



Hon Karen Chhour, Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence

Further response to the review of interagency arrangements

Date	13 May 2026	Tracking	132403	Priority	Routine
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Action sought from Minister		Timeframe
Hon Karen Chhour Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence	Provide feedback on the changes recommended by the Executive Board for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence (Board) and Indicate how you wish to communicate this process to your Ministerial colleagues	Routine

Action[/s] for Minister's office staff

Contacts			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Andrew Kibblewhite	Chief Executive		☒
Hannah Cameron	Lead Change Advisor	9(2)(a)	☐

Purpose

1. This briefing provides a further update for your feedback following the review of interagency arrangements for family violence and sexual violence prevention.

Key messages

2. A review of interagency arrangements signalled the importance of the Board members being the face of the Board, with the Centre sitting behind as a secretariat, advisor and enabler.
3. The review recommended Board members play a more active role in driving change, including determining the most effective way to spend the current appropriation. It also recommended that the Centre should be re-focused on strategic investment advice, system strategy and design, and monitoring performance.
4. Further analysis has been completed on how existing resources are spread across these areas, and potential for re-alignment. The Board has also considered options for the delivery of some specific capability areas.
5. A change process will be required to ensure the Centre is organised for the greatest impact. This change will be commenced in June, with changes implemented by September.
6. The review process has highlighted the need to clarify the national and regional structures overseeing the piloting of the multi-agency response in four localities. As a result, the Board propose the establishment of a 'ring-fenced' dedicated unit, to ensure appropriate leadership of implementation, and to build stronger connections to the Regional Public Service Commissioners. Your views are sought on the hosting of this unit.
7. The total appropriation provided for delivering system leadership is unchanged. This change is about ensuring best value from that investment.
8. It is suggested that you write to your Ministerial colleagues to inform them of the proposed adjustments. A draft letter is enclosed in Appendix 2.

Recommendations

We recommend that you:

1. **Note** the recommendations of the review of the interagency agency arrangements for family violence and sexual violence prevention. ✓
2. **Note** that the Board is accountable to you for the delivery of these functions, regardless of the ways it deploys resources across agencies to deliver them. ✓
3. **Agree** that the Board should agree Agency Commitments which set out each agency's role and obligations as part of the Multi-Agency Response. Yes / No
4. **Agree** to the Board's proposal that the Centre takes a different approach to stakeholder engagement in order to ensure joined-up, whole-of-government communication with the sector. Yes / No
5. **Agree** to write to the Board to reinforce your expectations, including that agencies keep you and the Board informed of activities and announcements. Yes / No
6. **Agree** that there may be potential for further joined-up work to gather deeper victim/survivor insights and EITHER:
 - a) the Board to delegate funding to the Ministry of Justice to allow for 2 FTE to perform this function, OR
 - ✓ b) undertake further analysis ahead of considering allocation of resources for this function. Indicate preferred option
7. **Indicate** your preference for the hosting of the Multi-Agency Response team, EITHER:
 - a) in the Ministry of Social Development, OR
 - ✓ b) a ring-fenced team within the Centre with a review within 12 months. Indicate preferred option
8. **Agree** to write to your Ministerial colleagues to update them (see draft at appendix 2). Yes / No



Hon Karen Chhour

Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence

Date 13/5/2026.

