

VOTE Parliamentary
Commissioner for
the Environment

VOTE Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment

OVERVIEW

Appropriations sought for Vote Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment in 1999/2000 total \$1.623 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 provide:

- 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 that 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 new 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 and outyears.

In 1998 the Commissioner agreed to the Government's 1% Expense Savings Proposal, resulting in a \$13,000 (GST inclusive) reduction in the annual appropriation for 1998/99 and outyears.

An increase of \$38,000 (GST inclusive) was approved for the 1998/99 year only to meet severance costs as a result of a restructuring of the Commissioner's support team.

The Higher Salaries Commission determination for the Commissioner's remuneration resulted in an increase in the Permanent Legislative Authority of \$4,000 for 1998/99 and outyears.

In 1999, additional funding of \$32,000 (GST inclusive) was provided for 1999/2000 and outyears to maintain and improve the quality of the Commissioner's information systems.

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

| Types of Appropriation | 1994/95 | 1995/96 | 1996/97 | 1997/98 | 1998/99 | | 1999/00 Appropriations to be Used | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|---|----------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Actual \$000 | Actual \$000 | Actual \$000 | Actual \$000 | Budget \$000 | Estimated Actual \$000 | By the Department Administering the Vote | | For Non-Departmental Transactions | | Total \$000 |
| | | | | | | | Annual \$000 | Other \$000 | Annual \$000 | Other \$000 | |
| Operating Flows | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Classes of Outputs to be Supplied | 1,148 | 1,280 | 1,464 | 1,599 | 1,629 | 1,629 | 1,450 | 173 | - | - | 1,623 |
| Benefits and Other Unrequited Expenses | - | - | - | - | - | - | N/A | N/A | - | - | - |
| Borrowing Expenses | - | - | - | - | - | - | N/A | N/A | - | - | - |
| Other Expenses | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Capital Flows | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Capital Contributions | 60 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Purchase or Development of Capital Assets | - | - | - | - | - | - | N/A | N/A | - | - | - |
| Repayment of Debt | - | - | - | - | - | - | N/A | N/A | - | - | - |
| Total Appropriations | 1,208 | 1,280 | 1,464 | 1,599 | 1,629 | 1,629 | 1,450 | 173 | - | - | 1,623 |
| Total Crown Revenue and Receipts (see note 2) | - | - | - | - | - | - | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | - |

Part B - Statement of Appropriations

Part B1 - Details of 1999/2000 Appropriations (see note 3)

| Appropriations | 1998/99 | | | | 1999/00 | | Description of 1999/00 Appropriations |
|--|--------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------------|---|
| | Vote | | Estimated Actual | | Vote | | |
| | Annual \$000 | Other \$000 | Annual \$000 | Other \$000 | Annual \$000 | Other \$000 (see note 4) | |
| Departmental Output Classes (Mode B Gross) | | | | | | | |
| D1 Reports and Advice | 1,456 | 173 | 1,456 | 173 | 1,450 | 173 | 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. |
| Total Appropriations for Departmental Output Classes (Mode B Gross) | 1,456 | 173 | 1,456 | 173 | 1,450 | 173 | Refer to Part C1 for a full description. |
| Total Appropriations | 1,456 | 173 | 1,456 | 173 | 1,450 | 173 | |

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
- 340 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 \$1.623 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 |
|---------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1999/00 | 1,623 | 1,458 | 1,458 | 1,458 | 3 |
| 1998/99 | 1,629 | 1,464 | 1,464 | 1,464 | 3 |

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 1999 \$ million | Forecast Net Worth 2000 \$ 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.