



Statement of Approach to Public Policy

Purpose

The New Zealand Society of Actuaries ("NZSA") is the professional body for actuaries practising in New Zealand. The NZSA:

- Supports a highly specialised pool of around 400 members, of which around 250 are fully qualified actuaries.
- Sets, maintains, and upholds actuarial professional standards and conduct.
- Supports members as they advance their skills and knowledge.
- Contributes to the development of actuarial thinking and its application through thought leadership activities.
- Provides a source of reference on actuarial matters for government and other interested bodies.
- Provides a formal link with actuarial bodies elsewhere in the world.

The [NZSA Code of Conduct](#) requires members to act in the public interest. This means having responsibilities to the wider community as well as to a person or entity receiving actuarial advice. Actuarial expertise can enhance public policy development for the benefit of the whole community. However, as the NZSA is a small organisation, we prioritise our resources where they add the most value.

This Statement sets out the principles by which we carry out our public policy work.

Principles

- 1. The NZSA can add value to public policy debates in areas in which our members have experience in applying their specialised actuarial skills.**
 - Actuarial skills blend financial techniques with risk assessments. Actuaries model future outcomes based on understanding the past. We tend to think long-term and see outcomes as statistical distributions rather than point estimates. We use the insights in these uncertain futures to have meaningful conversations about risks and opportunities.
 - Actuaries' skills are widely relied on in life, general and health (re)insurance. Appointed Actuaries have regulated roles in insurance companies.
 - Other areas in which NZSA members work include climate change, superannuation and retirement incomes, finance and investment, enterprise risk management, prudential regulation, health policy, social investment and data science.
- 2. The NZSA should only make contributions to public policy debates where there is sufficient expertise and experience.** This means expertise is both sufficiently deep (including for peer review) and supported by professional experience.
- 3. NZSA involvement in public policy must be objective and evidence based.** The NZSA does not take policy positions or express opinions without evidence. Contributions to policy are made based on explaining the implications of evidence, which may include data, modelling and members' professional experiences. Assumptions and levels of uncertainty should be explained.
- 4. NZSA involvement in public policy should be in the public interest** by furthering knowledge, contributing to better and more equitable policy for the wellbeing of the whole community



and/or by strengthening effective industry regulation and how industry can serve its customers.

- 5. NZSA work in public policy is unbiased and free from any political or commercial influence.** It is not in conflict with any employment situation or client advice. The expert work is carried out by volunteer resource and support work is funded from general revenue which is mainly member subscriptions. NZSA does not accept commissions for any thought leadership work.
- 6. NZSA is an advocate for its members and aspires to grow the profession.** This perspective may be given in policy debate, but it should be transparent and not an influence on substantive input to public policy matters. The NZSA Code of Conduct always applies to all members. The Code's requirements to act in the public interest and for advice to be provided with competence and care are particularly relevant here.