



# Briefing

## COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY FUND REPORTING

To Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister for Covid-19 Response

Date	25/02/2022	Priority	Medium
Deadline	28/02/2022	Briefing Number	DPMC-2021/22-1528

### Purpose

To provide a report on the progress of funding allocated through the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF) for your approval. This briefing also provides a letter for you to sign and dispatch to the Minister of Finance.

### Recommendations

1. **Note** that as part of the October 2021 COVID-19 Omnibus funding, Cabinet directed agencies to provide a report on the progress of funding allocated through the CRRF to the Treasury at least quarterly.
2. **Note** that the Minister of Finance has additionally requested a detailed update on publicity expenditure which will be provided to you in March 2022.
3. **Review and approve** the CRRF report in relation to the Vote Prime Minister and Cabinet appropriation for your COVID-19 Response portfolio (Attachment A)

YES  NO

4. Sign the letter to the Minister of Finance at attachment B

**YES** / NO

*Cheryl Barnes*  
Cheryl Barnes  
Deputy Chief Executive, COVID-19 Group

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25/02/2022

*[Signature]*  
Hon Chris Hipkins  
Minister for COVID-19 Response

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02/03/2022  
...../02/2022

Contact for telephone discussion if required:

Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Cheryl Barnes	Deputy Chief Executive, COVID-19 Response	N/A	s9(2)(a) ✓

Minister's office comments:

- Noted
- Seen
- Approved
- Needs change
- Withdrawn
- Not seen by Minister
- Overtaken by events
- Referred to

[Empty box for Minister's office comments]

# COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY FUND REPORTING

## CRRF reporting

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1. Within Vote Prime Minister and Cabinet, the COVID-19 Response portfolio received funding through the CRRF for the ongoing operation of the business group within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to lead and coordinate the all-government Covid-19 response effort.
2. Cabinet directed departments receiving CRRF funding to ensure they are able to report to the Treasury at least quarterly on how much has been spent, progress against key milestones, and forecast future expenditure on these initiatives or programmes [CAB-21-MIN-0487 refers]. In addition, Cabinet directed officials from DPMC to ensure contracts entered into to fulfil this initiative be structured in a way that enables them to be terminated quickly and funding returned to the centre.
3. A report has been developed to address these Cabinet directives. It will be developed and provided to you quarterly.
4. Additionally, the Minister of Finance has requested a specific update on the publicity expenditure which will be provided to you in March 2022. We anticipate working with our colleagues in the Ministry of Health to include in that report information on the vaccine campaign, which is managed through the Unite Against COVID-19 channels and funded through Vote Health.
5. The Quarter 2 CRFF report for funding appropriated within Vote Prime Minister and Cabinet is provided for your approval (**Attachment A**). It set out that:
  - a) funding has been provided to ensure a coordinated all-of-government response to COVID-19 continues until 30 June 2023;
  - b) funding into 2022/23 is required to continue to staff the COVID-19 Response Group (including running the ongoing Unite Against COVID-19 campaign), and that if funding is removed or reduced, this will result in less efficient coordination and collaboration in the response and reduced assurance to Ministers that the system is sustainable, as well as significantly reduce public engagement and information;
  - c) outyear funding is minimal in the form of a small contingency to manage any ongoing legal issues that may arise;
  - d) over the period from July to December 2021, expenditure was \$50.1 million. For the period to July 2022, forecast total expenditure for the Group is \$65.3 million in operational expenditure and \$0.6 million in capital expenditure;
  - e) key milestones achieved to date include:
    - i) ongoing coordination of the all-of-government COVID-19 response;
    - ii) coordination of the August COVID-19 resurgence response;
    - iii) advice on and implementation of the COVID-19 Protection Framework;

- iv) delivery of the Unite Against COVID and “Two shots for Summer” public information campaigns; and
- v) delivery of advice and oversight of the Reconnecting New Zealanders’ work programme.
- f) Overall, the work programme is on track, and there are no significant risks or issues without clear mitigation plans in place; and
- g) the COVID-19 Response Group will continue to progress its outcomes until 30 June 2023, in accordance with Cabinet’s direction.

## Next Steps

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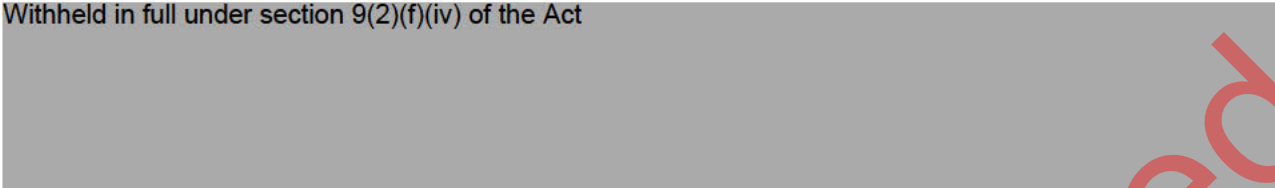
- 6. If you agree with the attached report, we ask that you sign and send the letter to the Minister of Finance (**Attachment B**), with the report attached.
- 7. We will provide a separate report on publicity expenditure for the Minister of Finance for your review in March 2022.

Attachments:	
<b>Attachment A:</b>	2021/22 CRRF funding: Vote Prime Minister and Cabinet report
<b>Attachment B:</b>	Letter to the Minister of Finance

# ATTACHMENT A

## 2021/22 CRRF funding: Vote Prime Minister and Cabinet report

Withheld in full under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act



Proactively Released

## ATTACHMENT B

Letter to the Minister of Finance

Proactively Released

Hon Chris Hipkins

~~BUDGET SENSITIVE~~



MP for Remutaka

Minister for COVID-19 Response

Minister of Education

Minister for the Public Service

Leader of the House

Hon Grant Robertson  
Minister of Finance  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

Dear Grant

In accordance with Cabinet's directive [CAB-21-MIN-0487 refers], attached as Annex A is a progress report on spending to date of Vote Prime Minister and Cabinet appropriation funding allocated in this portfolio from the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund.

A separate report requested by you concerning publicity expenditure is being prepared and I anticipate providing that to you later this month.

Yours sincerely

Hon Chris Hipkins  
Minister for COVID-19 Response

~~BUDGET SENSITIVE~~