

Vote Ombudsmen

APPROPRIATION MINISTER(S): Speaker of the House of Representatives (M78)

DEPARTMENT ADMINISTERING THE VOTE: Office of the Ombudsman (A31)

RESPONSIBLE MINISTER FOR OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN: Speaker of the House of Representatives

Overview of the Vote

The Speaker of the House of Representatives is responsible for appropriations in Vote Ombudsmen in 2024/25 totalling \$56.446 million. This consists of:

- slightly over \$54 million to investigate and resolve complaints and perform the other functions of the Office of the Ombudsman
- \$537,000 for Ombudsman remuneration, and
- \$1.700 million for capital expenditure.

The whole of the Vote is committed to the investigation, resolution of complaints and the provision of advice relating to central and local government administrative actions, monitoring compliance with international conventions, and the provision of advice and support for international ombudsman communities and forums.

Details of these appropriations are set out in Parts 2-4.

Details of Appropriations and Capital Injections

Annual Appropriations and Forecast Permanent Appropriations

Titles and Scopes of Appropriations by Appropriation Type	2023/24		2024/25
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Departmental Output Expenses			
Investigations, Resolution, Monitory, Advisory and Support Functions (M78) (A31) This appropriation is limited to the investigation, resolution of complaints and the provision of advice relating to central and local government administrative actions, monitoring compliance with international conventions, and the provision of advice and support for international ombudsman communities and forums.	53,765	53,765	54,134
Total Departmental Output Expenses	53,765	53,765	54,134
Departmental Other Expenses			
Remuneration of Ombudsmen PLA (M78) (A31) This appropriation is limited to remuneration expenses for the Ombudsmen as authorised by sections 8 and 9 of the Ombudsmen Act 1975.	529	529	537
Total Departmental Other Expenses	529	529	537
Departmental Capital Expenditure			
Office of the Ombudsman - Capital Expenditure PLA (M78) (A31) This appropriation is limited to the purchase or development of assets by and for the use of the Office of the Ombudsman, as authorised by section 24(1) of the Public Finance Act 1989.	2,583	2,583	1,775
Total Departmental Capital Expenditure	2,583	2,583	1,775
Total Annual Appropriations and Forecast Permanent Appropriations	56,877	56,877	56,446

Capital Injection Authorisations

	2023/24		2024/25
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Office of the Ombudsman - Capital Injection (M78) (A31)	-	-	-

Supporting Information

Part 1 - Vote as a Whole

1.1 - New Policy Initiatives

Policy Initiative	Appropriation	2023/24 Final Budgeted \$000	2024/25 Budget \$000	2025/26 Estimated \$000	2026/27 Estimated \$000	2027/28 Estimated \$000
Retain trained, experienced staff	Investigations and Resolution of Complaints and Government Administration Departmental Output Expenses	-	2,037	2,763	3,504	4,262
Cyber Security and Business Continuity Plan	Investigations and Resolution of Complaints and Government and Administration Non-Departmental Other Expenses	-	3,735	448	448	448
Total Initiatives			5,772	3,211	3,952	4,710

1.2 - Trends in the Vote

Summary of Financial Activity

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24		2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Actual \$000	Actual \$000	Actual \$000	Actual \$000	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Departmental Transactions Budget \$000	Non- Departmental Transactions Budget \$000	Total Budget \$000	Estimated \$000	Estimated \$000	Estimated \$000
Appropriations												
Output Expenses	23,482	32,802	42,096	31,336	53,765	53,765	54,134	-	54,134	51,563	50,446	51,204
Benefits or Related Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Borrowing Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Expenses	463	429	463	5,063	529	529	537	-	537	537	537	537
Capital Expenditure	2,082	1,456	568	3,035	2,583	2,583	1,775	-	1,775	200	200	200
Intelligence and Security Department Expenses and Capital Expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	-	-
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure (MCA)												
<i>Output Expenses</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Other Expenses</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Capital Expenditure</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Total Appropriations	26,027	34,687	43,127	39,434	56,877	56,877	56,446	-	56,446	52,300	51,183	51,941
Crown Revenue and Capital Receipts												
Tax Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Tax Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Receipts	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Total Crown Revenue and Capital Receipts	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	-	-	-

Note - where restructuring of the vote has occurred then, to the extent practicable, prior years information has been restated as if the restructuring had occurred before the beginning of the period covered. In this instance Total Appropriations for the Budgeted and Estimated Actual year may not equal Total Annual Appropriations and Forecast Permanent Appropriations and Multi-Year Appropriations in the Details of Appropriations and Capital Injections.

Adjustments to the Summary of Financial Activity Table Due to Vote Restructuring

There have been no restructuring adjustments to prior year information in the Summary of Financial Activity table.

