

Developing Capability in State Land Management in New Zealand - Current Initiatives

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SUMMARY

Good and responsible governance for state land is essential, but relies on capable staff with the technical knowledge to manage land effectively. In New Zealand, changes in government provision of services have led to knowledge being held by only a few people, and few ways of transferring that knowledge to others. However, there is little formal development of skills and capability in state land management and it is difficult to gain that knowledge except through years of experience. There are also a range of future developments in the way land is managed that could change the skills and capability needed.

Government agencies such as Land Information New Zealand face a range of challenges in training staff and keeping knowledge so that state land can be managed effectively. New skills, such as commercial expertise are required. Capability in state land management is gaining greater recognition. This work is ongoing, but is already starting to deliver results. Staff members are tasked with recording and distributing knowledge to their peers, and working with other government agencies. Continuing professional development is being better recognized and there is a greater use of online tools to share knowledge across government and with the public.

Planning to replace knowledgeable staff is vital. Also, the development of capability for state land management cannot be done on an ad hoc basis. Education and sharing knowledge between individuals, organisations and with the wider community has to become part of the everyday work of a state land manager. There is a need to be proactive, by championing the state land profession widely and persuading staff who hold the knowledge to capture and pass it on. Tackling this problem in a defined and structured way is required to ensure that the professional and commercial skills necessary are available in the future.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Issues of capability can arise throughout the reforms of management of state land. It is an area with few academic qualifications and much of the knowledge of the particular issues with state land is held by only a few experienced officers.

For many government agencies, land management is secondary to the delivery of vital services such as schools, roads or hospitals. In New Zealand, the establishment of a specialist centre has allowed issues of capability across government to be considered in a more detailed manner. The vision of is to be a leader in the management of Crown land in New Zealand. The aims are to ensure that government buys and sells land in a way that advances the public interest and protects private property rights and that state land is put to its best use.

The paper focuses in particular on the steps being taken to build capability across government and in the private sector, which in New Zealand's market economy, provides many of the day-to-day services associated with state land management. This includes efforts to increase expertise and staff capability, across agencies, and establishing mechanisms to share specialist technical advice across government.

2. STATE LAND MANAGEMENT IN NEW ZEALAND

2.1 Historic Context

State land in New Zealand is commonly referred to as Crown land, or Crown-owned land, reflecting the country's status as a constitutional monarchy. The head of state is Queen Elizabeth II. She reigns as the Queen of New Zealand, independently of her position as Queen of the United Kingdom. Her representative in New Zealand is the Governor-General, who has symbolic and ceremonial roles, and acts on the advice of Government Ministers. Like the United Kingdom, the government acts in the Queen's name. When New Zealanders talk about 'the Crown', they are usually referring not to the Queen as a person, but to the government as a whole. For this paper I use the term 'state land' as much as possible.

New Zealand became a British colony in 1840, following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi between representatives of the British Crown and Māori tribal chiefs¹. The colonial government imported English common law to the colony. This included many land law such as the principle that the Crown is the underlying owner of all land, and that the Crown grants

¹ Māori are the indigenous peoples of New Zealand and were adversely affected by colonisation, including the acquisition by the Crown of their lands.

others interests in that land.² Private ownership of land is based on a system of land registration known as the Torrens system.

The amount of state land in New Zealand has changed over time as land has been used by the state or disposed of to other people. At its peak, the state acquired 20 million hectares of land from its original Māori owners (over 75% of New Zealand's total land area). Much of this was sold to settlers for development. In 1982, the state owned and controlled approximately 55% of New Zealand's land area. Today, it is estimated to be around 40%, most of which is land held for conservation purposes.

2.2 State Land Reforms of the 1980s-1990s

In 1987, the Labour Government embarked on a wide range of economic reforms and government restructuring, including cutting government spending and reviewing how state agencies provided services to the public.

State land was an integral part of these reforms. From 1987, state land holdings were rationalised by releasing surplus or under-utilised land to the private sector. Responsibility for land that was still required was transferred to the state agency that used the property. State land with commercial values was transferred to state-owned enterprises, and land with natural conservation values (such as National Parks, and reserves) were transferred to the Department of Conservation. This reallocation process was done quickly, with new agencies up and running within an eighteen month period between 1986 and 1987.

This allocation process also identified a range of land that was considered to be neither commercially useful or having significant conservation values. This land (approximately four million hectares) was transferred to a third agency, now Land Information New Zealand, to manage and where possible sell this land.

