

Vote Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment

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

DEPARTMENT ADMINISTERING THE VOTE: Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (A33)

RESPONSIBLE MINISTER FOR PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT:
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Overview of the Vote

The position of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment was established by the Environment Act 1986 to provide Members of Parliament with independent, high quality advice about environmental matters. Advice is generally in the form of reports on investigations, letters, and presentations and submissions to select committees.

The Commissioner has seven statutory functions under the Environment Act to investigate environmental issues, processes, and public agencies. As an Officer of Parliament, the Commissioner has a unique opportunity to provide Parliament with independent advice in its consideration of any matters that may have an impact on the quality of the environment. The Commissioner also communicates his advice to a wider public audience.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives is responsible for appropriations in Vote Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment for the 2025/26 financial year totalling just under \$5 million. These consist of:

- one output expense of \$4.496 million for Reports and Advice
- other expense of \$406,000 for the Commissioner's Remuneration under Permanent Legislative Authority, and
- capital expenditure of \$72,000 under Permanent Legislative Authority for office equipment, meeting room upgrades, furniture and fittings.

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			
Reports and Advice (M78) (A33) This appropriation is limited to reviewing, investigating, providing reports and advice on the legal and other systems governing management of the environment and the performance of central and local government agencies in maintaining and improving the quality of the environment.	3,996	3,996	4,496
Total Departmental Output Expenses	3,996	3,996	4,496
Departmental Other Expenses			
Remuneration of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment PLA (M78) (A33) This appropriation is limited to remuneration expenses for the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment as authorised by section 9 of the Environment Act 1986.	406	406	406
Total Departmental Other Expenses	406	406	406
Departmental Capital Expenditure			
Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment - Capital Expenditure PLA (M78) (A33) This appropriation is limited to the purchase or development of assets by and for the use of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, as authorised by section 24(1) of the Public Finance Act 1989.	90	90	72
Total Departmental Capital Expenditure	90	90	72
Total Annual Appropriations and Forecast Permanent Appropriations	4,492	4,492	4,974

Capital Injection Authorisations

	2024/25		2025/26
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment - Capital Injection (M78) (A33)	-	-	-

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 \$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	3,218	3,583	3,713	3,886	3,996	3,996	4,496	-	4,496	4,496	4,496	4,496
Benefits or Related Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Borrowing Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Expenses	304	343	398	402	406	406	406	-	406	406	406	406
Capital Expenditure	22	475	90	8	90	90	72	-	72	72	72	72
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	3,544	4,401	4,201	4,296	4,492	4,492	4,974	-	4,974	4,974	4,974	4,974
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 Commissioner's remuneration, as set by the Remuneration Authority, has been increased by \$1,000 from \$337,000 to \$338,000, for the 2019/20 and subsequent years.

The Commissioner's remuneration, as set by the Remuneration Authority, has been temporarily decreased by \$68,000 from \$338,000 to \$270,000, from 9 July 2020 to 6 January 2021. The Commissioner's remuneration will revert to \$338,000 for the remainder of 2020/21 and subsequent years.

For 2021/22, there is a one-off increase of \$600,000 in capital expenditure for office fit-out costs.

For 2021/22, there is a one-off increase of \$169,000 departmental revenue for salary reimbursements from secondments.

For 2021/22, there is a one-off expense transfer from 2020/21 of \$138,000 relating to delays in planned projects to be delivered in 2021/22.

For 2021/22 and out-years, there is an increase of \$100,000 to the office's permanent baseline to meet increasing cost pressures.

The Commissioner's remuneration, as set by the Remuneration Authority, has been increased by \$5,000 from \$338,000 to \$343,000, for the 2021/22 and subsequent years.

For 2022/23 and out-years, there is an increase of \$490,000 to the office's permanent baseline to meet increasing cost pressures.

For 2022/23, there is a one-off increase of \$100,000 in capital expenditure for office fit-out costs.

The Commissioner's remuneration, as set by the Remuneration Authority, has been increased by \$55,000 from \$343,000 to \$398,000, for the 2022/23 and subsequent years.

For 2022/23, there is a one-off increase of \$40,000 departmental revenue for salary reimbursements from secondments.