Background

9. Earlier this year, a review of the interagency arrangements for the prevention of family violence and sexual violence re-confirmed the ongoing need for strong leadership and interagency coordination.
10. Participants identified areas for improvement including:
 - The Board has not yet turned shared accountability into impact at local level
 - The Board could do more to hold agencies to account
 - The Centre has become too large and is doing too much
 - Agencies can be ambivalent in their expectations of the system approach
 - There is a lack of clarity relating to the use of 'expertise' to inform the Board's work
 - The Centre has over sometimes spent too long on design and has not been so effective turning that design work into action.
 - Investment analysis and strategy is a key to alignment, and this should be a stronger focus for the Board
11. The review recommended that Board members continue to be held accountable for system leadership, adopting and implementing whole-of-system approaches, and holding agencies to account.
12. The review recommended clarifying and refocusing the role of the Centre. This process was informed by conversations with targeted stakeholders who have noted that there remains duplication of effort across government, and that the Centre needs to be working more 'on the system' not 'in the system'.
13. The review identified that the Board could be more deliberate about considering how it organises the effort required to deliver on its functions. It could take a stronger role in providing you with advice on the allocation of the Appropriation of around \$22m that is allocated for leading a whole-of-government approach to prevent, address and eliminate family violence and sexual violence, as well as related services and support to Ministers.
14. To enable this consideration, the Board agreed to 12 system leadership capabilities required to deliver on the Board functions. They proposed which of those capabilities should be Centre-led, Centre-coordinated, or where there may be potential to considered delegated leadership to another agency. You endorsed the Board's proposals for further analysis.

Proposed changes following the review

Analysis of current resource deployment

15. We have now undertaken analysis of the deployment of resource across the 12 system leadership capabilities. The Board has considered this analysis and agree how weighting of effort could be adjusted in the future.

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16. The Board has agreed in principle to:
 - a) **Reducing** resource allocation to: sector relationships, system policy alignment and workforce planning and implementation
 - b) **Increasing** resource allocation to: coordinating multi-agency delivery and victim/survivor insights
 - c) **Maintaining** a similar level of resourcing to other capabilities, which include areas of priority such as strategy and investment planning, monitoring and analysis.
17. Reducing the resource allocation from the Appropriation and the Centre does not mean that work will not continue in these areas. Instead, it signals that these are capabilities which can be better delivered by agencies as part of their core business. To make this successful, the Board will need to hold all agencies to account for progress, and for adopting whole of government standards and approaches.
18. As part of this process, the Board have agreed that a Board-approved research and evaluation strategy and research programme is required to identify priorities and guide any commissioning regardless of the funding source. The Centre will continue to lead the whole of government approach with funding for research and evaluation ring-fenced to improve transparency.

Executive Director recruitment

19. The review of interagency arrangements signalled the importance of the Board members being the face of the Board, with the Centre sitting behind as a secretariat, advisor and enabler. Many review participants signalled that the framing of the leader of the Centre as a 'Chief Executive' was confusing. Legally, the Board is a Chief Executive under the Public Service Act 2020.
20. It is therefore recommended that this leadership role should be re-framed as an Executive Director. This would bring the role in line with other similar roles. Recruitment processes for a new Executive Director will be progressed in parallel to people change processes, to enable the new leader to commence alongside the implementation of the change.

Changes to the Centre

21. The review has resulted in clarity about the intended role of the Centre into the future (see **Attachment A**). Analysis of current resource deployment, and engagement with Centre leadership has also identified improvements that can be made to the organisational design for the Centre. These changes include streamlining some management and business support arrangements and establishing a structure that reflects the Centre's priority functions.
22. The Centre currently has 66 permanent, and 12 fixed term positions, as well as a small number of contractors. Some areas of important capability, such as data analysis and strategic investment, are staffed by fixed-term employees and these need to be made more sustainable. Conversely, some positions were created at a point of time for delivery of a specific project but are no longer as relevant to the Centre's ongoing role.
23. The Ministry of Justice, as host agency, has commenced planning to support a change process. Early indications are that this might see the Centre shift to around 50-55 roles, plus 8-10 roles in a dedicated unit for multi-agency response and two positions working on victim/survivor insights (see below for more information on these aspects).