1.3 - Analysis of Significant Trends

The bulk of the movement in departmental appropriations in Vote Ombudsmen, which are detailed in the Summary of Financial Activity table above, are largely driven by movements in departmental output expenses required to maintain an efficient, effective and professional Ombudsman function. Details of significant movements within each appropriation are shown below.

Departmental Output Expenses

The baseline movements amounting to approximately \$30.652 million during the period 2019/20 to 2024/25 detailed in the Summary of Financial Activity are due to:

- As part of the 2019/20 Estimates, funding was approved for retaining trained and experienced staff, monitoring places of detention, international support and leadership, increased costs of accommodation, and an expense transfer from 2018/19 due to delayed projects.
- As part of the 2020/21 Estimates, funding was approved for enhanced complaints oversight over Oranga Tamariki, corporate support, technology infrastructure support, retaining trained and experienced staff, increased costs of accommodation, and an expense transfer from 2018/19 underspend.
- As part of the 2021/22 Estimates, funding was approved for a temporary MIQ inspection resource, a temporary investigation resource, retaining trained and experienced staff, improving security, increased costs of accommodation, and an expense transfer from 2020/21 underspend.
- As part of the 2022/23 Estimates, funding was approved for a temporary MIQ inspection resource, a temporary OPCAT inspection resource, a Protected Disclosures Act investigation resource, international support and leadership, retaining trained and experienced staff, increased costs of office accommodation, and an expense transfer from 2021/22 underspend.
- As part of 2023/24 Estimates, funding was approved for temporary investigations resources, retaining trained and experienced staff, increased costs of office accommodation, and an expense transfer from 2022/23 underspend.
- As part of the 2024/25 estimates, funding was approved for retaining trained and experienced staff, cyber security and business continuity plan. No expense transfers are being sort for 2024/25.

Departmental Other Expenses

Movements in Departmental Other Expenses are wholly attributable to:

- Determinations issued by the Remuneration Authority relating to Ombudsmen remuneration and to decisions by Parliament regarding the number of Ombudsmen appointed at any one time. There is presently one permanent Ombudsman.

Capital Expenditure

Movements in the provision for capital expenditure follow:

- The 2019/20 Estimates provides for an increased capital provision from \$1.882 million to \$2.082 million, for an accounting adjustment, monitoring places of detention, and international support and leadership.
- The 2020/21 Estimates provides for an increased capital provision from \$1.256 million to \$1.456 million, for enhanced complaints oversight for Oranga Tamariki, corporate support, technology infrastructure support, and monitoring places of detention.
- The 2021/22 Estimates provides for an increased capital provision from \$2.773 million to \$2.973 million, for a temporary MIQ inspection resource, a temporary investigation resource, improving security, and increased accommodation costs.
- The 2022/23 Estimates provides an increased capital provision from \$1.781 million to \$3.035 million, for a temporary OPCAT inspection resource, a Protected Disclosures Act investigation resource, office accommodation, enhanced complaints oversight for Oranga Tamariki, and technology infrastructure support.
- The 2023/24 Estimates provides an increased capital provision from \$200,000 to \$2.583 million, for office fitout, ICT hardware replacement, and ICT software projects.
- The 2024/25 Estimates provides an increased capital provision from \$200,000 to \$1.775 million for office fitout, hosting software & other licences, ICT hardware replacements and furniture.

Part 2 - Details of Departmental Appropriations

2.1 - Departmental Output Expenses

Investigations, Resolution, Monitory, Advisory and Support Functions (M78) (A31)

Scope of Appropriation

This appropriation is limited to the investigation, resolution of complaints and the provision of advice relating to central and local government administrative actions, monitoring compliance with international conventions, and the provision of advice and support for international ombudsman communities and forums.

Expenses and Revenue

	2023/24		2024/25
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Total Appropriation	53,765	53,765	54,134
Revenue from the Crown	53,765	53,765	54,134
Revenue from Others	-	-	-

What is Intended to be Achieved with this Appropriation

This appropriation is intended to achieve investigation, review and inspection of the administrative conduct of state sector agencies, and provision of advice and guidance in order to ensure people are treated fairly in New Zealand.

How Performance will be Assessed and End of Year Reporting Requirements

	2023/24		2024/25
	Final Budgeted Standard	Estimated Actual	Budget Standard
Assessment of Performance			
Improve public sector capability to do its work and make decisions - number of requests for advice or comment from public sector agencies responded to	300	300	300
Improve the conditions and treatment of people in detention - number of inspections and visits to places of detention	100	100	105
Ensure official information is increasingly available and not unlawfully refused - number of official information complaints completed	1,900	1,900	1,900
Ensure good decision making and processes - number of Ombudsman Act 1975 (OA) complaints completed	3,200	3,400	3,200

End of Year Performance Reporting

Performance information for this appropriation will be reported by The Office of the Ombudsman in the Annual Report to be presented to the house.