This was accompanied by rationalisation of the public sector workforce that dealt with state land matters. Since the early 1990s the outsourcing of state land functions has increased. Much of the operational work associated with the acquisition, management and disposal of state land (excluding the public conservation estate) is now contracted out to the private sector. This is considered to be economically efficient to do this rather than set and maintain an "in-house" capability.

This resulted in the release of most state employees who dealt with state land. Some of these employees are now employed by private sector companies, supplying those services to the state, on a fee-for-service basis.

² In English common law, the Crown has radical title or the allodium of all land, meaning that it is the ultimate "owner" of all land. However, the Crown can grant an ownership interest in that land – called an estate – to others.

2.3 State land role of Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)

New Zealand's state land estate includes some of the most iconic land in the country, ranging from South Island High Country pastoral land to the beds of lakes and rivers.. As the Crown's land manager, Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) manages 8 percent – around 3 million hectares – of New Zealand's land area. It is a role that recognises the full breadth of land value.

LINZ's day-to-day management involves acquisition, maintenance and disposal of land. It involves managing the tenancies of farmers who lease the Crown's grazing land and managing over 6,000 properties. It includes identifying and lessening risks to state land, such as safeguarding New Zealand's unique biodiversity from the threat of plant and animal pests.

LINZ also regulates the acquisition and disposal of land by all other state agencies by administering the relevant legislation, setting standards and making statutory decisions on the property transactions undertaken by other agencies. Many of these transactions are vital to the development of New Zealand's national infrastructure.³

3. CURRENT STATE LAND MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY

3.1 Why is capability important for state land

State land is a significant percentage of the total land area of New Zealand. While much of this land is conversation land, the state land estate is a vital national asset, used to provide vital government services, such as schools, hospitals and roads, and also an asset base for agricultural, industrial and commercial development. Communities, businesses and farmers rely on access to state land for a variety of uses.

How this estate is managed can be of tremendous importance. Good and responsible governance for state land is essential. Poor management of this land can have wide-ranging and long-lasting impacts for the social, environmental and economic development of the country. As noted by Willi Zimmerman, "the importance of the management of government-owned land is because the way this land is managed can enhance the welfare of the population but is also capable of undermining it."⁴

Managing this land requires people with a wide range of technical and management skills. Not all of these skills may be readily apparent. Decisions about state land can be influenced by a number of factors not found for land held by private individuals. For example, in a government setting, recognizing and responding to the political and public accountabilities required of a civil or state servant presents a unique facet of dealing with state land.

³ For more details see the LINZ Statement of Intent, available at: <http://www.linz.govt.nz/about-linz/publications/statement-intent>

⁴ Willi Zimmerman, *Building the Capacities for Effective Management of Government-owned Land*, FIG Paper, FIG/FAO International Seminar, State and Public Land Management in Transitional Countries, Budapest, Hungary, 2012.

While this can be seen as an individual-focused area, much of the capabilities required extend across teams and professions. Ensuring that there is a basic level of knowledge and understanding of what is needed to look after state land will in part ensure that proper decisions are made about the use and future of this land, and that the negative impacts from poor decisions are not felt by the wider community.

3.2 Issues with current capability

3.2.1 Outsourced capability

As noted above, many functions for state land are done by the private sector. Like other agencies LINZ hires private property management companies to manage the land on its behalf. This outsourcing of work includes many functions, such as maintaining the land and buildings, undertaking disposal of properties, dealing with users of the land, and working with the public on a daily basis.

This means that the size of government property teams in New Zealand is on average smaller than in other jurisdictions. For example, in managing over 6,000 properties, LINZ has approximately fifty staff located in two offices (Wellington and Christchurch). The responsibilities of these personnel include managing a portfolio of properties, dealing with contractual matters and responding to issues with the land that arise from time to time.

Most decisions, including those required under state legislation, are made by Ministers or government staff under formal statutory delegation. This preserves accountability under the law with government while enabling the private sector to look after the land efficiently, leading to savings to taxpayers.

3.2.2 Changing role

The role of the state land manager in New Zealand has changed. Much of the training in the past focused on knowledge and skills associate with hands-on management of land, such as leasing, building maintenance and monitoring grazing or other activities on the land.

