

# 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



21 December 2020

Hon Jan Tinetti  
Minister of Internal Affairs  
Parliament Buildings

Dear Jan

Thank you for your recent engagement on Budget 2021. As you will be aware, we have set a very high bar for the initiatives that will be invited for submission, limited to only the most critical cost pressures and urgent manifesto commitments.

I have considered the cost pressures and manifesto commitments that you outlined in your letter, and am inviting you to submit the following initiatives in your portfolio:

## **Royal Commission into Abuse in State Care and the Care of Faith-based Institutions – Cost Pressure**

I understand the national importance of this Royal Commission, and invite you to submit the initiative for assessment. While I have agreed to invite this initiative, I expect the Department of Internal Affairs to provide significant and genuine scaling options for consideration. As discussed I would like the Treasury to work with the Department of Internal Affairs and the Royal Commission on putting these options together. I expect the initiative to clearly articulate all underlying assumptions, cost drivers, and marginal costs associated with supporting the Inquiry to completion. Ministers will need to consider how to manage the uncertainty about the level of ongoing work the Commission will need to undertake. This may mean that funding is approved in stages beginning in Budget 2021. [33]

## **Integrated Services/Life Events, including SmartStart – Cost Pressure**

I understand this initiative aims to extend the existing SmartStart programme that does not have funding beyond 2020/21. I invite you to submit this initiative with the condition that only the critical cost pressure components are included.

## **Forecast Deficit in Passports Memorandum Account – Cost Pressure**

I note that this initiative seeks to address a cost pressure in the Passports memorandum account. While I have agreed to invite this initiative, I expect Internal Affairs to consider options, including deferring to Budget 2022.

[33]

Please note that while I have invited these initiatives to be submitted, this does not guarantee that they will receive funding. The Treasury will assess the value for money and relative priority of all initiatives, and this advice will help to inform the shape of the final Budget 2021 package to be decided by Budget Ministers. Therefore, I expect that all initiatives will be supported by a robust case for funding and a strong evidence base, as well as scaling and reprioritisation options.

The cost pressures and manifesto commitments that I have not invited you to submit on may be addressed through future Budgets or other levers such as reprioritisation of baseline funding. As per the expectations that I have previously outlined around fiscal management, I will not support any out-of-cycle funding requests for these initiatives unless there is a compelling case for urgency.

However, I wish to emphasise that the other information that you have provided will help to lay the groundwork for future Budgets, and provides an important insight into the challenges and opportunities facing our Government this term. I will discuss options for funding these initiatives through Budgets 2022 or 2023 at a later stage.

Yours sincerely



Hon Grant Robertson  
**Minister of Finance**