Coordination of the multi-agency response

24. You have agreed that there is a nationally consistent way of working when responding to family violence and sexual violence is a top priority for the Board.
25. In August 2025, the Board agreed to a Target Operating Model (the Model) for multi-agency responses. The Model describes critical process steps of a response that can effectively support those affected by violence. It also sets out the national and regional functions required to support, escalate and govern the responses. The Model approved by the Board was contingent on significant technology development and investment.
26. In December 2025 the Board made decisions to pause proposed technology solutions and, in January 2026, agreed to pilot aspects of the model in four areas, focused on consistent risk assessment and triage.
27. One of the challenges in multi-agency arrangements is having clarity throughout the system of the role and obligations of different government agencies. It is proposed that the Board clarify Agency Commitments which will set out these out and can be used to hold each agency to account for their contribution. Once the Board has agreed their Agency Commitments, these could be endorsed by the Family Violence and Sexual Violence Ministerial Group, and then regular reports provided to you, as lead Minister, on how well agencies are delivering their obligations.
28. The current implementation of the model is underway led by the Centre. Currently around 13 FTE in the Centre are supporting this work, with the effort spread across 26 different individuals. The result has been overly complex project management arrangements that operational agencies have struggled to understand. The review of interagency arrangements received feedback that the Centre was not well placed to undertake detailed service design and implementation, and that this task would be better passed to a lead operational agency.
29. As part of the review and change process, a costing model has been developed to clarify the specific costs associated with running the multi-agency response in the short-term. This costing model has clarified the intended roles and responsibilities at the national, regional and local levels, and the average type and level of resourcing required to deliver the Model in its emergent state.
30. The Board consider that a dedicated unit of 8-10 FTE is required at national level to support the operational aspects of delivery, with a strong Director with strategic and operational experience. This team would have a ring-fenced allocation of funding from the Board for national, regional and local delivery of the response.
31. Establishing this unit is essential to a sustainable approach to the multi-agency response. It will create a more stable environment to consider the future consolidation of funding, such as the funding currently managed by Police.
32. At the regional level, the Board agrees that the Regional Public Service Commissioners could play an effective role in ensuring good governance, and escalation of barriers and risks. The Regional Public Service Commissioners are existing regional leaders who have convening mandate to co-ordinate engagement, reduce duplication, and problem solve.

Options for hosting the multi-agency response unit

33. Ongoing Board oversight and accountability is critical for the sustainable delivery of a nationally consistent multi-agency response. Regardless of any hosting arrangements for the

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unit, the accountability for the response, and associated funding, will remain with the Board, and to you as the responsible Minister.

34. Options for hosting the multi-agency response unit have been considered. These have also included hosting the unit in Police or Oranga Tamariki. The Board considers that two options are feasible:
- a) Hosting the unit in the Ministry of Social Development for two years given its oversight of the Regional Public Service Commissioners, and ability to ensure alignment with other operational arrangements. New roles would be created which existing Centre staff could apply for alongside experienced operational staff from relevant agencies.
 - b) Hosting a ring-fenced team within the Centre for the next year to test the approach. The unit could still work with the Regional Public Service Commissioners on future models for regional and local governance and leadership ahead of longer-term decisions. Some positions would be transferred from the current Centre, and other roles created which could be filled by secondment to ensure appropriate operational expertise from relevant agencies.
35. **Option a** would create stronger links to the operational capability required to make the multi-agency response successful. The Ministry of Social Development has an existing regional footprint, and also has oversight of the Regional Public Service Commissioners. Separating the unit from the core Centre would enable it to focus on its re-focused strategic and monitoring role. However, the Ministry of Social Development would need to make decisions on the location of the unit within its structure, and there is a risk that the unit becomes less able to adopt a system leadership approach.
36. **Option b** would be the least disruptive and would maintain current institutional knowledge. However, activity to date has revealed that the Centre lacks operational knowledge or footprint to gain the confidence of agencies. Deliberate effort would be needed to connect relevant agencies to the intent of the unit and to lift the capability of the unit to include more operational and delivery experience. There is also a risk that the hosting relationship would be a distraction from the Centre's strategic focus and would make the Centre less able to objectively hold the unit accountable for delivery.
37. The Board considers that in the long term, the Centre should **not** lead implementation of the multi-agency response or hold funding that is allocated to localities and regions. Instead, the Centre, and new Executive Director, should be focused on providing strategic investment advice, such as a plan for consolidating funding, and monitoring implementation including ensuring that practice is in line with evidence.
38. However, at this point, both options are feasible. If you prefer option b, it is recommended that the Secretary for Social Development becomes a sponsoring board member for the unit and plays an oversight role on behalf of the Board.
39. Any chosen arrangement could be reviewed in 2027 alongside other decisions regarding the pace of further roll out.