With outsourcing more prevalent, the state land manager now has less ‘hands-on’ involvement with the properties under their charge. Their role is focused more on analysis, contract management, accountability and decision-making. It also requires staff to work closely with the community, customers and stakeholder groups to shape the future management of the state land estate. This requires a different set of skills and capacities than those needed to look after individual properties.

Like most developed nations, there is a significant drive from the New Zealand government for its agencies to make savings and trim the costs of providing services. Serious questions are being asked about the role of government and what services it should provide. This includes whether the state need to own large areas of land, or whether this land can better utilized by others. It is also necessary to ensure that correct decisions are made about scarce resources, and that staff are flexible enough to support and respond to changes in government

priorities. For example, the New Zealand Transport Agency in part funds its program to construct new state highways through the sale of land it no longer requires. This requires that agency to have a robust and transparent decision-making process to ensure that it is gaining the most use out of the portfolio it holds (and does not hold properties long-term where there is no need).

At the same time, demand for use of under-utilized state land is increasing. For example, urban renewal is taking on a greater priority and areas of state land are seen as possible sites for government-led affordable housing initiatives on in-fill and brown-field sites. This requires a greater deal of collaboration and partnerships, which are essential to making progress.

3.2.3 Greater need for commercial skills and behavior

In addition, demands from government and the public have required a higher level of commercial awareness. This includes an understanding of the commercial drivers for land management (such as increasing revenue from state land and the need to use resources efficiently) as well as the need to align with the objectives that government has set.

The pace of change in all sectors of property and related professions is increasing. Property professionals working with state land need to be aware of changes in many areas, such as technology, legislation, best practice, business management and quality assurance.

This means that staff need to always be mindful of the need to think of new ways in which to manage land in the future. The depth of knowledge and technical capability required for this role is high, but is not always readily available within the New Zealand market and is limited internationally.

3.2.4 Absence of formal training

State land management is not an area that has formal training. While New Zealand universities and other technical institutions have degrees and other courses in valuation, property management and surveying, state land management is not taught in any detail. Efforts to create a formal diploma or other qualification in state land management were attempted in the 1990s but were not able to be progressed due to the specialized nature of this work, and the small potential market for potential students.

Historically, staff would start as 'cadets' learning parts of their roles over a number of years, through formal training and by undertaking tasks starting at basic land management and gradually getting more complex. As they progressed through their career, their level of technical knowledge would increase, through completing a range of jobs and experiencing more difficult property related tasks. Some of the staff members who were first hired in the 1970s are still working at LINZ. 'Learning by doing' is still a major way that people come to understand the core principles of state land management.

3.2.5 Changing demographic

Following reforms in the 1980s and 1990s, the number of core staff working on state land issues in New Zealand has fallen. As people have moved out of this area, including in to private sector service providers, technical expertise on state land has tended to be focused among a small core of experienced staff. However, many of these knowledgeable staff are reaching their 60s and are approaching retirement age. There is a real risk that as these people leave government (usually through retirement), much of the expertise, whether it is an understanding of legislation or memories of how issues have previously been dealt with, will be lost.

For example, the table below illustrates the distribution of experience for those LINZ staff managing state land under the agency’s control.

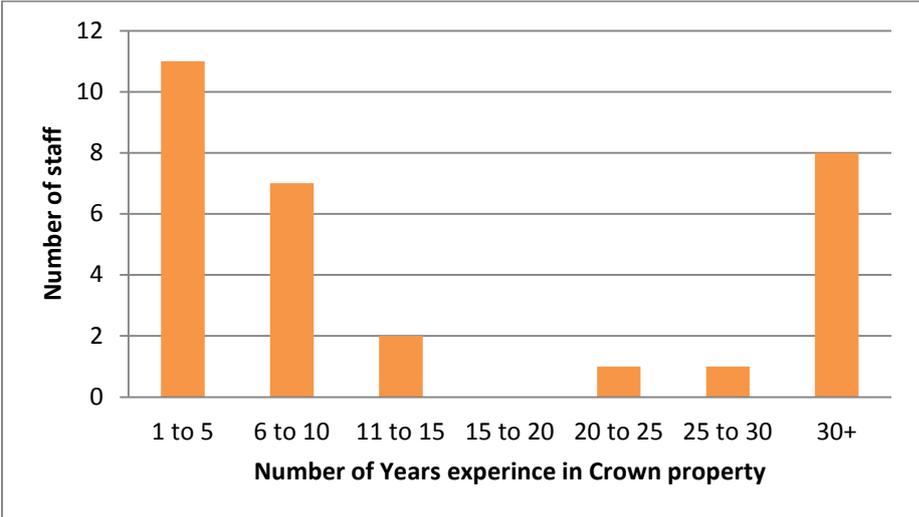


Table 1: Profile of LINZ Crown property team, Wellington (time in job)

Of the 30 staff LINZ has working on state land in its Wellington office, over half have been with the organization in such role for less than ten years. Conversely there is a large number of staff who have 30 or more years working in this area.

