

27 May 2025

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RESPONSE TO AN OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST (REF: DOIA045-2024/25)

On 13 May 2025, you contacted the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (the Ministry) requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information on Artificial Intelligence (AI) policy or guidance for staff. I have outlined your specific request and my response below.

I'd like to know how much government agencies are using artificial intelligence.

Does your organisation have an AI policy or guidance for staff? I would like to see a copy of that guidance if it exists. If it doesn't exist yet, what advice have you given staff so far on using AI? And do you have a timeline for creating your own AI policy?

The Ministry has a Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Tools Guideline that is consistent with the General Chief Digital Officer's (GDCO) Public Service AI Framework, and the use of AI technologies across the New Zealand Public Service. You may access the GDCO's Public Service AI Framework on the New Zealand Digital government website.

Click here: [Public Service AI Framework | NZ Digital government](#).

The Ministry for Pacific Peoples' Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Tools Guideline sets out the Ministry's expectations on the responsible use of GenAI and applies to all Ministry staff. I have appended to this letter a copy of the Ministry's GenAI Tools Guideline.

In line with standard OIA practice, the Ministry proactively publishes some of its responses to OIA requests. As such, this letter may be published on the Ministry for Pacific Peoples' website. Your personal details will be removed, and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you or your organisation.

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Should you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact the Ministry at: oiia_requests@mpp.govt.nz.

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

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Danilo Coelho de Almeida
Deputy Secretary
Corporate and Support Services



Ministry for Pacific Peoples

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Tools

Guidelines

Deputy Secretary, Corporate & Support Services

April 2024

Document

This document contains the guidelines for the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools at the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (MPP).

Version History

VERSION	DATE	AUTHOR	KEY CHANGES
1.0	05 April 2024	Kate Brewer	First draft
2.0	24 April 2024	Kate Brewer	Updated based on feedback (Transitional Director IT, Director Operations Corporate Services, Principal Advisor Risk and Assurance).

Note: Do not make unauthorised electronic copies or new versions (drafts) of this corporate policy. Contact the Deputy Secretary, Corporate Services to have new drafts initiated and recorded in the appropriate manner.

Status

CONTACT	Chief Information Security Officer
STATUS	In effect from May 2024
APPROVED DATE	May 2024
POLICY OWNER	Ministry for Pacific Peoples
BUSINESS OWNER	Deputy Secretary Corporate & Support Services
REVISION CYCLE	Every two years or as needed
NEXT REVIEW	December 2025

Signoff

NAME	ROLE	SIGNATURE	DATE

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RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

1. Introduction

This document sets out MPP's expectations on the responsible use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) at MPP.

MPP has undertaken an IT Security Assessment of Microsoft's Co-pilot GenAI tool.

1.1 MPP's Current Position Is:

- Co-pilot has been approved as MPP's enterprise GenAI tool.
- MPP staff can use Co-pilot in accordance with the Guidance Principles below.
- Use of any other GenAI tool is not permitted without an IT Security Assessment and approval from MPP's Chief Security Officer, Chief Information Security Officer and Chief Privacy Officer; and
- Personal or sensitive information must not be inputted into Co-Pilot AI tool.

2. Guidance Principles

2.1 Don't use Co-pilot for any MPP data classified as SENSITIVE or above

The risks for security and potential impacts if Government SENSITIVE or above datasets were to be compromised could be extremely serious. Do not input these types of datasets into Co-pilot.

2.2 Don't input personal information into Co-Pilot

In situations where it isn't possible to use non-personal information, a Privacy Impact Assessment must be conducted, all potential risks must be identified and addressed, and the Assessment must be approved by MPP's Chief Privacy Officer.

2.3 Don't use any other GenAI tool

This could create a risk of technologies being used in ways that could result in privacy or security breaches or disrupt the organisation's current and approved technology environment.

If staff require use of an AI tool other than Co-pilot, an IT Security Assessment must be conducted, and approval of the tool must be provided by MPP's Chief Security Officer, Chief Information Security Officer and Chief Privacy Office.

A Privacy Impact Assessment may also need to be conducted if the tool is intended to be used to input personal information.

