

Section 30A progress update on Oranga Tamariki response to the report *Experiences of Care in Aotearoa 2024/25*

26 June 2026

Overview

On 29 January 2026, Aroturuki Tamariki | The Independent Children's Monitor (the Monitor) provided Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) with a copy of the final report for *Experiences of Care in Aotearoa* (the report), its annual report on agency compliance with the Oranga Tamariki (National Care Standards and Related Matters) Regulations 2018 for the period 1 Jul 2024 to 30 June 2025.

On 27 February 2026, the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki provided a formal response to the report's findings, which included actions that the agency would take to address the findings in the Monitor's report.

Under section 30A of the Oversight of Oranga Tamariki System Act 2022, the chief executive must prepare a progress update on that response and an explanation of any changes to the response.

The progress report must be provided to the Monitor, the Minister responsible for the Monitor, and the Minister responsible for the administration of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 within four months of providing the response to the report.

The key findings of the report were that:

1. There has been no real improvement in compliance with the National Care Standards Regulations.
2. This is because social workers are not always able to work effectively and other government agencies are not sufficiently prioritising access to help.
3. Areas of high and low compliance, although Oranga Tamariki developed regulations and should comply with them all.
4. New action plan is expected to improve performance.
5. Improved compliance may be easier with a more dedicated focus.

In its response to the report, Oranga Tamariki highlighted our organisational priorities and the following work programmes that were already underway and which would drive improvement with the National Care Standards and contribute to addressing the Monitor's key findings:

- The National Care Standards Action Plan.
- Frontline Technology Systems Upgrade.
- Oranga Tamariki System Action Plan.
- Integrated Cross-Agency Response to the Dame Karen Poutasi Review.

As outlined in our response to the report, these are significant long-term work programmes, and we expect it to take some time before we begin to see significant improvements in performance. There has been positive, but modest progress in the four months since we responded to the report. An updated overview of these work programmes has been provided below.

There has been no change to how Oranga Tamariki is responding to the report's findings. All actions are regularly monitored and reported to Te Riu, the Oranga Tamariki Leadership team.



Update on actions in response to the report

Organisational priorities

Oranga Tamariki is focused on stabilising and strengthening its frontline workforce, improving the safety and quality of care, building system capacity, and enhancing partnership-based responses across government, iwi, community organisations and service providers.

Budget 2026 reinforced these priorities through targeted investment in initiatives to meet service demand and improve service efficiency, meet the needs of increasing numbers of children with complex needs and respond to the recommendations from the Dame Karen Poutasi review.

The National Care Standards Action Plan (NCSAP) – delivery continuing

Although full-year results for 2025/26 are not yet available, there are early indications of improvement, particularly in assessment and planning practice over quarters one and two, including increased use of organisational assessment and planning tools such as the Assessment Report and All About Me plan.

We have also targeted support for those sites and regions where there has been less progress against the actions under the NCSAP.

Frontline Technology Systems Upgrade (FTSU) – delivery continuing

The FTSU programme has continued to progress with the procurement of a combined platform and implementation and support partner, to replace our current case management system, CYRAS.

FTSU has also delivered an early practice enhancement with Te Aronga, a replacement for the All About Me Plan.

Te Aronga is a web application that went live on 4 May 2026 and has received extremely positive feedback from kaimahi and rangatahi. Te Aronga supports social workers to walk alongside te tamaiti and whānau when creating a plan and ensure they are receiving the care and support they need to achieve their oranga aspirations.

There is a six-month transition period for all tamariki and rangatahi in care to have a Te Aronga developed. The existing All About Me Plans remain valid for six months, or until a care arrangement or their needs change.

Another key change is the visit to child is based on need and is incorporated into Te Aronga to support the National Care Standards.

Oranga Tamariki System Action Plan (OTSAP) – delivery continuing



The OTSAP priorities for 2025/26 were focused on improving access to services and supports across health, education, and housing, supported by improved data and information sharing between agencies. This has included initiatives to improve the Gateway Assessment Service, enhance the visibility of children and young people in care in the health system, improve access to education supports, support smoother housing transitions, and enhance data and information sharing across all areas.

Agencies are now considering next steps for 2026/27 and beyond.

Six-monthly progress reports are available on the Oranga Tamariki System Action Plan website: [Implementation | Oranga Tamariki System Action Plan](#).

Integrated Cross-Agency Response to the Dame Karen Poutasi Review – delivery continuing

Oranga Tamariki is helping progress work across government to strengthen how children are protected, following the Dame Karen Poutasi Review. Agencies are working together to improve systems, training, and accountability so that children's safety is better supported across health, education, social services, and justice sectors.

A key focus is the introduction of mandatory child protection training for core children's workers. A staged approach has been adopted, beginning with a foundational training module that was launched for testing in March 2026. This module has been trialled across multiple agencies, including Oranga Tamariki, Health NZ, Police, and the Ministry of Education, with around 100 Oranga Tamariki staff participating. Feedback is being used to refine the training, and a more advanced module, including in-person components, is planned for testing from July 2026.

Alongside training, Oranga Tamariki has work underway to clarify shared responsibility across agencies for ensuring child safety. Officials have provided Ministers with options to strengthen both policy and legislation, particularly under the Children's Act 2014. Child protection policies are being reviewed to ensure they effectively support reporting and safe practice, and targeted consultation will help determine whether further operational or legislative changes are required.

Oranga Tamariki is the lead agency for the new multi-agency hub established in early 2026 to identify and respond quickly to the needs of children whose sole parent or carer is imprisoned. Since it was implemented, the Hub has strengthened information sharing and coordinated support, improving responses to children's safety, wellbeing, education, health and care needs, and had assisted 110 children by April 2026.

Social Sector Chief Executives have extended the Hub prototype (phase 2) for a further 12 months to 30 June 2027. This will enable continued learning, consolidation, evidence-building, strengthening cross-agency practices and roles, improving community alignment, establishing baselines, and identifying efficiencies.

Oranga Tamariki is also leading work to develop a national public awareness campaign to improve recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect, aligned



with mandatory training for children's workers and informed by evidence on effective behaviour-change approaches, with further advice to Ministers due later in 2026.

Overall, these combined efforts aim to ensure that Oranga Tamariki and agencies work more effectively together, that workers are better equipped to identify and respond to risks, and that systems are strengthened to better protect children across New Zealand.