

Reference: 20220041

21 February 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Official Information Act request, received on 8 February 2022. You requested the following:

Treasury Report T2021/2701: Release of August 2021 COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund Advice

Information being released

Please find enclosed the following document:

Item	Date	Document Description	Decision
1.	6 December 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2701: Release of August 2021 COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund Advice	Release in full

I have decided to release the document listed above, subject to information being withheld under one or more of the following sections of the Official Information Act, as applicable:

- names and contact details of officials, under section 9(2)(g)(ii) – to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through protecting Ministers, members of government organisations, officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment,
- direct dial phone numbers of officials, under section 9(2)(k) – to prevent the disclosure of information for improper gain or improper advantage.

Direct dial phone numbers of officials have been redacted under section 9(2)(k) in order to reduce the possibility of staff being exposed to phishing and other scams. This is because information released under the OIA may end up in the public domain, for example, on websites including Treasury's website.

Information publicly available

The document I am releasing to you contains tables of documents that have been published on the Treasury's website as part of the *Advice on COVID-19 Response Information Release*. This release can be found at:

www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/information-release/advice-covid-19-response-information-release.

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

Reubhan Swann

Manager, Ministerial Advisory Service

Treasury Report: Release of Treasury advice on August 2021 COVID-19 Outbreak

Date:	6 December 2021	Report No:	T2021/2701
		File Number:	MS-10-0

Action sought

	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Grant Robertson Minister of Finance	<p>Agree to release the attached documents proposed for proactive release on the Treasury website.</p> <p>Consult with the Ministers listed in paragraph 7 on this release.</p>	Friday 10 December

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Telephone	1st Contact
Joe Mansell	Proactive Release Advisor, Ministerial Advisory Service	s9(2)(k) s9(2)(g)(ii)	✓
Matt Kell	Proactive Release Advisor, Ministerial Advisory Service		✓
Reubhan Swann	Manager, Ministerial Advisory Service		

Minister's Office actions (if required)

Consult with the Offices of the following Ministers for the respective items below (in WSS Binder):

- Item 1: Prime Minister Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Minister for COVID-19 Response Hon Chris Hipkins, Associate Minister of Health Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall;
- Item 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14: Minister for Social Development and Employment Hon Carmel Sepuloni;
- Item 15, 16: Minister for Social Development and Employment Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety Hon Michael Wood.

Return the signed report to Treasury.

Note any feedback on the quality of the report

Enclosure: Yes (attached)

Treasury Report: Release of Treasury advice on August 2021 COVID-19 Outbreak

Purpose of Report

1. This report seeks your approval to publicly release Treasury's advice to you regarding the August 2021 outbreak of COVID-19 in the community.
2. This release is not part of an All-of-Government release. Treasury is aware that the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet are releasing their advice to Ministers on the alert levels.

Information Proposed to be Released

3. The scope for this release is limited to advice Treasury has provided to you between 17 August 2021 and 1 October 2021. The information proposed to be released covers the Wage Subsidy Scheme (WSS), the Resurgence Support Payment (RSP), the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF), and the economic impact of the outbreak.
4. Ministerial Advisory Service has facilitated this release on behalf of the following Treasury teams. The managers from these teams have approved the release of their respective material.
 - a Welfare and Oranga Tamariki – Keiran Kennedy,
 - b Regions, Enterprise and Economic Development – Jean Le Roux,
 - c Economic Policy – John Beaglehole,
 - d Budget Management – Simon Duncan,
 - e Strategic Performance Improvement – Megan Taylor.
5. We propose to release the documents listed in the tables in the annexes below, subject to information being withheld under the following sections of the Official Information Act 1982 as applicable:
 - a section 9(2)(f)(iv) – to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials,
 - b section 9(2)(g)(i) – to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions,
 - c section 9(2)(g)(ii) – to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through protecting ministers, members of government organisations, officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment, and
 - d section 9(2)(k) – to prevent the disclosure of information for improper gain or improper advantage.

We have redacted the direct dial phone numbers of officials under section 9(2)(k) in order to reduce the possibility of staff being exposed to phishing and other scams.

Consultation

6. Treasury has consulted with Inland Revenue, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. All agencies are happy with Treasury's proposed redactions and approach.
7. We recommend that you consult with the following Ministers on the below items. These items are all located in the WSS binder:
 - a Item 1: Prime Minister Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Minister for COVID-19 Response Hon Chris Hipkins, Associate Minister of Health Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall;
 - b Item 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14: Minister for Social Development and Employment Hon Carmel Sepuloni;
 - c Item 15, 16: Minister for Social Development and Employment Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety Hon Michael Wood.