There are a number of reasons for the ‘gap’ in the middle of the table. Significant downsizing in staff numbers in the 1980s and 1990s lead to few new staff being hired. Also, with the development of more mobile workforce preferences, retention of those staff that were hired has proven more difficult, as they move out of this area of work, or in to the private sector providers.

While time in job does not equate to levels of knowledge of experience, the above table does demonstrate that there are a large number of staff who are either being trained or are learning their role, and another core of people who have a significant amount of experience in this work. As this last group moves out of the workforce in the next 1-5 years (and may be replaced with more inexperienced staff) this will change the makeup of the property section towards the lower end of the scale.

Importantly, this change is not limited to LINZ alone. Other government agencies, such as the Department of Conservation, and private sector providers are also facing potential loss of older, more experienced staff. Finding replacement personnel may become increasingly difficult. This reinforces the need to recognise that capability in state land management is not an issue for one agency, but spans the entire government property profession.

3.2.6 Career demographics

The changing demographics and career aspirations of staff is also a factor. New staff members no longer see working for one government department, or even in one area like state land, for most of their careers as a desirable option. Younger staff members are more mobile career-wise, and may choose to have a range of different jobs in related roles from the outset of their working lives. These last two factors mean that the expectation of having long-term staff, learning as they go over a number of years is no longer realistic. It provides a challenge in engaging new staff and getting them to a sufficient level of knowledge to be able to be productive as quickly as possible. Also, determining how to capture the knowledge from those staff already in the agency is vital.

Facing a potentially higher staff turnover than in the past, government agencies such as LINZ need to have robust knowledge sharing and training programs. These programs will be called on more frequently, and it is no longer feasible to invest time and effort in training new staff on an ad hoc basis.

3.2.7 Location of knowledge

As noted above a lot of the knowledge on state land has been recorded but is not easily accessible. It may be in papers held by one person, or electronically in stored emails. LINZ does have an electronic document management system that allows access to documents between offices and even remotely. However, even where information is captured electronically, the lack of metadata or accepted conventions can make locating and retrieving this information difficult.

Also, many historic documents, manuals and practice notes are written in a way that requires an existing level of knowledge to interpret. They are potentially overly bureaucratic, physically large documents, and not easy to read. Issues have arisen when staff members try to use these documents as training aids, and this creates the potential to disengage staff from the learning process.

4. CURRENT CAPABILITY INITIATIVES

LINZ has over the last five years given a greater focus to capability in the state land area. This work is ongoing, but is already starting to deliver results. A number of initiatives are underway and are detailed below.

4.1 Recognition of importance of capability

A major action was to get acceptance that building and maintaining capability was vital to the future of state land management. Capability is not something that is easily recognizable when the focus is managing properties. It has only been in the last three-five years that more concrete steps have been taken in this area. In part, the assistance of FIG, in particular knowledge gained from previous working weeks and seminars about the similar issues facing other countries, helped to refine the work currently underway.

Capability was a specific factor in a recent restructuring of LINZ's Crown property functions. The key drivers for change to the existing organizational design were:

- the creation of the Crown Property Centre of Expertise (see below)
- the requirement to better understand and meet the needs of customers and stakeholders, including the general public
- to meet the Government's goal of "Better Public Services for all New Zealanders"
- to ensure that Māori interests in Crown land were expertly managed
- to contribute to meeting LINZ's 10 year vision – The "Power of Where" drives New Zealand's success

This involved an assessment of the organization's capability needs in the Crown property area. The aim is to have a flexible and adaptive workforce with technical capability, operating with a customer-service focus and have the analysis skills and judgment to make appropriate decisions about the land they manage.

It is intended that the relevant team managers will now work as a collective group to assess development and capability requirements for the entire work group. They will identify gaps in capability and assess and prioritize which knowledge, skills and experience needed to be developed.

4.2 Knowledge stewardship

As part of the review noted above, the need for a formal "guardian of knowledge" was developed. This is based on two things: knowledge is currently in the heads of long serving staff, and while documentary evidence capturing this knowledge exists, it is not always current or easily accessible.

