

The Treasury

Letters of Expectation Information Release

August 2021

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<https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/information-release/shareholder-expectations-letters-2021-22-information-release>

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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:

[23] 9(2)(a) - to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people

[39] 9(2)(k) - to prevent the disclosure of official information for improper gain or improper advantage

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Hon Dr David Clark

MP for Dunedin

Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Minister for the Digital Economy and Communications

Minister for State Owned Enterprises

Minister of Statistics

Minister Responsible for the Earthquake Commission



Ms Catherine Drayton
Chair
Christchurch International Airport Ltd
[23]

Dear Ms Drayton

2021/22 OWNER EXPECTATIONS FOR CHRISTCHURCH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT LTD (CIAL)

I am writing to outline the matters that we expect your board to address in the 2021/22 business planning round.

Government priorities and the response to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic brought unexpected challenges for all New Zealanders. The response to COVID-19 will be of central importance in the coming year. The Government has three overarching objectives: continuing our health response to keep New Zealanders safe from the virus, accelerating the economic recovery from COVID-19 and laying the foundations for a more sustainable and equitable future.

Investing in critical infrastructure and public services will be important to our economic recovery, along with a focus on renewable energy, waste reduction, sustainability and pursuing carbon neutrality in light of the challenges caused by climate change. The Government will also be focused on supporting small businesses, training and job creation opportunities for workers and businesses, and delivering programmes to bolster New Zealand's exports.

Companies and entities that are owned by the Crown will play a role in supporting the response to COVID-19 and social and economic recovery. During 2020 Crown entity and company boards outlined the challenges that they have faced and the strategies that boards have adopted to respond. We expect that you will continue to advise Ministers this year, well in advance of any emerging issues.

The responsible management of Crown-owned company assets and finances, including sound investment and careful control of debt, can also make an important contribution to the COVID-19 recovery ambitions of New Zealanders.

Through the evolving and uncertain COVID-19 environment, we expect that you will continue to focus on your ongoing viability and provision of goods and services. In doing so, we ask that you consider the impact of your decisions on your staff and suppliers.

This letter contains the following information:

- Ministers' specific expectations for CIAL;
- general expectations for companies and entities that the Crown has a shareholding in; and
- timeline for the 2021/22 business planning process and governance information (Annex 1).

Entity-specific expectations

Prudent Fiscal Management

Shareholding Ministers note CIAL's focus to ensure the airport not only survives the effects of COVID-19, but also thrives from it. We endorse your focus on restarting your core airport operation in the current year and recovering profitability by increasing air traffic volumes in the next financial years.

We expect you will make prudent fiscal management decisions to ensure CIAL achieves its strategy. Should the recovery of the airport's financial situation is more positive than expected, we expect the Board to give proper consideration to returning any surplus funds through a dividend process.

We also confirm the previous Government's long standing expectation to be informed prior to any material changes that affect the financial performance of CIAL and announcements being made public.

Tarras Investment Project

We acknowledge CIAL's operational decision to invest in land purchases in Tarras with the intention of establishing an international airport in Central Otago. We expect CIAL to keep its shareholders fully informed, so that we can clearly understand CIAL's plans, including the next steps it intends to take at each stage of this proposal, and the likely timetable for those steps.

We expect CIAL to not only make financially prudent decisions with regard to this significant proposal, but also, throughout the development of the proposal, to uphold the social license and reputation of the company as an important New Zealand firm and one of New Zealand's key transport gateways. In developing the proposal, we expect CIAL to engage and work closely with affected communities and stakeholders, treating them with respect and understanding and listening to and carefully considering the issues that they raise.

General expectations

The Treasury released an updated Owner's Expectations document in April 2020 (www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/guide/owners-expectations). The document sets out Ministers' expectations on matters such as information-sharing and engagement with the Treasury, board evaluations, thresholds for consultation or approvals for significant investments, and timeframes for reporting and business planning documents. Some key expectations are reiterated in this letter below.

We ask that you circulate this document to all directors on your board so that they are aware of and understand the frameworks and expectations unique to Crown companies and entities.