Next Steps

8. Following your approval, Treasury will publish this information on the Treasury website on 13 December 2021.

Recommended Action

We recommend that you:

- a **agree** to release the attached documents proposed for proactive release on the Treasury website,

Agree/disagree.
- b **consult** with the following Ministers on the release of the below items (in WSS Binder):
 - i. Item 1: Prime Minister Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Minister for COVID-19 Response Hon Chris Hipkins, Associate Minister of Health Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall;
 - ii. Items 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14: Minister for Social Development and Employment Hon Carmel Sepuloni;
 - iii. Item 15, 16: Minister for Social Development and Employment Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety Hon Michael Wood.

Consulted/not consulted.

Reubhan Swann
Manager, Ministerial Advisory Service

Hon Grant Robertson
Minister of Finance

Annex 1: Proposed CRRF advice for release

Doc	Date	Document Title
1	25 Aug 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2177: Future of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund – purpose, criteria and process
2	27 Aug 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2188: Options to Manage Future COVID-19 Costs
3	2 Sep 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2228: Replenishing the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund
4	9 Sep 2021	Cabinet Paper CAB-21-SUB-0368: Replenishing the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund
5	13 Sep 2021	Cabinet Minute CAB-21-MIN-0368: Replenishing the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund
6	22 Sep 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2347: Next steps for COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF) tracking and reporting

Annex 2: Proposed Wage Subsidy Scheme advice for release

Doc	Date	Document Title
1	18 Aug 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2117: Activating the COVID-19 Resurgence Support Payment and Wage Subsidy Schemes August 2021
2	18 Aug 2021	Cabinet Minute CVD-21-MIN-0004: COVID-19: Auckland Community Cases: Wage Subsidy Issues
3	20 Aug 2021	Cabinet Paper CAB-21-SUB-0328: Further funding for activating the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy and Resurgence Support Payment August 2021 Schemes
4	20 Aug 2021	Cabinet Minute CAB-21-MIN-0328: Further funding for activating the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy and Resurgence Support Payment August 2021 Schemes
5	20 Aug 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2133: COVID-19 Wage Subsidy August 2021 Scheme: Second payment
6	27 Aug 2021	Cabinet Minute CAB-21-MIN-0346: COVID-19 Wage Subsidy August 2021 Scheme: Second Payment: Update
7	24 Aug 2021	Joint Report T2021/2176: Wage subsidy August 2021 scheme: Revenue test period
8	3 Sep 2021	Joint Report T2021/2170: COVID-19 Wage Subsidy August 2021 Scheme: Update and costs
9	8 Sep 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2312: Wage Subsidy August 2021 scheme: Alert level transition
10	13 Sep 2021	Cabinet Minute CAB-21-MIN-0373: Wage Subsidy Scheme: Update on third payment
11	17 Sep 2021	Joint Report T2021/2318: Wage Subsidy August 2021 scheme: Uptake, funding and operational matters
12	22 Sep 2021	Joint Report T2021/2393: Wage Subsidy August 2021 scheme: Six week review
13	27 Sep 2021	Cabinet Paper CAB-21-SUB-0392: Wage Subsidy August 2021 scheme: Six week review
14	27 Sep 2021	Cabinet Minute CAB-21-MIN-0392: Wage Subsidy August 2021 scheme: Six week review
15	1 Oct 2021	Joint Report T2021/2479: COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme and Short-Term Absence Payment review and next steps
16	13 Aug 2021	Joint Report T2021/1735: Wage Subsidy, Leave Support, and Short-term Absence Payment rates
17	23 Sep 2021	Aide Memoire T2021/2442: Wage Subsidy Scheme and Resurgence Support Payment: insights and update on costings

Annex 3: Proposed Resurgence Support Payment advice for release

Doc	Date	Document Title
1	18 Aug 2021	Cabinet Minute CVD-21-MIN-0004: COVID-19: Auckland Community Cases: Wage Subsidy Issues
2	20 Aug 2021	Cabinet Paper CAB-21-SUB-0328: Further funding for activating the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy and Resurgence Support Payment August 2021 Schemes
3	20 Aug 2021	Cabinet Minute CAB-21-MIN-0328: Further funding for activating the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy and Resurgence Support Payment August 2021 Schemes
4	3 Sep 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2218: Supporting businesses' ongoing costs during prolonged Alert Level restrictions
5	7 Sep 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2307: Choice of impacted window for the purposes of a second RSP
6	9 Sep 2021	Cabinet Paper CMG-21-SUB-0023: Issuing a Second Payment under the Resurgence Support Payment August 2021
7	14 Sep 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2322: Approach to payments 3 and 4 of the RSPAUG21 scheme

Annex 4: Proposed Economic Support advice for release

Doc	Date	Document Title
1	19 Aug 2021	Aide Memoire T2021/2126: Review of Alert Levels: 20 August
2	27 Aug 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2190: Strategy for COVID economic response over the next three months
3	17 Sep 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2338: COVID economic strategy - update
4	1 Oct 2021	Treasury Report T2021/2464: Future of COVID Economic Supports