

VOTE Parliamentary  
Commissioner for  
the Environment

# VOTE Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment

## OVERVIEW

Appropriations sought for Vote Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment in 1998/99 total \$1.6 million (GST inclusive). This is intended to be spent on the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment undertaking his or her constitutional function in assisting Parliament by independently:

- assessing the capability, performance and effectiveness of the New Zealand system of environmental administration
- providing advice and information that will assist managers to maintain and improve the quality of the environment.

Details of what the appropriations are to be spent on appear in parts B1 and C of this Vote.

## Footnotes

Note 1	<i>The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment is an Office of Parliament under the Public Finance Act 1989.</i>
Note 2	<i>Not applicable as Crown revenue is not appropriated.</i>
Note 3	<i>Appropriations are stated GST inclusive (where applicable).</i>
Note 4	<i>Costs to be incurred pursuant to section 9 of the Environment Act 1986.</i>

# VOTE Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment

VOTE MINISTER: THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

ADMINISTERING DEPARTMENT: PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (see note 1)

*The Speaker is the Responsible Minister for the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment*

## Part A - Statement of Objectives and Trends

### Part A1 - Objectives for Vote Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment

The appropriations in Vote Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment make an important contribution to the maintenance and improvement of the quality of the environment in New Zealand. Specifically the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment contributes to:

- a healthy environment, highly valued by people and managed responsibly for the current and future benefit of all.

The appropriations will fund:

- the independent investigation and review of:
  - the system of agencies and processes established by the Government for managing the allocation, use and protection of natural and physical resources
  - public authority environmental planning and management
  - any matter in respect of which the environment may be or has been adversely affected
- the provision of advice to the House of Representatives and committees of the House on:
  - the results of investigations and reviews conducted by the Commissioner
  - Petitions, Bills and other matters under consideration by the House or a committee
- the collection and dissemination of information relating to the environment, including the results of investigations and reviews conducted by the Commissioner and advice on preventive measures and remedial actions for the protection of the environment.

## Part A2 - Trends in Vote Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment

The time series of flows detailed in the table below for Vote Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment shows a slight reduction from 1993/94 to 1994/95 resulting in a reduction in the Commissioner's capability to deliver reports and advice. In 1994/95 the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment received a capital contribution of \$60,000, which was necessary to provide a sustainable working capital position and to upgrade computer equipment. From 1995/96 Parliament agreed to an increase in outputs by the Commissioner. This increase reflected decisions by the Commissioner to carry out a programme of additional investigations into the effectiveness of environmental management carried out by local government under the Resource Management Act 1991.

Additional funding of \$88,000 (GST inclusive) was provided in 1996/97 only for a symposium to assist the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment with the development of the Commissioner's strategic direction for the next five years, and the transfer to Wellington of the Commissioner, who took up office on 1 January 1997.

As a consequence of an interim review by the Commissioner in January 1997, additional funding of \$177,000 (GST inclusive) was provided in 1997/98 only to maintain the quality of current outputs, pending the outcome of the 1997/98 appropriation baseline review. This review was carried out in March 1998, with the result that the interim funding of \$177,000 (GST inclusive) for the 1997/98 year was confirmed by Parliament to be part of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's baseline appropriation for 1998/99.

The Higher Salaries Commission determination for the Commissioner's remuneration resulted in a further increase of \$5,000 for the 1997/98 year.

## Trends in Vote Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment - Summary of Appropriations and Crown Revenue

Types of Appropriation	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98		1998/99 Appropriations to be Used				Total
	Actual \$000	Actual \$000	Actual \$000	Actual \$000	Budget \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	By the Department Administering the Vote		For Non-Departmental Transactions		
						Annual \$000	Other \$000	Annual \$000	Other \$000		
<b>Operating Flows</b>											
Classes of Outputs to be Supplied	1,151	1,148	1,280	1,464	1,600	1,600	1,431	169	-	-	1,600
Benefits and Other Unrequited Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	N/A	-	-	-
Borrowing Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	N/A	-	-	-
Other Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Capital Flows</b>											
Capital Contributions	-	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Purchase or Development of Capital Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	N/A	-	-	-
Repayment of Debt	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	N/A	-	-	-
<b>Total Appropriations</b>	1,151	1,208	1,280	1,464	1,600	1,600	1,431	169	-	-	1,600
<b>Total Crown Revenue and Receipts (see note 2)</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-