2.4 Don't input any information into Co-Pilot that would be withheld under the Official Information Act

The risks for the integrity of the public service and potential impacts if redacted information were to be accessed and or inappropriately used could be extremely damaging for public trust and confidence.

2.5 Don't use Co-pilot for Ministry decision-making processes.

MPP is required to understand its own decision-making processes and to be able to explain those decisions when questioned to do so. Using GenAI for essential systems and services uses AI algorithms which are extremely complex to understand and very difficult to explain how the output was reached.

3. Why do we need a GenAI Guide?

GenAI, when used appropriately, can improve services provided by organisations and Government agencies. GenAI is currently being integrated into cloud, security and other services around the world and so is no longer something organisations can or necessarily should avoid using.

However, New Zealanders have concerns about the use of AI, and they have expectations that any use of it by Government agencies will be done so carefully, ethically and securely.

This guidance is intended to support staff at MPP to understand the benefits and risks and to be aware of the Ministry's expectations regarding the proper use of the approved GenAI tool, Co-pilot.

4. Benefits of GenAI

AI assists with mechanical and tedious tasks (i.e. counting or data matching) that people might not want to or be able to do. Those tasks are likely better suited to automation such as offered by AI tools.

AI can save time. GenAI can be used to create a first draft of documents, but the GenAI outcomes are limited in their ability to create new critical content, and any output requires careful review.

By using algorithms AI can detect patterns in large volumes of data and can interpret their meaning. Analytics created by AI in this way can use and access more data, are more detailed, and the models improve over time.

5. Risks of GenAI

As AI models are created off training data which is often publicly sourced or sourced from the input of others using the AI tool, information specific to minority groups may not be well represented in the data drawn from the AI tool and results can be discriminatory or unfair.

Inputting personal or sensitive information into the AI model without consent or authority may lead to a privacy and / or security breach by the organisation.

Hackers may manipulate AI models to facilitate cyber-attacks. AI tools can be used to impersonate real people, create fake identities and to assist with online hacking and phishing scams.

Some AI tools can leak sensitive information that increases security risks. AI models have been known to suggest real passwords.

AI makes it easier to exploit illegally obtained information from data breaches, to re-identify people in published datasets, and to combine any sources of data to build detailed profiles of people which are more or less accurate.

Poorly considered prompts used in the AI model may lead to inaccurate responses from it.

6. Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Artificial Intelligence	AI is software that learns from data. AI tools are built on 'training data' (see definition below) and examples of AI tools include software used to review and summarise legal documents using language matching; the predictive text function on your laptop or phone; and content creating tools (see definition below) such as Co-pilot.
Generative AI	Is one type of Artificial Intelligence technology that can produce content – such as text, images or audio – by matching the prompts or questions it receives to patterns in the data that it has. On the basis of probability, the technology then uses that matched data to 'fill in the blanks' and create or generate text or images that closely resemble human-related content.
Publicly available AI tools	These sit outside an agency's own environment as third-party AI platforms or software. Apart from Microsoft's Co-pilot, these tools have not been risk assessed by MPP to the standard expected for NZ Government agencies. Open AI's ChatGPT, Microsoft's Bing search and Google's Bard are the most well-known examples of free and publicly available GenAI.
Personal Information	Information about a living individual. Examples include a person's name, telephone number, address, date of birth, ethnic origin and financial information. Even if a person's name is not recorded, but there is a reasonable chance that they could be identified from other information or a combination of pieces of information, it can still be personal information for the purposes of the Privacy Act.
Training data	is an extremely large dataset that is used to teach machine learning models of AI. The data is often publicly sourced or sourced from the input of others using the AI tool and can take various forms, such as images, audio, or text.

7. Further Resources

- Privacy Policy
- [Privacy Act 2020](#)
- [Summary of Guidance from Office of Privacy Commissioner on GenAI.docx](#)
- [Office of the Privacy Commissioner | Generative Artificial Intelligence.](#)
- [Interim GenAI guidance for the public service — Full guidance \(PDF 193 KB\)](#)
- [Interim GenAI guidance for the public service — Summary \(PDF 230 KB\)](#)

This document is a first effort by MPP to provide help to staff to use this new class of technology. It will be updated as the technology evolves, and the risks and impacts are better understood.