Victim survivor insights

40. It is a stated priority in the current Action Plan to *"work to ensure that the voices and experiences of victims/survivors remain central to all that we do."*

41. The review found that that the gathering of and response to victim/survivor experiences and insights may have caused confusion. The Centre directly receives some feedback from victim/survivors and may have unintentionally raised false expectations of its ability to respond and advocate for change. The resourcing analysis found that dedicated resourcing for victim and survivor insights is currently close to zero.
42. New Zealand has a Chief Victims Advisor (CVA - a Ministerial Advisory Group of one) who is hosted by the Ministry of Justice within the Justice Sector Directorate, including allocation of one senior advisor to provide support. The CVA has raised concerns about duplication across government, and the lack of a single point of engagement for victim/survivors. Victim/survivors raise issues with the CVA on an ad hoc basis, and she supports these individuals to navigate government but is limited by resources and scope.
43. Following options analysis, it is recommended that a small team (two FTE) is created in the Ministry of Justice to:
 - a) Report to the Board with advice on barriers, challenges and policy proposals, to inform the work programmes of agencies
 - b) Respond to enquiries and communications from victim survivors, including children
 - c) Ensure that victim survivor experience is integrated into system improvements
 - d) Undertake consultation with victim survivors on specific policy issues or proposals
44. This option provides a mechanism for the Board to receive advice on victims' views, integrated with feedback from the CVA. The small team would work with Justice Sector Directorate staff who are overseeing a programme of cross-agency work related to victims. They would also build connections to sector insights to ensure that appropriate insights are drawn from survey data. There will be clear accountability for delivery of this function to the Board, through the Secretary of Justice.
45. The CVA would work with the team but will not have direct management or delivery accountabilities. This close working relationship will address current concerns about duplication and ensure that there is a single channel for communication with victim survivors.
46. In line with its strategic role, the Centre would remain arms-length from the gathering of victim/survivor experiences. It will instead consolidate these insights alongside other sources of evidence and use this evidence to advise on strategic and investment priorities. The Centre will also support the Board in monitoring the delivery of this function.

Financial implications

47. The Board continues to be accountable to you, as responsible Minister, for the delivery of their functions and the administration of the Appropriation. All capabilities will continue to be funded from the Appropriation, regardless of where they are deployed, and therefore there are no official financial implications because of these changes.
48. To ensure focus on priorities, the Board proposes to create operational allocations for specific areas of spending in 2026/27 as set out in table 3 below.

Table 1: Proposed ring-fenced allocations for 2026/27

	2026/27 (m)
Budget for the Centre to deliver their re-focused role	\$13.05
Research and evaluation (managed by the Centre)	\$1.24
Coordinating multi-agency delivery (managed by the dedicated team hosted by the Centre)	\$6.60
Victim/survivor insights (managed by the Secretary of Justice)	\$0.45
TOTAL	\$21.34

Next steps/timeframes

49. There are no Cabinet decisions or financial implications arising from these proposals. We recommend that you update your Ministerial colleagues by a letter before the Board's proposed changes are shared with staff and stakeholders.
50. A communications plan has been developed to ensure that stakeholders receive clear and simple messages about the change. We can work with your office to provide updates on timeframes and to provide assurance that this process will be carefully managed.
51. The formal people change process will follow these communications. We anticipate this commencing in May with new arrangements being implemented by the beginning of September. This includes appointing a new leader for the Centre.

Appendix One: Back pocket talking points on the review

1. The government is committed to action that will prevent family violence and sexual violence, and we are making sure all of our resources are focused on activity that will make an impact.
2. The Chair of the Board commissioned a review of interagency arrangements to ensure that Board, the Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention and government agencies are operating effectively and efficiently.
3. The review confirmed the need for a joined-up system approach to family violence and sexual violence. One single agency cannot understand all the issues and take a whole-of-government view on the best way forward.
4. It is good to hear that the rationale for the Board, and the Centre supporting it, remains strong.
5. The purpose and functions of the Board that were agreed by Cabinet, remain consistent with the Action Plan and our government's priorities.
6. As lead Minister, I will continue to hold Board members accountable for delivery of agreed milestones, and their agency's contribution to multi-agency responses that are needed to keep people safe.
7. The Board has reviewed how they deploy resources and activities to drive the whole-of-government impact that we need.
8. The total resources provided for delivering system leadership are unchanged. This change is about ensuring best value from that investment.
9. I am confident that this will help ensure we deliver on our commitments and make a difference to victim survivors of family violence and sexual violence.