The Commissioner's remuneration, as set by the Remuneration Authority, has been increased by \$4,000 from \$398,000 to \$402,000, for the 2023/24 and subsequent years.

For 2024/25, there is a one-off increase of \$18,000 in capital expenditure for meeting room fit-out costs.

For 2024/25, there is a one-off expense transfer from 2023/24 of \$50,000 relating to delays in planned projects to be delivered in 2024/25.

The Commissioner's remuneration, as set by the Remuneration Authority, has been increased by \$4,000 from \$402,000 to \$406,000, for the 2024/25 and subsequent years.

For 2025/26 and out-years, there is an increase of \$500,000 to the office's permanent baseline to meet increasing cost pressures.

For 2025/26 and out-years, there is an increase of \$50,000 to the office's permanent baseline to meet increasing travel requirements.

Part 2 - Details of Departmental Appropriations

2.1 - Departmental Output Expenses

Reports and Advice (M78) (A33)

Scope of Appropriation

This appropriation is limited to reviewing, investigating, providing reports and advice on the legal and other systems governing management of the environment and the performance of central and local government agencies in maintaining and improving the quality of the environment.

Expenses and Revenue

	2024/25		2025/26
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Total Appropriation	3,996	3,996	4,496
Revenue from the Crown	3,993	3,993	4,493
Revenue from Others	3	3	3

What is Intended to be Achieved with this Appropriation

The position of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment was established by the Environment Act 1986 to provide Members of Parliament with independent, high quality advice about environmental matters.

Decisions to change law, policy and institutional arrangements are the responsibility of Parliament, central government, and local government. Implementing these decisions, and monitoring their impact on the environment, is the responsibility of government agencies.

Over the 2025/26 year, the Commissioner will continue to produce a body of reports and advice aimed at improving environmental decision-making, the implementation of decisions, and public understanding, especially of environmental management, policy, and science.

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			
Select committee reports indicate that PCE reports were useful	All reports useful	All	All
Number of Briefings given to Members of Parliament during the year	30	28	30
Proportion of recommendations adopted or partially adopted during the tenure of the Commissioner	65%	43%	65%
Number of reports, commentaries, reviews, evaluations and submissions published during the year	6-8	25	6-8
Reports are externally peer reviewed and content checked	100%	100%	100%
Public concerns and information are responded to within required timeframes	100%	96%	100%

End of Year Performance Reporting

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

2.2 - Departmental Other Expenses

Remuneration of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment PLA (M78) (A33)

Scope of Appropriation

This appropriation is limited to remuneration expenses for the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment as authorised by section 9 of the Environment Act 1986.

Expenses

	2024/25		2025/26
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Total Appropriation	406	406	406

What is Intended to be Achieved with this Appropriation

This appropriation is intended to achieve payment to the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment as determined by the Remuneration Authority.

How Performance will be Assessed and End of Year Reporting Requirements

The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment 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 by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment in the Annual Report that is to be presented to the House.

2.3 - Departmental Capital Expenditure and Capital Injections

Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment - Capital Expenditure PLA (M78) (A33)

Scope of Appropriation

This appropriation is limited to the purchase or development of assets by and for the use of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, 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	90	90	72
Intangibles	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-
Total Appropriation	90	90	72

What is Intended to be Achieved with this Appropriation

This appropriation is intended to achieve the replacement and/or upgrade of assets in support of the delivery of the Office's services.

How Performance will be Assessed and End of Year Reporting Requirements

Expenditure is in accordance with the Commissioner's capital asset management policy.

End of Year Performance Reporting

Performance information for this appropriation will be reported by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment in the Annual Report that is to be presented to the House.

Reasons for Change in Appropriation

The decrease in this appropriation for 2025/26 is due to reduced capital expenditure requirements relative to 2024/25.

*Capital Injections and Movements in Departmental Net Assets***Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment**

Details of Net Asset Schedule	2024/25 Estimated Actual \$000	2025/26 Projected \$000	Explanation of Projected Movements in 2025/26
Opening Balance	611	611	
Capital Injections	-	-	
Capital Withdrawals	-	-	
Surplus to be Retained (Deficit Incurred)	-	-	
Other Movements	-	-	
Closing Balance	611	611	