In response, a team has been charged with a specific function to manage knowledge and capability across LINZ. Part of this team's role is to develop and maintain formal induction training programs for staff.⁵ Another role will be to catalogue the information and knowledge already held by LINZ and make it more easily available to staff and external parties.

⁵ An induction programme is a formal way of training new staff in the agency to provide an initial level of knowledge. This benefits the staff member by understanding the key principles of their role and where they can go for further information.

4.3 Engagement across government

LINZ has developed the Crown Property Centre of Expertise (CPCOE). CPCOE offers a range of services for other government agencies in the management, acquisition and disposal of state land. This includes asset or tenancy management and other property services, or overseeing the disposal of surplus land. The vision for this initiative is to be the leader across government in state land management.

As part of this work LINZ aims to improve capability across the government's property sector with regard to state land and improving the use of that land to meet government and public needs. This is to be achieved by providing training modules, secondment opportunities, workshops and other opportunities for development. While some of the initiatives below have been underway for some time, bringing them all under one programme is intended to increase capability across government in a structured way.

LINZ staff have many years of experience in managing state land, and working within relevant legislation, regulations and policies. We also have experience in best practice property and contract management and procurement.

4.4 Documented processes for staff

LINZ has undertaken a significant amount of effort in the last 6-7 years to document its state land management processes in a formal manner. Standards and guidelines have been published to outline what staff members are required to do in each high-risk task and outline the processes that they should follow. These are not intended to override judgement in their work, but will help to ensure that a consistent approach is taken to this work.

Further efforts have been made to document the process for decision-making under the various legislation that LINZ is responsible for. Decision making is an important part of land administration, and it is important that government and the public can have confidence that the decisions around state land are made in a clear and consistent manner and are sustainable, capable of withstanding scrutiny through the courts of law.

LINZ developed a Documented Decision-Making Process, which is a simplified way to take information received and work it through consistent and comprehensive risk based steps to make a 'decision.' Working papers have also been developed, as well as a checklist for staff to ensure that all requirements of administrative law are met. This process has been outlined in earlier presentations,⁶

⁶ Trevor Knowles, *State and Public Sector Land Management in New Zealand: An Outline of the Background and Administration Processes*, FIG/FAO/CNG International Seminar on State and Public Sector Land Management, Verona Italy, September 2008

4.5 Continuing professional development

As capability in state land requires more commercial expertise, such as financial control, asset and risk management and commercial procurement, we have found opportunities to utilize the private sector training in these areas, rather than try to replicate such tools internally. Staff can seek to become members of professional bodies, such as the Property Institute of New Zealand. The Property Institute is New Zealand's premier property professional organisation, headquartered in Wellington and representing valuers, property managers, property advisors and plant and machinery valuers nationwide. It has over 2,500 members in these professions. It is the leading professional body for standards, qualifications and ethics across all facets of the property professions within New Zealand.

This gives LINZ staff access to a range of professional networks and opportunities, such as seminars run by these private entities, or the ability to do training in more commercial aspects of their work, learning the best practice used in the private sector.

Also, some LINZ staff members are trained lawyers and can access professional development programs run by the New Zealand Law Society. While this is mainly focused on property or land law, there are also opportunities to learn other legal skills that may apply to the work that they undertake.

By engaging with the private sector professional bodies, there is also potential to develop career pathways inside and outside of government.

4.6 Online training modules

LINZ is working with the private sector to record and disseminate the knowledge associated with state land management. The Property Institute has a company, Property Education & Training Ltd that provides professional development for members and non-members. Online property-related training modules are available that can be accessed anytime and anywhere, even from smartphone or tablet devices.

In 2014, LINZ and the Institute launched an initial online training module in state land. This pilot module was intended to summarize how the state manages its land, and the differences between state land management and that of private land. Further training modules will be developed over the next few years, touching on subjects as compulsory acquisition, property management, sale of land and the land-based aspects of the Crown's Treaty of Waitangi claim settlements with Māori.

These modules are accessible in a number of ways, via computer and mobile devices. They enable learning remotely, and at a pace set by the user.

4.7 Resource Hub

In 2013 LINZ launched a pilot to create an internal electronic resource hub for state land management. This web-based system is intended to provide a single way for staff to access resources, expertise and best practice for land management activities.

