

# *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 2026/27 financial year covering the following:

- a total of just under \$29 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	2025/26		2026/27
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
<b>Departmental Output Expenses</b>			
<b>Drafting of and Access to Legislation (M5) (A34)</b>	27,416	27,416	<b>28,940</b>
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.			
<b>Total Departmental Output Expenses</b>	27,416	27,416	28,940
<b>Departmental Capital Expenditure</b>			
<b>Parliamentary Counsel Office - Capital Expenditure PLA (M5) (A34)</b>	2,830	2,830	2,830
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.			
<b>Total Departmental Capital Expenditure</b>	2,830	2,830	2,830
<b>Total Annual Appropriations and Forecast Permanent Appropriations</b>	30,246	30,246	31,770

### Capital Injection Authorisations

	2025/26		2026/27
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Parliamentary Counsel Office - Capital Injection (M5) (A34)	-	-	-

# 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 Critical Legislation Delivery and Access Pressures	<b>Drafting of and Access to Legislation</b> Departmental Output Expense	1,292	2,716	2,977	2,821	2,821
Total Initiatives		1,292	2,716	2,977	2,821	2,821

## 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
<b>Appropriations</b>												
Output Expenses	21,527	25,562	29,460	25,694	27,416	27,416	28,940	-	28,940	28,901	28,745	28,745
Benefits or Related Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Borrowing Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Expenditure	-	157	31	1,746	2,830	2,830	2,830	-	2,830	2,830	2,830	2,830
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	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Appropriations</b>	21,527	25,719	29,491	27,440	30,246	30,246	31,770	-	31,770	31,731	31,575	31,575
<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 increase in output expenses from 2025/26 largely reflects increased baseline funding to address critical legislative delivery and access pressures. The uneven funding profile for output expenses in the period 2021/22 - 2024/25 largely reflected winding down and completion of the Business Transformation Programme, partially offset by increases in operating funding.

## 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*

	2025/26		2026/27
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Total Appropriation	27,416	27,416	28,940
Revenue from the Crown	27,090	27,090	28,614
Revenue from Others	326	326	326

##### *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*

	2025/26		2026/27
	Final Budgeted Standard	Estimated Actual	Budget Standard
Assessment of Performance			
The satisfaction rating given by the Attorney General with the performance of the Parliamentary Counsel Office (see Note 1)	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	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	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 2)	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 3)	99%	99%	99%
Legislation is published within set timeframes (see Note 4)	100%	100%	100%

Assessment of Performance	2025/26		2026/27
	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 5)	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 6)	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 2026/27.

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

Note 4 - 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 5 - 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 6 - 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 increase in this appropriation for 2026/27 is due to:

- a year-on-year increase of \$1.424 million to address critical legislation delivery and access pressures, and
- a one-off increase for an expense transfer from 2024/25 of \$500,000. This transfer increases funding in 2025/26 by \$200,000 and in 2026/27 by \$300,000, reflecting the rephrasing of the Legislative Extended Access Programme (LEAP).

### *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
<b>Current Government</b>						
Addressing Critical Legislation Delivery and Access Pressures	2025/26	1,292	2,716	2,977	2,821	2,821
<b>Previous Government</b>						
Providing Workforce Capacity to Ensure Continued Delivery of Core Services	2023/24	2,379	2,379	-	-	-

## 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*

	2025/26		2026/27
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$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**

Details of Net Asset Schedule	2025/26 Estimated Actual \$000	2026/27 Projected \$000	Explanation of Projected Movements in 2026/27
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>	