

The Treasury

Budget 2021 Information Release

August 2021

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Information Withheld

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act that would apply have been identified.

Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to sections of the Act under which information has been withheld:

- [1] 6(a) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the government
- [23] 9(2)(a) - to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people
- [25] 9(2)(b)(ii) - to protect the commercial position of the person who supplied the information or who is the subject of the information
- [26] 9(2)(ba)(i) - to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied
- [33] 9(2)(f)(iv) - to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by ministers and officials
- [34] 9(2)(g)(i) - to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions
- [35] 9(2)(g)(ii) - to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through protecting ministers, members of government organisations, officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment
- [36] 9(2)(h) - to maintain legal professional privilege
- [37] 9(2)(i) - to enable the Crown to carry out commercial activities without disadvantage or prejudice
- [38] 9(2)(j) - to enable the Crown to negotiate without disadvantage or prejudice
- [39] 9(2)(k) - to prevent the disclosure of official information for improper gain or improper advantage
- [40] Not in scope
- [42] 18(d) - information is already publicly available or will be publicly available soon.

Where information has been withheld, a numbered reference to the applicable section of the Act has been made, as listed above. For example, a [23] appearing where information has been withheld in a release document refers to section 9(2)(a).

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Hon Grant Robertson

MP for Wellington Central
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister of Finance
Minister for Infrastructure
Minister for Sport and Recreation
Minister for Racing



26 January 2021

Hon Kris Faafoi
Minister of Immigration
Parliament Buildings

Dear Kris

Further to my recent engagement on Budget 2021, my officials have informed me of a matter relating to the initiative for the *Treatment of COVID-19-related Memorandum Account Deficit* that I agreed to invite for submission for Budget 2021.

As Cabinet has already approved and accounted for the necessary capital injections to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, the decision to “write-off” COVID-19-related deficits is not expected to have further funding or financial implications. I therefore consider that the initiative should not be submitted for consideration through the Budget process as there is little benefit in further assessment.

However, I still consider that the decision not to cost recover these deficits from future fee payers is a significant policy matter that should be considered at Cabinet. This is an issue shared by other affected border agencies. I understand that there will be an opportunity for this consideration when Border Ministers report to Cabinet in March 2021.

In addition, I expect that any further capital injections to support border agency liquidity, subject to Cabinet approval, should be funded from the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund.

Yours sincerely,

Hon Grant Robertson,
Minister of Finance