

# *Vote Parliamentary Counsel*

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APPROPRIATION MINISTER(S): Attorney-General (M5)

DEPARTMENT ADMINISTERING THE VOTE: Parliamentary Counsel Office (A34)

RESPONSIBLE MINISTER FOR PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL OFFICE: Attorney-General

## *Overview of the Vote*

The Attorney-General is responsible for appropriations in Vote Parliamentary Counsel for the 2025/26 financial year covering the following:

- a total of just under \$26 million for the provision of law drafting services, which includes legislative drafting assistance to Pacific Island nations, undertaking 3-yearly programmes of statute law revision, administering legislation that the Parliamentary Counsel Office is responsible for, and access to legislation in both paper and electronic form, and
- a total of just under \$3 million for the purchase or development of assets by and for the use of the Parliamentary Counsel Office.

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  |                      |                        |              |
| Drafting of and Access to Legislation (M5) (A34)<br>This appropriation is limited to the drafting and publishing of and providing access to legislation, and examining and providing advice and assistance on the design, drafting, and publication of legislation, and any other related functions directed by the Attorney-General. | 26,211               | 26,211                 | 25,798       |
| Total Departmental Output Expenses  | 26,211               | 26,211                 | 25,798       |
| Departmental Capital Expenditure  |                      |                        |              |
| Parliamentary Counsel Office - Capital Expenditure PLA (M5) (A34)<br>This appropriation is limited to the purchase or development of assets by and for the use of the Parliamentary Counsel Office, as authorised by section 24(1) of the Public Finance Act 1989.  | 2,830                | 2,830                  | 2,830        |
| Total Departmental Capital Expenditure  | 2,830                | 2,830                  | 2,830        |
| Total Annual Appropriations and Forecast Permanent Appropriations   | 29,041               | 29,041                 | 28,628       |

Capital Injection Authorisations

|   | 2024/25              |                        | 2025/26      |
|---|----------------------|------------------------|--------------|
|   | Final Budgeted \$000 | Estimated Actual \$000 | Budget \$000 |
| Parliamentary Counsel Office - Capital Injection (M5) (A34) | -                    | -                      | -            |

# *Supporting Information*

## Part 1 - Vote as a Whole

This part provides trend information for the vote.

## 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<br>\$000 | Actual<br>\$000 | Actual<br>\$000 | Actual<br>\$000 | Final<br>Budgeted<br>\$000 | Estimated<br>Actual<br>\$000 | Departmental<br>Transactions<br>Budget<br>\$000 | Non-<br>Departmental<br>Transactions<br>Budget<br>\$000 | Total<br>Budget<br>\$000 | Estimated<br>\$000 | Estimated<br>\$000 | Estimated<br>\$000 |
| <b>Appropriations</b>  |                 |                 |                 |                 |                            |                              |   |   |                          |                    |                    |                    |
| Output Expenses  | 18,893          | 21,527          | 25,562          | 29,460          | 26,211                     | 26,211                       | 25,798  | -   | 25,798                   | 25,798             | 25,798             | 25,798             |
| Benefits or Related Expenses   | -               | -               | -               | -               | -                          | -                            | N/A   | -   | -                        | -                  | -                  | -                  |
| Borrowing Expenses   | -               | -               | -               | -               | -                          | -                            | -   | -   | -                        | -                  | -                  | -                  |
| Other Expenses   | -               | -               | -               | -               | -                          | -                            | -   | -   | -                        | -                  | -                  | -                  |
| Capital Expenditure  | 108             | -               | 157             | 31              | 2,830                      | 2,830                        | 2,830   | -   | 2,830                    | 2,830              | 2,830              | 2,830              |
| Intelligence and Security Department Expenses<br>and Capital Expenditure | -               | -               | -               | -               | -                          | -                            | -   | N/A   | -                        | -                  | -                  | -                  |
| Multi-Category Expenses and Capital<br>Expenditure (MCA)                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                            |                              |   |   |                          |                    |                    |                    |
| <i>Output Expenses</i>   | -               | -               | -               | -               | -                          | -                            | -   | -   | -                        | -                  | -                  | -                  |
| <i>Other Expenses</i>  | -               | -               | -               | -               | -                          | -                            | -   | -   | -                        | -                  | -                  | -                  |
| <i>Capital Expenditure</i>   | -               | -               | -               | -               | -                          | -                            | N/A   | -   | -                        | -                  | -                  | -                  |
| <b>Total Appropriations</b>  | 19,001          | 21,527          | 25,719          | 29,491          | 29,041                     | 29,041                       | 28,628  | -   | 28,628                   | 28,628             | 28,628             | 28,628             |
| <b>Crown Revenue and Capital Receipts</b>                                |                 |                 |                 |                 |                            |                              |   |   |                          |                    |                    |                    |
| Tax Revenue  | -               | -               | -               | -               | -                          | -                            | N/A   | -   | -                        | -                  | -                  | -                  |
| Non-Tax Revenue  | -               | -               | -               | -               | -                          | -                            | N/A   | -   | -                        | -                  | -                  | -                  |
| Capital Receipts   | -               | -               | -               | -               | -                          | -                            | N/A   | -   | -                        | -                  | -                  | -                  |
| <b>Total Crown Revenue and Capital Receipts</b>                          | -               | -               | -               | -               | -                          | -                            | 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 decrease in appropriation for 2025/26 is explained by the one-off increase in funding that was received for the Parliamentary Counsel Office's Business Transformation Programme in the 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25.

