

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 2025/26 totalling \$53.236 million. This consists of:

- \$52.659 million to investigate and resolve complaints and perform the other functions of the Office of the Ombudsman
- \$577,000 for Ombudsman remuneration.

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	2024/25		2025/26
	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.	54,134	54,134	52,659
Total Departmental Output Expenses	54,134	54,134	52,659
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.	567	567	577
Total Departmental Other Expenses	567	567	577
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.	1,775	1,117	2,844
Total Departmental Capital Expenditure	1,775	1,117	2,844
Total Annual Appropriations and Forecast Permanent Appropriations	56,476	55,818	56,080

Capital Injection Authorisations

	2024/25		2025/26
	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	2024/25 Final Budgeted \$000	2025/26 Budget \$000	2026/27 Estimated \$000	2027/28 Estimated \$000	2028/29 Estimated \$000
Managing the demand in delivering core functions	Investigations and Resolution of Complaints and Government Administration Departmental Output Expenses	-	1,096	1,895	1,895	1,895
Total Initiatives		-	1,096	1,895	1,895	1,895

1.2 - Trends in the Vote

Summary of Financial Activity

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25		2025/26			2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	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	32,802	42,096	31,336	53,765	54,134	54,134	52,659	-	52,659	52,341	53,099	53,099
Benefits or Related Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Borrowing Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Expenses	429	463	5,063	529	567	567	577	-	577	577	577	577
Capital Expenditure	1,456	568	3,605	3,257	1,775	1,117	2,844	-	2,844	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	34,687	43,127	40,004	57,551	56,476	55,818	56,080	-	56,080	53,118	53,876	53,876
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 \$30.032 million during the period 2020/21 to 2025/26 detailed in the Summary of Financial Activity are due to:

- 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 planning. No expense transfers are being sought for 2024/25
- as part of the 2025/26 Estimates, funding was approved for managing demand in core functions in relation to Protective Disclosures and other complaints. No expense transfers are being sought for 2025/26.

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 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.
- The 2025/26 Estimates provide an increased capital provision from \$200,000 to \$2.844 million for office fitout, ICT hardware and software licences.

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

	2024/25		2025/26
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Total Appropriation	54,134	54,134	52,659
Revenue from the Crown	54,134	54,134	52,659
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

	2024/25		2025/26
	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	350	300
Improve the conditions and treatment of people in detention - number of inspections and visits to places of detention	105	105	105
Ensure official information is increasingly available and not unlawfully refused - number of official information complaints completed	1,900	2,100	1,900
Ensure good decision making and processes - number of Ombudsman Act 1975 (OA) complaints completed	3,200	3,500	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	2024/25 Final Budgeted \$000	2025/26 Budget \$000	2026/27 Estimated \$000	2027/28 Estimated \$000	2028/29 Estimated \$000
Managing demand in core functions	2025/26	-	1,096	1,895	1,895	1,895
Retain trained, experienced staff	2024/25	2,037	2,763	3,504	4,262	-
Cyber Security and BCP	2023/24	3,735	448	448	448	-
Retain trained, experienced staff	2023/24	2,563	2,563	2,563	2,563	-
Office accommodation	2023/24	325	325	325	-	-
Temporary investigation resource	2023/24	797	797	-	-	-
Expense transfer from 2022/23 underspend	2023/24	150	-	-	-	-
Temporary MIQ inspection resource	2022/23	-	-	-	-	-
Temporary OPCAT inspection resource	2022/23	-	-	-	-	-
Protected Disclosures Act investigation resource	2022/23	1,934	1,934			-
International support and leadership	2022/23	921	1,061			-
Retain trained, experienced staff	2022/23	939	939			-
Office accommodation	2022/23	659	659			-
Expense transfer from 2021/22	2022/23	-				-
Temporary MIQ inspection resource	2021/22	-				-
Temporary investigation resource	2021/22	797				-
Retaining trained and experienced staff	2021/22	765				-
Improving security	2021/22	1,108				-
Office accommodation	2021/22	251				-
Adjustment for capital charge	2021/22	(128)				-
Expense transfer from 2020/21	2021/22	-				-
Enhanced complaints oversight over Oranga Tamariki	2020/21	8,075				-
Corporate support	2020/21	1,966				-
Technology infrastructure support	2020/21	466				-
Retaining trained and experienced staff	2020/21	707				-
Office accommodation	2020/21	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

	2024/25		2025/26
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Total Appropriation	567	567	577

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

	2024/25		2025/26
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Forests/Agricultural	-	-	-
Land	-	-	-
Property, Plant and Equipment	1,049	1,049	2,634
Intangibles	726	68	210
Other	-	-	-
Total Appropriation	1,775	1,117	2,844

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 increase in this appropriation for 2025/26 by \$2.644 million to \$2.844 million is due to:

- increase of \$1.788 million for leasehold improvements to occur in 2025/26
- increase of \$693,000 for ICT hardware replacements
- Increase of \$138,000 for ICT software
- Increase of \$37,000 for furniture and fittings
- decrease of \$12,000 for plant and equipment.

Capital Injections and Movements in Departmental Net Assets

Office of the Ombudsman

Details of Net Asset Schedule	2024/25 Estimated Actual \$000	2025/26 Projected \$000	Explanation of Projected Movements in 2025/26
Opening Balance	15,023	15,023	
Capital Injections	-	-	
Capital Withdrawals	-	-	
Surplus to be Retained (Deficit Incurred)	-	-	
Other Movements	-	-	
Closing Balance	15,023	15,023	