Well-being focus

Ministers expect all boards to be cognisant of the Government's focus on well-being. The Government's wellbeing approach is based on a balance of the four capitals in the Treasury Living Standards Framework – Financial, Human, Natural and Social Capital. Boards should consider and reflect the broader impact of their decisions and initiatives in planning and performance reporting. In this respect, some important aspects include corporate social responsibility and acting as a good employer, particularly if boards need to make decisions to respond to commercial or financial challenges such as the impact of COVID-19.

Capital structure and dividends

Where appropriate, boards are expected to return any surplus capital to the Crown so that it may be used to fund other government priorities. Boards should consider Ministers' comments during the annual business planning round when setting their dividend policy, desired capital structure, level of future reinvestment, and capital expenditure.

Valuations

Ministers place significant reliance on the board's estimate of the company's commercial value. We expect these valuations to be robust, and either prepared or reviewed independently, where appropriate. The review should refer to the key assumptions included in the model.

Disclosure of senior management remuneration

Ministers acknowledge that the board is involved in setting the remuneration for the executive team. We expect that remuneration will be appropriately linked to performance and set at a level sufficient to attract and retain the necessary skills within the executive to enable Crown companies and entities to operate successfully.

At the same time, we expect boards to adopt good practice disclosure when reporting on senior management remuneration and, if required, to be able to justify publicly the remuneration decisions that they have made. Shareholding Ministers remain focused on executive remuneration being communicated transparently, and we expect to see this reflected in detailed disclosures in your annual report. We intend to give feedback on the disclosures in your 2019/20 annual report soon.

Supporting diversity

Consistent with the Government's support for diversity and gender balance on boards, boards are encouraged to support diversity and inclusion in the workplace and in leadership teams.

Board performance evaluations

Performance evaluations help boards to improve performance and contribute to the Treasury's advice to Ministers on board composition. We expect that evaluations will now take place annually and should ideally be conducted by an independent evaluator.

No surprises

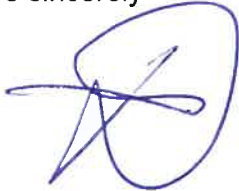
Ministers expect to be informed well in advance of any material or significant events relating to your company, whether positive or negative. The Owner's Expectations document provides some examples of matters that could fall within the 'no surprises' policy.

In particular, boards should inform Ministers' offices before the announcement of all financial results, and before appearances in front of select committees.

Further information

Your Treasury relationship managers will be in contact shortly after you receive this letter to discuss Ministers' expectations in more detail. If you have any questions please contact Maruta Kanepa (on [39]) Alternatively, you can contact Juston Anderson, Acting Manager, Commercial Performance (on [39])

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'D' with a horizontal line through it, and a vertical line extending downwards from the center of the 'D'.

Hon Dr David Clark
Minister for State Owned Enterprises
on behalf of shareholding Ministers

cc: Mr Malcolm Johns, CEO, CIAL, [23]
Mr Paul Munro, CEO, Christchurch City Holdings Ltd, [23]

Annex 1

Timetable for the Business Planning Process for 2021/22

Table 1: Summary timetable for the Business Planning Process

<i>Due by</i>	<i>Key Action</i>
January / February	The Treasury to discuss the Letter of Expectations with the Chair
26 February	Board sends Strategic Issues letter to Ministers
30 April	Board submits draft Statement of Intent (SOI)
30 June	Board delivers final SOI to shareholding Ministers
As soon as practicable after delivery of the final SOI to Ministers, but no later 30 July	SOI made available to the public by the board on its website

All entities are expected to provide shareholding Ministers with a **Strategic Issues letter**, by **26 February 2021** in response to the Letter of Expectations. Should your entity wish to engage with shareholding Ministers to seek clarification around their expectations, we would ask that you advise the Treasury as early as possible of such intentions.

Entities are expected to provide shareholding Ministers with a draft SOI, consistent with the expectations as detailed in this letter, by no later than **30 April 2021**.

The final SOI should be delivered to shareholding Ministers on or before **30 June 2021**.

Shareholding Ministers should be alerted as soon as possible if any of these deadlines cannot be met.

Further information is available in the Owner's Expectations document (<https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/guide/owners-expectations>).