

Director Sentiment Survey 2025



Produced by the Institute of Directors in association with ASB, the *Director Sentiment Survey* takes the pulse of New Zealand's governance community to identify strengths, issues and challenges.



Economic performance

55%



expected New Zealand's economic performance to improve over the next 12 months. This was a further lift from 2024 when 52% expected the economy to improve. On a net basis (improve minus decline), 36% of directors expected the economy to improve over the next year, up from 24% last year.

Business confidence

63%



expected their organisation's performance to improve over the next year (58% in 2024). The gap between expectations for organisational performance and the economy has widened slightly to 8% (from a record low of 6% in 2024). Directors are generally more positive about their organisations than the economy as a whole, with the average gap between expectations for organisational and national economic performance at 24.6% since the first survey in 2014.

Activism rising

44%



believe shareholder or member activism will have an impact on their board/organisation (10.1% high impact; 33.6% moderate impact) over the next two years. While activism remains less intense here than in larger markets, recent shareholder campaigns show that the pressure on boards is building.

Succession planning

37%



said their board are discussing succession planning of board chairs, down from 41.1% last year. Succession planning for board members/committee chairs (41.5%), CEO (54.3%) and senior management (57.8%) have also fallen, signalling reduced attention to leadership continuity and renewal.

Governing risk

Risk governance was a key focus for directors centred on building resilience and ensuring emerging threats are addressed within core oversight.

Risk management systems

69%



of directors said their boards have appropriate risk management systems in place – highest among listed company directors (88.1%).

Cyber risk

57%



of directors said their boards regularly review cyber risks, down from 62.2% in 2024 despite year-on-year increases in cyberattacks globally.

Physical impacts

46%



of directors said their board reviews the adequacy of its risk management approach to physical climate and environmental risks such as storms, floods and droughts.