## Part 2 - Details of Departmental Appropriations

### 2.1 - Departmental Output Expenses

#### Drafting of and Access to Legislation (M5) (A34)

##### *Scope of Appropriation*

This appropriation is limited to the drafting and publishing of and providing access to legislation, and examining and providing advice and assistance on the design, drafting, and publication of legislation, and any other related functions directed by the Attorney-General.

##### *Expenses and Revenue*

|                        | 2024/25                 |                           | 2025/26         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
|                        | Final Budgeted<br>\$000 | Estimated Actual<br>\$000 | Budget<br>\$000 |
| Total Appropriation    | 26,211                  | 26,211                    | 25,798          |
| Revenue from the Crown | 25,998                  | 25,998                    | 25,598          |
| Revenue from Others    | 213                     | 213                       | 200             |

##### *What is Intended to be Achieved with this Appropriation*

This appropriation is intended to achieve the provision of high-quality legislation that is readily available to all New Zealanders.

##### *How Performance will be Assessed and End of Year Reporting Requirements*

|   | 2024/25                           |                                   | 2025/26                           |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|   | Final Budgeted<br>Standard        | Estimated<br>Actual               | Budget<br>Standard                |
| Assessment of Performance   |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| The satisfaction rating given by the Attorney General with the performance of the Parliamentary Counsel Office (see Note 1 and 2)   | The Attorney-General is satisfied | The Attorney-General is satisfied | The Attorney-General is satisfied |
| Bills and secondary legislation drafted by the PCO undergo a quality assurance process to ensure they are reviewed for errors and to assess their constitutional soundness, legal effectiveness, workability, compliance with current drafting practice, structure and clarity (see Note 3) | 100%                              | 100%                              | 100%                              |
| All certified revision Bills and their accompanying certificates have been provided to the Attorney-General in accordance with section 98 of the Legislation Act 2019 (see Note 4)  | 100%                              | 100%                              | 100%                              |
| The proportion of select committees that respond to our annual survey that rate the quality and timeliness standards as four or better on a scale of one to five, with one being very dissatisfied and five being very satisfied (see Note 5)   | 90%                               | 90%                               | 90%                               |
| Free public access to the New Zealand Legislation (NZL) website is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (see Note 6)   | 99%                               | 99%                               | 99%                               |
| Legislation is published within set timeframes (see Note 7)   | 100%                              | 100%                              | 100%                              |

| Assessment of Performance  | 2024/25                                  |  | 2025/26                                  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  | Final Budgeted Standard                  | Estimated Actual                         | Budget Standard                          |
| All Bills on the annual legislation programme in category 1 (that must be passed or introduced as a matter of law in the current calendar year) and category 2 (that must be passed in the current calendar year), and which the PCO have received instructions for, are drafted | 100%                                     | 100%                                     | 100%                                     |
| The proportion of instructing departments and agencies that respond to our annual survey that rate the quality and timeliness standards, as four or better on a scale of one to five, with one being very dissatisfied and five being very satisfied (see Note 8)                | 90%                                      | 90%                                      | 90%                                      |
| Pacific Island instructors are satisfied that the quality and timeliness standards have been achieved as determined by survey responses from relevant Pacific Island instructors (see Note 9)  | Pacific Island instructors are satisfied | Pacific Island instructors are satisfied | Pacific Island instructors are satisfied |
| Users of the New Zealand Legislation Website, that are surveyed by the PCO, agree that the website was easily usable   | 80%                                      | 80%                                      | 80%                                      |

Performance for this Appropriation will be assessed through the performance measures listed above. These measures will be reported on in the Parliamentary Counsel Office's Annual Report for 2025/26.

Note 1 - The Attorney General's satisfaction is sought through an annual satisfaction survey. The rating measures the Attorney General's satisfaction across 5 categories (general satisfaction, quality of advice, overall trust, overall confidence, overall performance) on a scale of 1-5, where 1-2 means unsatisfied, 3-4 means satisfied, and 5 means extremely satisfied.

Note 2 - Changes to this performance measure were made through the 2024/25 Supplementary Estimates process to reflect a change in measurement methodology, with the PCO now seeking the Attorney-General's satisfaction through an annual survey.

Note 3 - This was previously included as a standard under the prior version of the Attorney-General's satisfaction measure. The PCO has established it as a standalone performance measure to provide increased public visibility over this quality assurance process. Changes to this performance measure were made through the 2024/25 Supplementary Estimates process.