It is a tool to help transfer knowledge between staff in a simple way. The resource hub collates and store searchable information on specific topics with LINZ's land management functions. It has links to LINZ's electronic document management system, the agency's intranet and to external sites.

The resource hub covers three major aspects of knowledge transfer:

- **individual development** through one to one partnership based mentoring
- **group development** through multi-layers of formal and informal interaction virtually or otherwise
- **organisational knowledge building** through a central repository of interest or knowledge groups

Staff members are encouraged to identify their own topics, to research and draft content and seek comments from their peers. We will add more topics or clusters to the resource hub repository. This work will expand to include knowledge capturing from various other sources such as mentoring notes, technical sessions, learning materials from training courses etc. This hopefully will lead to improved data management, and more easily identifiable and useable records.

4.8 Staff engagement

The on-going learning and development of staff at LINZ is dealt with in a formal manner. Each position has a formal, written job description which describes the role and the skills considered necessary. As part of their employment, each staff member has a performance agreement. This document sets out the expectations of staff and how their performance will be measured. Part of this agreement includes a development plan, identifying agreed areas of competency that the staff member and their manager have agreed to work towards. Much of this development may be new skills and knowledge are required that can be learnt on the job and through working with colleagues.

LINZ's Crown property area runs regular training sessions/forums on professional development. These are opportunities for staff to meet, ask questions and share knowledge on technical issues that may come up in their everyday work. By setting time aside specifically for this purpose it enables staff to think about aspects of their work that they wish to learn more about. Staff members are encouraged to identify the areas of interest that they wish to learn about. Notes from such sessions are recorded and kept for future reference.

Finally, staff are now involved in managing all of matters associated with an area of land, rather than focusing on particular aspects (such as disposal, property management, leasing).

This “end-to-end management” is intended to expose staff to the full scope of issues that may arise with state land and become more skilled in being able to manage a wider range of activities.

4.9 Mentoring

As part of the engagement, senior staff members are encouraged to mentor new staff in the specifics of state land management. This can be done on an ad basis, simply by being available to answer questions, to working through land cases together, to providing formal peer-to-peer coaching on a technical issue. The mentor can provide a different perspective on skills and competencies.

4.10 International engagement

Not all answers for land management problems can be found within New Zealand. New challenges such as climate change, or land rights on government land are global issues and

LINZ is a member of the Australasian Crown Land Administrators’ Forum, an organization for state land administrators from each of the Australian states and New Zealand to meet and share information on a bi-annual basis. This is an opportunity to compare practice, legislative and regulatory frameworks, and operational issues that may be common between agencies. This group has also established an online forum where members can ask questions of other jurisdictions on technical or policy matters.

FIG is another source of engagement and expertise that can be useful in our setting. The collection of the collection of papers and presentations from previous FIG events, covering aspects of valuation, cadastre or urban development, has been reviewed on a regular basis to identify matters on interest in these disciplines that may be applicable to state land. Physical meetings such as FIG sessions in Verona (2008) and Budapest (2012) enable discussions and documentation to be shared between countries on specific state land issues. Discussions on initiatives underway in different countries have prompted us to consider whether some of these examples could be modified for application in New Zealand.

For example, LINZ is investigating a website to provide better information to other government agencies (and eventually the public) about the land that LINZ is looking to sell or otherwise make available. Part of this work was prompted by the example of the BVVG AgriForest Privatisation Agency in Germany, presented at the FIG seminar in Budapest in 2012.⁷

⁷ Katja DELLS, Andreas GLÄSEL and Michael GABEL, *IT-supported State-land Management in a Transitional Environment - Examples from Eastern Germany and Mongolia*, FIG paper (Budapest 2012).

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5. FUTURE ACTIONS

5.1 New skills required

State land management is not static. There are a range of future developments in the way land is managed that could change the skills and capability needed. This includes needing to respond to the impact of climate change on state land, or growing pressures for better use of state land or quicker decision-making. And as the pace of change continues to increase, more flexible ways of working will be required.

For example LINZ has identified that it needs access to business planning and financial analysis skills for state land that were not considered necessary in the past. Limited resources require better decisions about which land to focus attention on, and a desire to identify deliverable results ahead of time. The need to have a capability program that can respond to these challenges and does not reinforce 'standard' ways of working will be paramount.