## Part B - Statement of Appropriations

### Part B1 - Details of 1998/99 Appropriations (see note 3)

Appropriations	1997/98				1998/99		Description of 1998/99 Appropriations
	Vote		Estimated Actual		Vote		
	Annual \$000	Other \$000	Annual \$000	Other \$000	Annual \$000	Other (see note 4) \$000	
<b>Departmental Output Classes (Mode B Gross)</b>							
D1 Reports and Advice	1,431	169	1,431	169	<b>1,431</b>	169	Provision of reports and advice on the legal and other systems governing management of the environment and on the performance of central and local government agencies in maintaining and improving the quality of the environment.
<b>Total Appropriations for Departmental Output Classes (Mode B Gross)</b>	1,431	169	1,431	169	1,431	169	<b>Refer to Part C1 for a full description.</b>
<b>Total Appropriations</b>	1,431	169	1,431	169	1,431	169	

## Part C - Explanation of Appropriations for Output Classes

### Part C1 - Departmental Output Classes

#### ***Output Class D1 - Reports and Advice***

##### *Description*

Under this output class, reports and advice are provided on the capability of the government system of agencies and processes for managing the environment, including independent advice on the performance of central and local government agencies with statutory and administrative responsibilities relating to the maintenance and improvement of environmental quality.

##### *Quantity, quality, timeliness and cost*

##### Quantity

The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment will expect to provide an estimated:

- 28 to 47 investigation reports
- 350 to 398 information transfers.

##### Quality and timeliness

The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment will aim to ensure that:

- reports will clearly state their purpose and address, where relevant:
  - the requirements of Part 1 of the Environment Act 1986 and the terms of reference established for reviews, investigations and inquiries
  - questions raised by the House of Representatives and select committees
- assumptions behind the findings of reviews, investigations and inquiries and behind advice on remedial action and preventive measures for protecting the environment will be explicit, and arguments will be logical and supported by facts
- all known material facts relevant to findings and advice will be included in reports and accurately presented
- reports provide evidence of adequate consultation with interested parties and that parties and public authorities that are the subject of investigations are given the opportunity to examine and comment on reports before they are released
- technical information and analysis will be of acceptable scientific quality as measured by peer review



- material presented in reports will be effectively summarised and will be concise, in plain English and free of spelling and grammatical error
- a response to external inquiries, providing information or, where a concern has been made about the adequacy of government agencies and processes to protect the environment, providing advice on the action the Commissioner proposes taking on the concern, is given:
  - within 15 working days in 80% of cases
  - within 25 working days in 95% of cases.

Cost

This output class will be provided within the appropriated sum of \$1.6 million (inclusive of GST).

Year	Cost GST incl \$000	Cost GST excl \$000	Total Revenue GST excl \$000	Revenue Crown GST excl \$000	Revenue Other GST excl \$000
1998/99	1,600	1,441	1,441	1,441	-
1997/98	1,600	1,441	1,441	1,441	-

## **Part D - Explanation of Appropriations for Other Operating Flows**

### Part D1 - Benefits and Unrequited Expenses

There is no appropriation in respect of Part D1.

### Part D2 - Borrowing Expenses

There is no appropriation in respect of Part D2.

### Part D3 - Other Expenses

There is no appropriation in respect of Part D3.

## Part E - Explanation of Appropriations for Capital Flows

### Part E1 - Capital Contributions

There is no appropriation in respect of Part E1.

## Net Worth of Entities Owned

### Statement of Estimated and Forecast Net Worth

	Balance Date	Estimated Net Worth 1998 \$ million	Forecast Net Worth 1999 \$ million
Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment	30 June	0.059	0.059

### Part E2 - Purchase or Development of Capital Assets by the Crown

There is no appropriation in respect of Part E2.

### Part E3 - Repayment of Debt

There is no appropriation in respect of Part E3.