

Vote Community and Voluntary Sector

Baseline Alignment Proposal

Version 1.0

26 February 2010

Submitted by:

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Section 1: Alignment to Government Priorities

Activities funded by Vote Community and Voluntary Sector make a significant contribution to the well-being of New Zealanders and New Zealand communities. The very wide variety of non-government organisations and other community groups in New Zealand reflects the diversity of the communities served by the sector, the extensive range of work it undertakes, and the services it provides (from health and social services to sport and recreation to cultural activities). The Vote supports the Government's objectives through the promotion of the community role in improved productivity and economic participation at all levels of New Zealand society.

The specific Ministerial priorities for this Vote and their contribution to Government priorities are:

Better public services

A strong principles-based relationship between Government and the community and voluntary sector is an ongoing priority. This will be underpinned by the development of a Relationship Agreement which will provide the opportunity for government agencies and the sector to jointly develop a mandated agreement on how to work together effectively, in order to achieve closer collaboration in developing policy and services planning, reduce transaction costs, increase trust in government, and increase involvement by hard-to-reach population groups and communities. Allied to this is the promotion of good practice across government using examples of successful engagement between government and the voluntary sector.

A related priority is to ensure that government agencies have clear and consistent guidance on engaging with citizens and communities, in order to develop sustainable and effective policies. The development of internationally-based principles for effective engagement with citizens and communities will enhance greater government transparency and accountability, and have the potential to broaden the sphere in which citizens can make or influence decisions that affect their lives.

Regulatory reform

A review of the Charities Act 2005 and Regulations will be undertaken to identify matters arising from the implementation of the charities register and to seek to improve the future operation of the Act and the charities register. This will be supported by robust monitoring of the Charities Commission to improve its value to the community and voluntary sector.

Investment in infrastructure; Improved education and skills

Improving digital literacy in the community is key to realising the benefits of the Government's significant investment in broadband infrastructure. The objective is to support initiatives aimed at improving digital literacy and connectedness among whānau, hapū, iwi and wider communities. Investment in training to build community digital literacy is essential to ensure that communities have the skills to use the technology available to them. The flow-on benefits of adopting new technologies include effective participation in the economy, better education outcomes, more cohesive communities, and better access to online government and other services.

The proposal will allow some of the successful community-focused digital literacy initiatives funded through the Community Partnership Fund to continue and, in the longer-term, the development of similar initiatives. Matched funding from the corporate and philanthropic sectors will be sought to support programme development and delivery.

Access to training is important to ensure that communities have the skills to use the digital technology available to them. The communities most likely to benefit from the investment in digital literacy are Māori, Pacific and those living in remote or rural areas or aged over 65 years. Without investment in digital literacy, there is a risk that communities in most need will not experience the flow-on benefits of adopting new technologies.

Whānau Ora

Whānau Ora is a philosophy of wellbeing that places whānau at the centre and builds on the strengths and capabilities already present in whānau.

The approach takes as its starting point the idea that transformative solutions for whānau will be found when whānau are empowered to determine the mix of positive development initiatives and services that will work for them. The development of a whānau ora approach requires:

- whānau to take responsibility for changing their situation
- providers to work differently with whānau
- government agencies to work differently with providers, and
- government to relate differently with communities, hapū and iwi.

The challenge for government is principally to use this approach to find more flexible and responsive ways to govern, fund and monitor the services that support whānau wellbeing. The approach's focus on whānau as the core unit is a significant shift from government's usual focus on individuals.

Section 2: Reprioritisation

Funding Implications

All but one of the priorities for this Vote are funded, business-as-usual activities. They highlight points of emphasis within a wider work programme. As such, they will be achieved within baseline. Over the past 18 months the Department of Internal Affairs, which administers this Vote, has been actively seeking ways to work more productively. As a result, it has identified a number of areas in which efficiencies or savings have been realised, or have the potential to be so. Savings in a number of Votes were offered up in Budget 2009, and lower areas of work reprioritised with the agreement of the relevant Vote Ministers.

Areas of potential gain will continue to be explored on an ongoing basis, as part of a structured performance and productivity improvement programme ranging across the Department's functions. This proactive commitment to productivity improvement will ensure that the Department will continue to deliver its core services in an environment of static baselines, and has enabled it to respond to the current set of Ministerial priorities without seeking additional funding in Budget 2010.

The exception is the community based digital literacy priority, which is currently unfunded.

This initiative is estimated to cost \$540,000. The proposal is to transfer funding within the Vote, from the Community Internship Programme fund and the Interface Facilitation function, as follows:

Community Internship Programme (\$250,000)

The appropriation for this programme was increased from \$268,000 to \$581,000 in Budget 2008 (as a Green Party initiative). The Programme has been under-subscribed for some years, with \$160,000 returned to the Crown last year.

Offering \$250,000 from this programme will reduce the funds to a level that meets demand. It will also allow the Department to run a more cost-effective single funding round. There is no immediate impact on communities, as the residual funds would otherwise return to the Crown.

Interface Facilitation function (\$290,000)

A decision to end the Interface Facilitation function was taken last year. It was agreed that the funding generated by that decision would be reallocated to community activities that benefit the most disadvantaged communities. Initiatives to improve community-based digital literacy meet this criteria.

Section 3: Summary of Financial Movements

Vote Community and Voluntary Sector

The baseline figures shown in the following table include departmental and non-departmental operating expenses only.

	\$000	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Baseline (2009/10 FBU)		44,983	44,091	44,097	44,097	44,097
Share Allocation		-	-	-	-	-
Centralised Saving		-	-	-	-	-
Reprioritisation						
Departmental Multi-class Output Expense: Policy Advice – Community		-	(290)	(290)	(290)	(290)
Non-departmental Other Expense: Community Internship Programme		-	(250)	(250)	(250)	(250)
Non-departmental Other Expense: Community Development Scheme <i>(Digital Literacy Programme)</i>		-	540	540	540	540
Total Reprioritisation		-	-	-	-	-
Transfers Outside Vote		-	-	-	-	-
Total Transfers Outside Vote		-	-	-	-	-
Total Changes		-	-	-	-	-
Total Proposed Baseline		44,983	44,091	44,097	44,097	44,097