Note 4 - This was previously included as a standard under the prior version of the Attorney-General's satisfaction measure. The PCO has established it as a standalone performance measure because it is a legislative obligation to provide the Attorney General with all certified revision Bills and their accompanying certificates, and it is the PCO's responsibility to monitor whether this has been met. Changes to this performance measure were made through the 2024/25 Supplementary Estimates process.

Note 5 - The quality standard is that:

- advice given on matters relating to the provision of legislative drafting services, including explaining the changes made by the revision tracked version of a Bill, is objective, accurate, and sufficient.

The timeliness standard is that:

- revision tracked documents are provided for the Select Committee in accordance with deadlines set by or negotiated with the committee.

Note 6 - A 100% budget standard is not appropriate as system outages are required for planned upgrades.



Note 7 - The note to the performance measure was updated using plain language to clarify the measurement criteria through the 2024/25 Supplementary Estimates process:

- To meet the required timeframes:
  - new Government Bills are available within one working day after they are introduced to the House
  - subsequent versions of Bills are available within one working day after the printed version is made available to the House
  - Amendment Papers (APs) are available within one working day after circulation to Members of Parliament
  - secondary legislation that is drafted by the PCO is made available within one working day after notification in the *New Zealand Gazette*
  - Acts are available within five working days after Royal assent.

For these measures, an item is considered published when it is made available on the New Zealand Legislation Website.

Note 8 - The quality standards are that:

- the legislation produced is drafted as clearly and simply as possible
- the instructing department or agency is satisfied the final product is workable and implements the Government's policy, and
- advice on legislative drafting matters is provided in a manner that is respectful, collaborative and solutions focused.

The timeliness standard is that:

- drafts of legislation are produced within agreed deadlines.

Note 9 - The quality standard is that:

- advice given on matters relating to the provision of legislative drafting services is objective, accurate, and sufficient.

The timeliness standard is that:

- legislation is provided to Pacific Island instructors in accordance with agreed deadlines.

### *End of Year Performance Reporting*

Performance information for this appropriation will be reported by Parliamentary Counsel Office in its Annual Report to be presented in the House.

### *Reasons for Change in Appropriation*

The decrease in this appropriation for 2025/26 is due to:

- one off increases that occurred in 2024/25 due to an expense transfer of \$400,000 from 2023/24 to 2024/25 for the implementation of the Parliamentary Counsel Office's Business Transformation Programme and \$13,000 miscellaneous third-party revenue received.

### *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 |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Previous Government</b>   |                      |                              |                      |                         |                         |                         |
| Providing Workforce Capacity to Ensure Continued Delivery of Core Services | 2023/24              | 2,379                        | 2,379                | 2,379                   | -                       | -                       |
| Business Transformation Programme - Capital to Operating swap              | 2021/22              | (75)                         | (75)                 | -                       | -                       | -                       |

## 2.3 - Departmental Capital Expenditure and Capital Injections

### Parliamentary Counsel Office - Capital Expenditure PLA (M5) (A34)

#### *Scope of Appropriation*

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

#### *Capital Expenditure*

|                               | 2024/25                 |                           | 2025/26         |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
|                               | Final Budgeted<br>\$000 | Estimated Actual<br>\$000 | Budget<br>\$000 |
| Forests/Agricultural          | -                       | -                         | -               |
| Land                          | -                       | -                         | -               |
| Property, Plant and Equipment | 200                     | 200                       | 200             |
| Intangibles                   | 2,630                   | 2,630                     | 2,630           |
| Other                         | -                       | -                         | -               |
| <b>Total Appropriation</b>    | <b>2,830</b>            | <b>2,830</b>              | <b>2,830</b>    |

#### *What is Intended to be Achieved with this Appropriation*

This appropriation is intended to achieve investment in the renewal and replacement of life-expired assets in support of the delivery of the Parliamentary Counsel Office's services.

#### *How Performance will be Assessed and End of Year Reporting Requirements*

Expenditure is in accordance with the Parliamentary Counsel Office's long-term capital expenditure plan.

#### *End of Year Performance Reporting*

Performance information for this appropriation will be reported by the Parliamentary Counsel Office in its Annual Report to be presented in the House.

#### *Capital Injections and Movements in Departmental Net Assets*

#### **Parliamentary Counsel Office**

|   | 2024/25<br>Estimated<br>Actual<br>\$000 | 2025/26<br>Projected<br>\$000 | Explanation of Projected Movements in 2025/26 |
|---|---|-------------------------------|---|
| Details of Net Asset Schedule             |   |                               |   |
| Opening Balance                           | 13,591                                  | 13,591                        |   |
| Capital Injections                        | -                                       | -                             |   |
| Capital Withdrawals                       | -                                       | -                             |   |
| Surplus to be Retained (Deficit Incurred) | -                                       | -                             |   |
| Other Movements                           | -                                       | -                             |   |
| <b>Closing Balance</b>                    | <b>13,591</b>                           | <b>13,591</b>                 |   |