Current and Past Policy Initiatives

Policy Initiative	Year of First Impact	2023/24 Final Budgeted \$000	2024/25 Budget \$000	2025/26 Estimated \$000	2026/27 Estimated \$000	2027/28 Estimated \$000
Retain trained, experienced staff	2024/25	-	2,037	2,763	3,504	4,262
Cyber Security and BCP	2023/24	925	3,735	448	448	448
Retain trained, experienced staff	2023/24	2,563	2,563	2,563	2,563	2,563
Office accommodation	2023/24	325	325	325	325	-
Temporary investigation resource	2023/24	-	797	797	-	-
Expense transfer from 2022/23 underspend	2023/24	5,413	150	-	-	-
Temporary MIQ inspection resource	2022/23	-	-	-	-	-
Temporary OPCAT inspection resource	2022/23	-	-	-	-	-
Protected Disclosures Act investigation resource	2022/23	1,934	1,934	1,934		
International support and leadership	2022/23	1,061	921	1,061		
Retain trained, experienced staff	2022/23	939	939	939		
Office accommodation	2022/23	659	659	659		
Expense transfer from 2021/22	2022/23	-	-			
Temporary MIQ inspection resource	2021/22	-	-			
Temporary investigation resource	2021/22	797	797			
Retaining trained and experienced staff	2021/22	765	765			
Improving security	2021/22	1,108	1,108			
Office accommodation	2021/22	251	251			
Adjustment for capital charge	2021/22	(128)	(128)			
Expense transfer from 2020/21	2021/22	-	-			
Enhanced complaints oversight over Oranga Tamariki	2020/21	8,075	8,075			
Corporate support	2020/21	1,966	1,966			
Technology infrastructure support	2020/21	466	466			
Retaining trained and experienced staff	2020/21	707	707			
Office accommodation	2020/21	49	49			
Expense transfer from 2018/19 underspend	2020/21	-	-			

2.2 - Departmental Other Expenses

Remuneration of Ombudsmen PLA (M78) (A31)

Scope of Appropriation

This appropriation is limited to remuneration expenses for the Ombudsmen as authorised by sections 8 and 9 of the Ombudsmen Act 1975.

Expenses

	2023/24		2024/25
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Total Appropriation	529	529	537

What is Intended to be Achieved with this Appropriation

This appropriation is intended to achieve provision of remuneration payment to the Ombudsman as determined by the Remuneration Authority.

How Performance will be Assessed and End of Year Reporting Requirements

The Chief Ombudsman leads the performance of the Office. The performance of the Office's activities, including the above payment, is reflected in the information for departmental output appropriations.

End of Year Performance Reporting

Performance information for the Office will be reported in the Annual Report that is to be presented to the House.

2.3 - Departmental Capital Expenditure and Capital Injections

Office of the Ombudsman - Capital Expenditure PLA (M78) (A31)

Scope of Appropriation

This appropriation is limited to the purchase or development of assets by and for the use of the Office of the Ombudsman, as authorised by section 24(1) of the Public Finance Act 1989.

Capital Expenditure

	2023/24		2024/25
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Forests/Agricultural	-	-	-
Land	-	-	-
Property, Plant and Equipment	400	400	1,331
Intangibles	2,183	2,183	444
Other	-	-	-
Total Appropriation	2,583	2,583	1,775

What is Intended to be Achieved with this Appropriation

This appropriation is intended to achieve the provision of assets for the use of the Office of the Ombudsman.

End of Year Performance Reporting

Performance information for this appropriation will be reported by the Office of the Ombudsman in the Annual Report to be tabled in the House.

Reasons for Change in Appropriation

The decrease in this appropriation for 2024/25 by \$808,000 to \$1.775 million is due to:

- decrease of \$61,250 for ICT hardware replacement
- decrease of \$1.739 million for ICT software. This is primarily due to majority of costs of a major ICT project occurring in 2023/24
- increase of \$61,000 for furniture and fittings
- increase of \$277,500 for plant and equipment, primarily for Data Centre equipment refresh, and
- increase of \$653,750 for office fitout to occur in 2024/25.

*Capital Injections and Movements in Departmental Net Assets***Office of the Ombudsman**

Details of Net Asset Schedule	2023/24 Estimated Actual \$000	2024/25 Projected \$000	Explanation of Projected Movements in 2024/25
Opening Balance	15,023	15,023	
Capital Injections	-	-	
Capital Withdrawals	-	-	
Surplus to be Retained (Deficit Incurred)	-	-	
Other Movements	-	-	
Closing Balance	15,023	15,023	