



Te Kawa Mataaho

Public Service Commission

5 August 2025

9(2)(a) privacy

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Official Information Request

Our Ref: PSCR 2025-0566

I refer to your official information request received on 26 May 2025 for:

“Under the OIA, can I please have copies of all aide memoirs, briefings, memos, notes, reports, or any other advice, sent to the Minister or their offices regarding funding decisions for your department/ministry and votes you are responsible for, in the context of Budget 2025. This includes all Budget 2025 bids for funding, impacts of funding decisions in Budget 25, and impacts of not receiving funding in Budget 2025. This can be limited to 1 November 2024 to today.

Under the OIA, I also request copies of all aide memoirs, briefings, memos, notes, reports, or any other advice, sent to your executive leadership team regarding funding decisions for departments and votes you are responsible for, in the context of Budget 2025. This includes all Budget 2025 bids for funding, impacts of funding decisions in Budget 25, and impacts of not receiving funding in Budget 2025. This can be limited to 1 November 2024 to today.

If and where a document that falls under scope of this request cannot be released, please supply a summary of that document’s contents.

If and where any document falls under the scope of this request, please release it in full, including sections which might otherwise be considered out of scope”.

Part one of your request

Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission (the Commission) did not submit any Budget bids in Budget 2025. The Crown Response Office (CRO) (which is hosted by the Commission), submitted four Budget bids for Vote Public Service.

Please find listed in the table below the documents provided by CRO, to the Lead Coordination Minister for the Government’s Response to the Royal Commission’s Report into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions related to their four bids for Vote Public Service.

Item	Date	Document Description	Decision
1	22 November 2024	Briefing - Approach to developing a Budget 2025 package	Released in part

2	27 November 2025	A3 - Approach to creating a package of initiatives for redress provision for submission to the Budget 25 process	Released in part
3	28 November 2025	A3 - Approach to creating a package of Crown Response to Abuse in Care initiatives for submission to the Budget 25 process	Released in part
4	3 December 2024	Briefing - Approach to creating a package of initiatives for redress provision for submission to the Budget 25 process	Released in part
5	12 December 2024	Briefing - Preparing costings for a Crown Response Budget 2025 bid – Time limited funding for the proposed duration of the Crown Response Office	Released in part
6	12 December 2024	Briefing - Placeholder Submission - Crown Response to Abuse in Care Budget '25 Package	Released in part
7	12 December 2024	Annotated Agenda - For Meeting with MoF-Min Stanford 16 Dec	Released in part
8	18 December 2024	Briefing - Updated information on the Crown Response Office component of the Crown Response Budget 2025 bid	Released in part
9	17 January 2025	Briefing - For approval - Budget '25 Crown Response to Abuse Package	Released in part
10	27 February 2025	Aide Memoire - Bilateral with Minister of Finance on Crown Response Budget '25 package	Released in part
11	6 March 2025	A3 - Redress System Package – Alternative Scaling Options	Released in part
12	14 March 2025	Briefing - Confirming the Crown Response Budget 2025 package	Released in part
13	23 April 2025	Cover Note - Budget 2025 – Summary of initiatives document for publication	Released in part
14	23 April 2025	Summary of Initiatives - Crown Response to the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care	Released in part
15	13 May 2025	Briefing - Crown Response Work Programme and Summary of Budget '25 Package	Released in part

I have decided to release the documents listed above, subject to information being withheld under one or more of the following sections of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), as applicable:

- section 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people

- section 9(2)(f)(iv) – to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials
- section 9(2)(g) – to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any public service agency or organisation in the course of their duty
- section 9(2)(h) – to maintain legal professional privilege

In addition, some information has been deleted where it is not within the scope of your request.

We are currently preparing these documents for release, and they will be released to you no later than **15 August 2025**.

Part two of your request

Please find listed in the table below the advice provided to the Commission’s executive leadership team, within scope of your request.