If asked about the Executive Director role

10. The review of interagency arrangements pointed to the importance of the Board members being the face of the Board, with the Centre sitting behind as a secretariat, advisor and enabler.
11. The accountability for implementing the government's strategy, and the levers to effect change, sit with the Chief Executives that make up the Board.
12. The previous framing of the leader of the Centre as a 'Chief Executive' was confusing for sector stakeholders. Changing the title to the more legally accurate, Executive Director brings the role in line with other similar roles.

Appendix two: Draft letter to FVSV Ministers

Dear Colleague,

Earlier this year, the Chair of the Executive Board for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence (Board) commissioned a review of interagency arrangements. The purpose of the review was to ensure that the Board, the Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention (the Centre), and government agencies are operating as effectively and efficiently as possible.

The review reconfirmed the ongoing need for strong, visible system leadership and interagency coordination in relation to family violence and sexual violence. It also identified opportunities to strengthen delivery, including by clarifying and refocusing the role of the Centre.

Importantly, the review confirmed that the rationale for the Board, and the Centre supporting it, remains strong. The purpose and functions of the Board, as agreed by Cabinet, remain consistent with the Action Plan and our Government's priorities. I am not proposing any changes to these arrangements, nor to the appropriation allocated for cross-system leadership.

The review identified the need for Board members to be clear about their accountability to drive change. To achieve our aims for the delivery of multi-agency responses and keep people safe, I am asking the Board to define Agency Commitments which outline the role and obligations of each government agency in the response. I will share these Agency Commitments with you and hold the Board to account for their delivery.

The review recommended that the Board consider more carefully how resources and activities are deployed to drive the whole of government impact we need. This work has now been completed, and the Board has agreed to make some changes to how it delivers its functions:

- First, I will place a stronger expectation on Board members and their agencies to align engagement with the sector, and for the Board to update me regularly on relevant activities. The Centre enable and monitor this more integrated approach.
- Second, the Centre will increasingly focus on advising the Board and Ministers on strategic priorities to deliver change, guiding the best use of government investment across the system, and taking a stronger role in monitoring system performance and delivery. To support this clearer focus, a change process will be undertaken to ensure the Centre is organised in a way that is fit for purpose.
- Third, leadership of the implementation and coordination of the multi-agency response will move to a dedicated team within the Centre. This will enable a more operational approach and alignment with existing local and regional arrangements. We will review this arrangement within 12 months, to ensure alignment with other thinking about the most efficient and effective structural arrangements in the public service.

I endorse these changes, which I believe will better support the Board to drive the outcomes we need to improve safety and wellbeing for New Zealanders.

If you would like further information, I encourage you to discuss this with your agency's Chief Executive Board member or contact my office.

