

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 2026/27 totalling \$60.808 million. This consists of:

- \$60.192 million to investigate and resolve complaints and perform the other functions of the Office of the Ombudsman, and
- \$616,000 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	2025/26		2026/27
	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.	52,659	52,659	60,192
Total Departmental Output Expenses	52,659	52,659	60,192
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.	606	606	616
Total Departmental Other Expenses	606	606	616
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.	1,853	1,853	573
Total Departmental Capital Expenditure	1,853	1,853	573
Total Annual Appropriations and Forecast Permanent Appropriations	55,118	55,118	61,381

Capital Injection Authorisations

	2025/26		2026/27
	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	2025/26 Final Budgeted \$000	2026/27 Budget \$000	2027/28 Estimated \$000	2028/29 Estimated \$000	2029/30 Estimated \$000
Addressing Remuneration Market Alignment	Investigations and Resolution of Complaints and Government Administration Departmental Output Expenses	-	1,026	1,026	1,026	1,026
ICT Technology	Investigations and Resolution of Complaints and Government Administration Departmental Output Expenses Departmental Capital Withdrawal	-	6,825 (7,000)	(350) -	(350) -	(350) -
Total Initiatives		-	851	676	676	676

1.2 - Trends in the Vote

Summary of Financial Activity

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26		2026/27			2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
	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	42,096	31,336	53,765	46,608	52,659	52,659	60,192	-	60,192	53,775	53,775	53,775
Benefits or Related Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Borrowing Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Expenses	463	5,063	529	632	606	606	616	-	616	616	616	616
Capital Expenditure	568	3,605	3,257	1,236	1,853	1,853	573	-	573	1,467	728	875
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	43,127	40,004	57,551	48,476	55,118	55,118	61,381	-	61,381	55,858	55,119	55,266
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.

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 \$18.096 million during the period 2021/22 to 2026/27 detailed in the Summary of Financial Activity are due to:

- 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, and
- as part of the 2026/27 Estimates, funding has been approved for addressing remuneration for market alignment, as well as for investment in the Office's ICT technology via a capital to operating swap.

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 2021/22 Estimates provided 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 provided 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 provided 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 provided 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 provided an increased capital provision from \$200,000 to \$2.844 million for office fitout, ICT hardware and software licences.
- The 2026/27 Estimates provides an increased capital provision from \$200,000 to \$573,000 for ICT hardware, furniture & fittings and plant & equipment. This is due to a technical adjustment to align capital expenditure to reflect the capital management plan.

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

	2025/26		2026/27
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Total Appropriation	52,659	52,659	60,192
Revenue from the Crown	52,659	52,659	60,192
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.

Reasons for Change in the Appropriation

The increase in this appropriation for 2026/27 is due to:

- an increase of \$6.825 million associated with a swap of capital to operating for investment in the Office's ICT technology
- an increase of \$1.026 million for staff remuneration market alignment
- an increase of \$741,000 associated with performance pay, and
- an increase of \$2,000 reflecting the varying outyear profile for additional protected disclosures funding received through the Budget 2025 process.

This is partially offset by a decrease of \$1.061 million due to the cessation of temporary funding for international development.

How Performance will be Assessed and End of Year Reporting Requirements

	2025/26		2026/27
	Final Budgeted Standard	Estimated Actual	Budget Standard
Assessment of Performance			
Number of requests for advice or comment from public sector agencies responded to	300	350	330
Number of examinations of places of detention	115	115	115
Number of official information complaints completed	3,000	3,500	2,750
Number of Ombudsmen Act complaints completed	6,800	7,800	7,250

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	2025/26 Final Budgeted \$000	2026/27 Budget \$000	2027/28 Estimated \$000	2028/29 Estimated \$000	2029/30 Estimated \$000
Swapping capital from balance sheet to operating appropriation	2026/27	-	7,000	-	-	-
Reduce capital charge in line with capital to operating swap	2026/27	-	(175)	(350)	(350)	(350)
Retain trained, experienced staff	2026/27	-	1,026	1,026	1,026	1,026
Managing demand in core functions	2025/26	1,096	1,895	1,895	1,895	-
Retain trained, experienced staff	2024/25	2,763	3,504	4,262	-	-
Cyber Security and BCP	2023/24	448	448	448	-	-
Retain trained, experienced staff	2023/24	2,563	2,563	2,563	-	-
Office accommodation	2023/24	325	325	-	-	-
Temporary investigation resource	2023/24	797	-	-	-	-
Protected Disclosures Act investigation resource	2022/23	1,934	-	-	-	-
International support and leadership	2022/23	1,061	-	-	-	-
Retain trained, experienced staff	2022/23	939	-	-	-	-
Office accommodation	2022/23	659	-	-	-	-

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

	2025/26		2026/27
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Total Appropriation	606	606	616

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

	2025/26		2026/27
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Forests/Agricultural	-	-	-
Land	-	-	-
Property, Plant and Equipment	1,853	1,853	573
Intangibles	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-
Total Appropriation	1,853	1,853	573

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 2026/27 is due to a technical adjustment to align capital expenditure to reflect the capital management plan.

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

Details of Net Asset Schedule	2025/26 Estimated Actual \$000	2026/27 Projected \$000	Explanation of Projected Movements in 2026/27
Opening Balance	15,023	15,023	
Capital Injections	-	-	
Capital Withdrawals	-	(7,000)	Withdraw funds from the balance sheet to swap capital to operating appropriation.
Surplus to be Retained (Deficit Incurred)	-	-	
Other Movements	-	-	
Closing Balance	15,023	8,023	