Item	Date	Document Description	Decision
16	11 March 2025	Te Mana Arataki Paper – Finance Update – Budget 2025	Released in part

I have decided to release the document listed above, subject to information being withheld under section 9(2)(h) of the OIA to maintain legal professional privilege. In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the OIA.

Information publicly available

The following information is also covered by your request and will be publicly available on Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission’s website soon at the link provided for in the table below.

Item	Date	Document Description	Website Address
17	12 December 2024	MoSR 2024-0325 - REPORT - Grants and Funds - Savings Options	Publicly available soon https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/publications
18	18 December 2024	MoSR 2024-0368 – REPORT – Budget 2025 Grants and Funds – Savings Options	Publicly available soon https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/publications
19	9 April 2025	MoSR 2025-0324 – REPORT – 2025-26 Estimates and 2024-25 Supplementary Estimates for Vote Public Service – Crown Response Office	Publicly available soon https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/publications
20	9 April 2025	MoSR 2025-0302 – REPORT – 2025-26 Estimates and 2024-25 Supplementary Estimates for Vote Public Service	Publicly available soon https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/publications

Accordingly, I have refused your request for the documents listed in the above table under section 18(d) of the OIA on the grounds the information requested is or will soon be publicly available. Some relevant information has been removed from documents listed in the above table and should continue to be withheld under the OIA, on the grounds described in the documents

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact Enquiries@publicservice.govt.nz.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that we intend to publish this letter (with your personal details removed) on the Commission's website.

Yours sincerely



Nicky Dirks

**Manager – Ministerial and Executive Services
Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission**



PAPER TITLE	Finance Update – Budget 2025
LT Meeting Date:	11 March 2025
Team:	Finance, Performance and Assurance
Author:	Luke Starrenburg - Manager Finance , Performance and Assurance
Responsible DC	Thor Gudjonsson – Deputy Chief Executive Enabling Services
Attachments (if required):	Nil
The following teams have been consulted:	

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to:
 - a. update you on the Commission’s current financial position
 - b. request your approval to transfer funds from 2024/25 into outyears
 - c. request your approval for internal budget adjustments as part of the March Baseline Update.

Recommended Actions

We recommend you:

- a. **note** that the Commission is forecasting to underspend \$1.4 million as at 28 February 2025.

Noted
- b. **agree** to transfer \$1.1 million into outyears to mitigate future cost pressures.

Agree / Disagree
- c. **agree** to increase the Legal budget by \$190,000 and the Office of the Commissioner budget by \$100,000 as part of the internal budget updates following the March Baseline Update.

Agree / Disagree

Background

2. On 20 February 2025, the Commission submitted its March Baseline Update letter to the Minister for Public Service. The Minister has approved our requests and forwarded to the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Finance will consider changes in mid-March.

3. The Commission indicated in its 2024 Performance Plan that it intended to manage future cost pressures through transferring approximately \$1 million into outyears.
4. We could not use the March Baseline Update for this process, as Joint Ministers do not have the required delegation to authorise this transfer.
5. We can make this request as part of the Budget process through what is called the Budget Technical Process, as this is approved by Cabinet the week before the substantive Budget meeting. The Treasury has advised this is the correct time to make the request. Budget Technical numbers need to be entered and confirmed by 14 March 2025.

Transfer of funds into outyears

Current financial position

6. The Finance team has worked with managers to determine an accurate forecast and any fiscal risks for the remainder of the year to determine what funding is available to transfer.
7. While the full February month end results were not available at the time this paper was prepared, we expect the Commission to underspend its appropriations by approximately \$1.4 million. Updated forecast will become available to Finance on Monday 10 March, so if there are any material changes, a verbal update will be given.
8. The key drivers of the expected underspend include:
 - a. \$767,000 in shared services revenue from the Ministry for Regulation. This was not included in the original budget, as we did not know whether MfR intended to stay in RBNZ in 2024/25. We have all but agreed the final figure now, and this was reflected in the recent March Baseline Update.
 - b. \$300,000 as a contribution toward the Equal Pay Taskforce from the Ministry for Women. Indications at the beginning of the year were that we would not receive any contributions towards the Taskforce in 2024/25
 - c. \$300,000 (approximately) in salaries due to vacancy lag and decisions made by managers to hold back on unneeded recruitment
 - d. \$141,000 from the make-good provision. We currently have \$228,000 to cover costs in restoring the floors when we leave for Bowen House. Our conservative estimate is that we will need up to \$87,000 of this. There may however be some unexpected costs associated with the move to Bowen House.

