will be delivered by 15 July 2026.

Conflicts of Interest

All Internal Assurance team members and outsourced provider team members involved in this review have declared any potential or perceived conflicts of interest relevant to their participation. Where conflicts of interest have been identified, appropriate measures have been taken to address and mitigate them, ensuring that all actions and decisions align with the principles of transparency, impartiality, and integrity. This includes internal team members making a declaration in Camms.

Staffing

Lead Auditor	Privacy of natural persons
Support	Privacy of natural persons, Practice Lead; Privacy of natural persons (Principal Assurance Advisors); Privacy of natural persons Assurance Advisor
External Support	TBC

Sponsor

This work has been commissioned by the CE.