

Reference: 20210533

3 December 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Official Information Act (OIA) request, received on 8 November 2021. You requested:

All costs to New Zealand's tax-funded coffers associated with the Alert Level restrictions that commenced on 17 August 2021:

including but not limited to:

- 1. Wage subsidies, and*
- 2. Resurgence relief, and*
- 3. Costs of additional testing and vaccination drives beyond those excluded above, i.e. drives such as the "super-Saturday", Eden Park activities, the Maori focus, and the various buses cruising around as mobile vaccine centres, and*
- 4. Costs of operating boundaries between Alert Level regions / areas, especially the Auckland boundary, and*
- 5. Costs to the DHBs for health care provided to the Covid-positive patients, including HDU and ICU, and*
- 6. Costs of MIQ for Covid-positive community (not border) cases being housed in these facilities, and*
- 7. Costs of Police running around chasing and catching MIQ escapees, and*
- 8. Costs to Police, justice, and other government bodies attending to Auckland escapees such as the two who visited Northland, the two who visited Wanaka, and the various others who distributed themselves around the country, and*
- 9. Costs of the contact tracing teams, and*
- 10. Costs of those operating and managing the various call centres / websites / etc. in place as a result of Covid-19, and*
- 11. Costs of the food packages distributed, and*
- 12. Costs of the incentives / bribes, music, food, and other draw-cards at testing and vaccination centres implemented to entice people to get tested and vaccinated, and*
- 13. The cost of travel for the various government officials, including the Prime Minister, to attend to Covid-related activities such as vaccination encouragement around the country, and*
- 14. The personal income tax revenue lost due to workers' reduced remuneration, and*
- 15. The personal income tax revenue lost due to job losses, and*
- 16. The company tax revenue lost due to the loss of trading revenue for those companies, and*

17. *The company tax revenue lost due to companies closing their operations, and*
18. *The GST revenue lost due to the loss of trading experienced by all goods and services providers, and*
19. *The revenue lost on the diverse collection of taxes of fuel that was not purchased due to people not going to work, and*
20. *The revenue lost on the Auckland Fuel Tax (regardless of how you may choose to identify it) on the fuel that was not purchased due to people not going to work, and*
21. *The tax revenue lost on the sale of domestic airline tickets, domestic cruise tickets (including the out-and-back "cruises to nowhere) that were not purchased due to domestic travel being obstructed, especially involving Auckland, and*
22. *The tax revenue lost on each other tax type not specifically listed above that was adversely affected by the Covid response over this period.*

Parts 3, 4, 5, 9 and 12 of your request were transferred to the Ministry of Health.
Parts 4, 19 and 20 were transferred to the Waka Kotahi - New Zealand Transport Agency.

Part 6 was transferred to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

Parts 7 and 8 were transferred to the New Zealand Police.

Parts 10 and 13 were transferred to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). Please note that only the first section of part 13 was transferred to DPMC (The cost of travel for the various government officials).

Part 11 was transferred to the Ministry of Social Development.

Parts 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21 and 22 were transferred to Inland Revenue.

Please note that part 4 was accepted by both the Ministry of Health and Waka Kotahi to ensure an inclusive response.

In regard to part 13: *The cost of travel for the various government officials, including the Prime Minister, to attend to Covid-related activities such as vaccination encouragement around the country.* As advised, DPMC will provide a response to the part relating to government officials that are connected to that department. The remainder of this request is refused under 18(f) of the OIA– *the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.*

If you would like to provide more information on any specific government officials that you are interested in receiving information on in relation to COVID-related activities, then you may wish to make a further OIA request to the relevant government agency.

Information being released in regards to part 1 and 2.

We have interpreted the meaning of 'costs' in your request as referring to the amount of funding allocated from the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF) since 17 August 2021, and the amount of the approved funding that has actually been spent during this period.

Information on decisions allocating funding from the CRRF is published on the Treasury website: [COVID-19 funding allocation and expenditure \(treasury.govt.nz\)](https://www.treasury.govt.nz/COVID-19-funding-allocation-and-expenditure). An updated list of allocations, including those between 17 August and 15 November 2021, will be made available in January 2022. Some of the costs that you have sought information on in your request will not be reflected in this list. For example, the impacts of changes to tax revenue are not managed against the CRRF, nor are costs met from

existing baseline funding (for example, to meet the cost of Police operations responding to MIQ escapees).

In terms of actual expenditure, individual agencies are responsible for managing and reporting on expenditure once it has been agreed. This is why most of the items in your request have been transferred to the responsible agency.

Responses to your questions on actual expenditure from the Wage Subsidy Scheme and Resurgence Support Payment are outlined below.

Costs of Wage Subsidy Scheme (WSS) since 17 August 2021 (as at 1 December):
\$3.875 billion of funding has been allocated from the CRRF for the WSS since 17 August 2021. Using this funding, as well as previously approved funding for the WSS that had not yet been spent, a total of \$4.594 billion has been provided to wage subsidy recipients since 17 August.

Further information on the uptake of the WSS is regularly published on the Ministry of Social Development website: [Weekly Reporting - Ministry of Social Development \(msd.govt.nz\)](https://www.msd.govt.nz/weekly-reporting)

Costs of Resurgence Support Payment (RSP) since 17 August 2021 (as at 29 November):
\$2.957 billion of funding has been allocated from the CRRF for the RSP scheme since 17 August 2021. Of this, \$1.950 billion has been provided to resurgence support recipients since 17 August.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Treasury website.

This reply addresses the information you requested. You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision.

Yours sincerely

Simon Duncan
Team Leader, Budget Management