5.2 All of government resource hub

Currently the resource hub noted above is only accessible by LINZ staff members. However, as part of better educating other government agencies, one possibility is to allow access to all or part of the resource hub for these agencies and their private sector providers. It is hoped that this will share knowledge between agencies and pool expertise across government. The benefits of doing so would include better consistency in how different organizations deal with similar issues,

We envisage further engagement between agencies, both within New Zealand and externally. For example, the development of the Government Property Profession Competence Framework in the United Kingdom⁸ is an initiative that could influence some of the work currently underway in New Zealand.

5.3 Building ability of the community to manage state land

As the roles of government in managing state land change, there is a greater need for community involvement. For example, the provision of housing for unemployed or low income people may increasingly be done using state land, which is managed by the community sector groups, such as charities and non-governmental organizations. Alternately, more reserves and other scenic areas may be managed by community trusts for local and central government. Making some of the professional expertise available to these groups is likely to be necessary in the future.

⁸ Government Property Profession Competence Framework, United Kingdom Government:
<http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/networks/gpp/property-asset-management-in-government/competence-framework>

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5.4 Better information for the public

As part of assisting the public to understand what can and can't occur on state land, LINZ is currently redesigning its website and other publications. The aim of this work is to better inform our customers, by detailing how people can lease or otherwise use state land, and what they need to do. This will assist potential users of the land, by giving them clear guidance and better informing them as to how state land can be used and is managed. If sufficient and complete information on their proposed actions is given early, this makes it easier for LINZ to assess and decide whether to allow that use. This can lead to quicker and robust decisions that meet the objectives of potential users.

This work entails a complete redesign of our website, with better structured, and more easily identifiable information. This includes standard application forms and factsheets about the types of uses or tenures the public can seek over state land and giving a greater visibility of the actions LINZ is undertaking on the land.

For example, when LINZ is undertaking work to remove invasive or environmentally damaging weeds and pests on state land, it uses the LINZ webpage as a way of informing communities of this work and the strategy behind these actions.

Greater use of digital services is intended to provide information that customers wish to see. At the same time it will inform the public of the land that LINZ manages, and provide greater transparency of the actions that government is undertaking on state land.

6. LESSONS LEARNT

While this is still an ongoing process there are a range of lessons that have been learnt to date in developing capability in state land management.

Firstly, succession planning is vital. Staff are moving between agencies and roles with a lot more frequency. Replacements are not easy to find from outside of state land agencies. Therefore determining which people are potentially able to step up in to a new role is important.

Secondly, the development of capability for state land management within government in New Zealand has been done internally and on an ad hoc basis. This is not sustainable in the long-term. Education and sharing knowledge between individuals, organisations and with the wider community has to become part of the everyday work of a state land manager.

Much of the sharing of knowledge will happen outside any formal process. Indeed a lot of the movement of knowledge between people is 'invisible,' not easily seen or tracked by management.

Finally, there is a need to be proactive in developing capability. The organisation needs to champion and promote the profession widely and persuade staff members who hold the knowledge that it is important to capture and pass it on. Tackling this problem in a defined

and structured way is required to ensure that the professional and commercial skills necessary are available in to the future.

7. CONCLUSION

There are a range of challenges for government organizations such as LINZ in training staff and keeping technical knowledge at a level that enables state land to be managed effectively and good decision-making.

As a single organisation in a wider government property sector, it is clear that LINZ does not have all of the answers in this area. By aiming to be leader in state land management in New Zealand, LINZ will facilitate this work and encourage other government agencies to contribute, bringing their own expertise and practices forward, in a way that can useful to others..

Fundamentally, it is important that capability is not an ends in itself. Rather, if government has a capable workforce, able to apply its expertise to the management of state land, then the users of that land, and the wider community, will benefit.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

I have worked in the Crown property area at the Department of Survey and Land Information and LINZ since 1995, in both operational and regulatory roles. In 1999, I was part of an interagency team charged with reviewing the Public Works Act 1981 and Land Act 1948, and I am currently on a similar team reviewing the compensation provisions of the PWA.

Following a period as advisor to the Minister of Lands, I was appointed manager of LINZ's Crown Property Regulatory team. My team is responsible for administration of the PWA, setting standards and guidelines for the acquisition and disposal of land by Crown agencies under the PWA and Land Act 1948, and Treaty claim settlement legislation. In 2012 I was appointed Deputy Commissioner of Crown Lands in addition to my existing roles. This role has been expanded to be responsible for capability development programmes in LINZ and across the government's Crown property sector.

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