Fiscal risks

9. Any transfer of funds into future years needs to take the current fiscal risks facing the Commission into account. Fiscal risks raised by the Commission include the following:
 - a. The Commission is moving to Bowen House in April. There is a risk we will need to pay for both Bowen House and RBNZ during this month. This could cost the Commission from \$71,000 for 2 weeks to \$142,000 for the month. We are actively working with MBIE to try to avoid this double up.
 - b. The Strategy, Policy, and Integrity budget has a \$60,000 underspend it intends to put towards additional capacity for the Strategic Information budget due to the workload coming from the Public Service Act reforms.

- c. Legal costs relating to the PSA claim, the Waitangi tribunal claim, ^{9(2)(h) legal privilege} and the COVID RCOI. ^{9(2)(h) legal privilege}
- d. There is a risk of further expenditure needed in the IT Services budget, to fund the move to Bowen House and merging the Crown Response Office in with the Commission. Expected costs are in the forecast, but these could increase. We also expect that CRO will pay the majority if not all of the costs for their integration.
- e. There is a risk in the CE remuneration appropriation, in that all of the contingency has been exhausted. Any additional unbudgeted expenditure could put the appropriation at risk. We are considering options to pull funding forward from the 25/26 financial year, to create a buffer should one be needed for unforeseen events.
- f. A one-off Bargaining settlement cost of approximately \$50,000 for the Union only Benefit to be paid this financial year.

Proposed transfer

- 10. Based on our forecast underspend, and accounting for the fiscal risks we are aware of, we propose a transfer of \$1.1 million, phased across outyears as shown below. This will leave a gap of \$300,000 between forecast underspend and transfer to cover the fiscal risks mentioned above and any other unforeseen expenditure.
- 11. This is higher than the \$1 million we mentioned in our Performance Plan. The proposal is shown below, compared to what is in the Performance Plan.

(\$000s)	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Current proposal	(1,100)	360	360	380
Performance Plan	(1,000)	330	330	340

- 12. To reconcile the budget, each group's budget will be reduced to match its current forecast, with the remaining \$300,000 being allocated to the central budget to cover fluctuations in expenditure. The only exception to this, could be to leave the \$60,000 forecast underspend in the SPI budget to cover the extra resource required for the Public Service Act reforms.

March Baseline Update – internal changes

- 13. The Commission's budget has been updated to reflect changes requested in MBU.
- 14. This was an opportunity for the Commission to make small adjustments to its budget where appropriate. This paper recommends two changes to increase budgets within the Commission for unforeseen costs over the course of the year and errors in the OBU budget.
- 15. The requested increases include:
 - a. The Legal team has needed to increase its forecast to accommodate increased legal expenses relating to a variety of claims (mentioned under 9.c.). There was also an error with the salaries in the OBU budget for the legal team, which did not provide them with the correct budget for their staff. The team needs an increase of \$190,000

- b. The Office of the Commissioner budget needs an additional \$100,000 in funding to cover errors in the OBU budget, which did not properly account for the salaries of TMA members.
- 16. These changes will not affect the Commission's forecast underspend, nor the proposed transfer mentioned above. The costs are already included in the Commission's forecast.
- 17. If approved, these budgets will be increased as part of the process above.

Next steps

- 18. The transfer amount approved by Te Mana Arataki will be entered into the Commission's Budget Technical submission. This is due by 14 March 2025. This will enter the Government's budget process.
- 19. The Finance team will update budgets to reflect decisions made today. An updated letter will be sent from the CFO to budget holders confirming their new budget.