Yours sincerely,

Hon Karen Chhour

Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence



Attachment A

Further response to the review of interagency arrangements

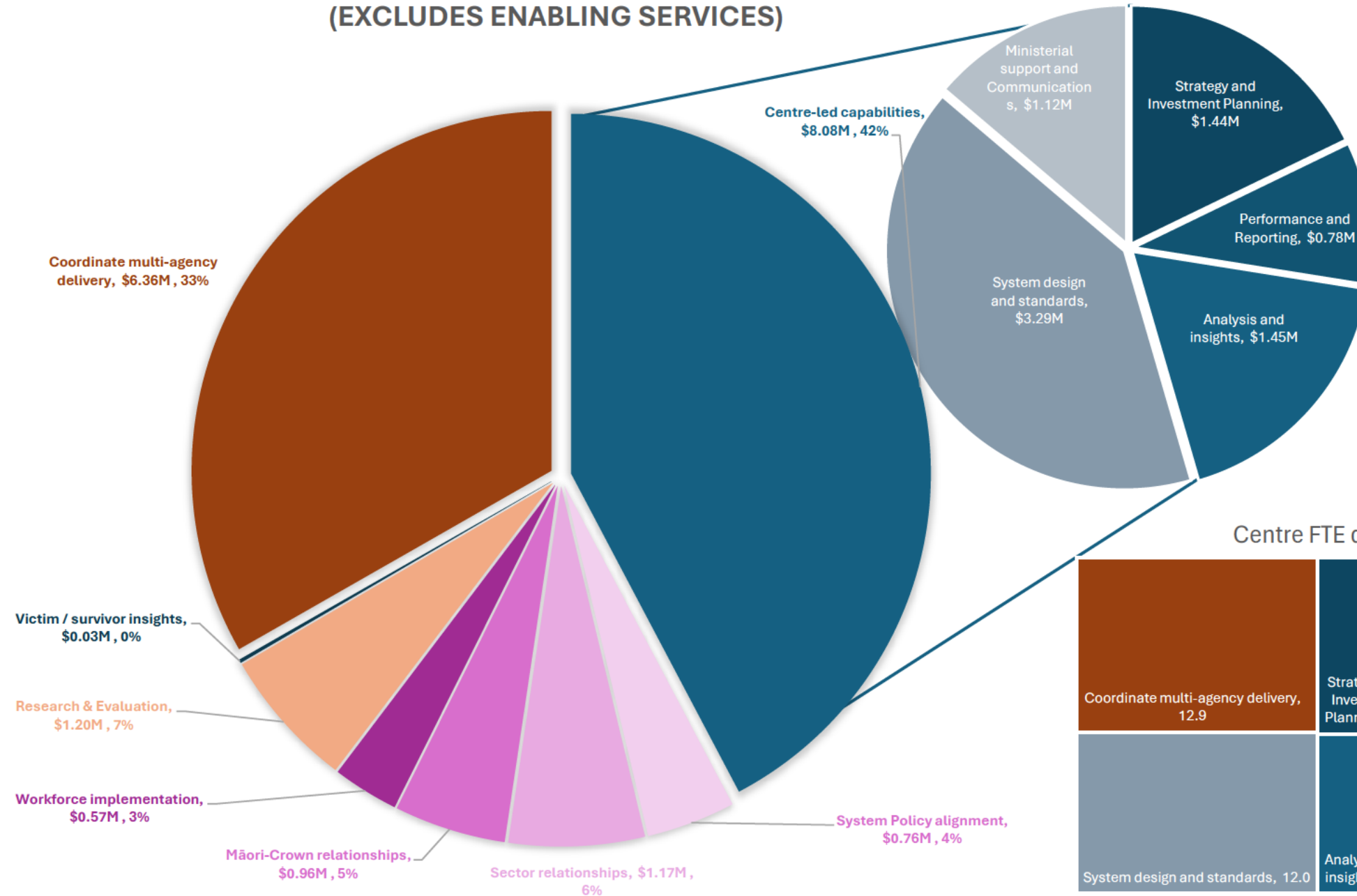
Slide one: current resource deployment analysis

Slide two: shifting the deployment of resource toward IEB priorities

Slide three: functions and capabilities to exercise system leadership



FUNCTIONAL VIEW BY RESOURCE DEPLOYMENT (EXCLUDES ENABLING SERVICES)



- Point in time analysis as at 28 Feb.
- Individual employees were assigned weighting across capability areas based on current work focus, as assessed by senior managers
- Doesn't account for variation across the year or staff agility across work areas.
- Annual operational funding is weighted across capability areas, includes Project Whetū spend in 2025.
- Enabling services including MoJ shared services agreement PLUS business support that is currently shared across the Centre is \$3.79m (not included in graphic but will be applied to future budget allocations on FTE basis).
- Total cost calculated at \$22.9m. Does not account for fixed term positions or vacancy lag and is therefore slightly higher than available budget.

Centre FTE distribution (28 Feb 2026)





Shifting the deployment of resources toward IEB priorities

	Capability areas	Current resource allocation		Proposed change in weighting of effort from IEB spend
		Estimated Centre FTE (point in time as at 28 Feb 2026)	Estimated annual cost to IEB (\$m) <u>includes</u> rem and operating costs <u>doesn't include</u> enabling services	
 Centre- led	Strategy and Investment Planning	7.9	\$1.44	=
	Analysis and insights	7.1	\$1.45	=
	Performance and reporting	5.1	\$0.78	=
	Ministerial support and communications	7.1	\$1.12	=
	System design and standards	12.0	\$3.29	=
 Centre- coordinated	Sector relationships	6.1	\$1.17	↓
	System policy alignment	4.9	\$0.76	↓
	Workforce planning and implementation	3.8	\$0.57	↓
	Māori-Crown relationships	4.2	\$0.96	=
	Research and evaluation	0.7	\$1.20	=
 Ring-fenced resourcing	Coordinate multi-agency delivery	12.9	\$6.36	↑
	Victim/survivor insights	0.1	\$0.03	↑
	TOTAL	71.9	\$19.13	



Functions and capabilities to exercise system leadership

Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence



Cabinet agreed functions of the Interdepartmental Executive Board

- provide whole-of-government strategy, policy, and budgeting advice to Ministers on eliminating family violence and sexual violence;
- provide analysis and evidence to support Ministers to make decisions on specific interventions;
- provide Ministers with an oversight of interventions and outcomes within the whole family violence and sexual violence sector, and identify any linkages, gaps, or opportunities;
- monitor, support and coordinate implementation of the National Strategy, and other priority and cross-agency initiatives, and lead the development of future iterations of the National Strategy; and
- manage relationships between government and the family violence and sexual violence sector;



Priorities for the Centre to provide system leadership

Strategy and investment planning

- Provide advice on evidence-based strategy and policy - develop and evolve National Strategy and Action Plan
- Advising on whole of government funding and service provision, providing evidence to support Ministers to make decisions about investments, identifying gaps and opportunities

Performance and reporting

- Enable the Board to agree responsibilities, and establish effective governance and leadership
- Monitor progress against Action Plans, compliance with system settings and impact on outcomes
- Enable public and parliamentary accountability including Annual Report and programme management

Ministerial support and communications

- Support the Minister, Board and agencies to communicate whole of government approach
- Enable a Ministerial advisory group to provide advice to the Minister
- Support Minister(s) in decision making, engagements and communication, OIAs and WPQs

System design and standards

- Facilitate Board decisions to set evidence-based requirements for system
- Lead design of tools and frameworks eg information sharing, risk assessment, capability frameworks
- Advise on mechanisms to monitor compliance against requirements including reporting and governance

Analysis and insights

- Consolidate data and insights from all sources, analysing trends and themes, outcomes and impact
- Report on prevalence, intervention effectiveness and challenges



Centre will coordinate, but agencies lead the doing

System policy alignment

- Ensure policies and actions are based on evidence and understanding of FV and SV and effective responses.

Workforce planning and implementation

- Design, fund and implement workforce strategy and training to address gaps, and embed consistent practice

Sector relationships

- Communicate with the sector, support and fund sector leadership and coordination (eg peak bodies)

Māori-Crown relationships

- Build capacity and capability of iwi to lead responses to family violence and sexual violence

Research and evaluation

- Design research and insights programme to fill knowledge gaps in relation to strategic priorities



Delegated to the Ministry of Justice

Victim/survivor insights

- Gather and report on victim/survivor experiences, respond to victim queries
- Gather feedback from victim/survivors on specific proposals for change



Ring-fenced Unit – hosting tbc

Coordinate multi-agency delivery

- Plan and lead delivery of ongoing consistent MAR model, engaging with localities on readiness and capability, collect monitoring information, evaluate practice and advise on improvements and rollout
- Commission and fund regional and local MAR to build capability and enable partnerships