



Intended for All Ministers
All Chief Executives
Chief Parliamentary Counsel
Speaker of the House of Representatives

2024 Legislation Programme: Reassessment of Priorities

Introduction

- 1 In December 2023, Cabinet Circular CO (23) 13 asked Ministers and agencies to submit bids for bills seeking places on the 2024 Legislation Programme. At that time, it was noted that the Leader of the House, in consultation with the Prime Minister, would undertake a formal process in the third quarter of 2024 to reassess and reprioritise the Legislation Programme in light of progress to date and remaining House time.
- 2 The reassessment process will be used to identify the bills that will be ready to progress in the House between now and the last sitting day of the year and, given the limited House time available, which of those bills are a priority for the Government to progress in this period. It will also be used to start planning House time for the first sitting weeks of 2025 while the 2025 Legislation Programme is being finalised (bids for which will be sought later this year).
- 3 To support this process, Ministers and agencies are now asked to provide an update on the progress of their legislation, and any changes to their legislative priorities, in line with the guidance below. Note that this request applies both to legislation for which a bid was provided at the start of 2024 as part of the annual Legislation Programme process, and new legislative proposals that have arisen since then, as noted in paragraph 8.
- 4 Reassessment information from each Minister is requested by **12pm on Thursday, 15 August 2024**. The response should include a covering letter from the Minister, and be sent to the Cabinet Office Legislation Coordinator, Sam Moffett, via the email at the end of this Circular.
- 5 Information on the [Legislation Programme](#) more broadly, including the priority categories for bills, can be found on the [CabGuide](#) website.

Bills to which reassessment applies

- 6 Ministers are asked to reassess the **timeline and priority category** for all bills from their portfolios which have been included in the 2024 Legislation Programme and:
 - 6.1 were assigned priority 2, 3, 4, or 5, and have not yet been introduced;

or

6.2 were assigned any other priority (other than 1), and which now seek to be either introduced or enacted this year.

7 The reassessment is to determine whether the initial bid remains accurate and realistic. Details on the requested information can be found in paragraphs 12 to 16 below.

8 Ministers are also asked to provide a timeline for any bill that was not included in the 2024 Legislation Programme, but which now seeks to be introduced or enacted before the end of 2024, in the format referred to in paragraph 14.2 below.

9 Reassessment information is not required in relation to any bills that have a priority of 1, or bills that have a priority of 6, 7, 8, or 9, unless it is now intended that the bill be introduced or enacted this year.

Matters to consider

10 Ministers and agencies are asked to note that:

10.1 unless specifically agreed otherwise with the Leader of the House, bills that were not introduced by 1 July are unlikely to be able to be enacted in 2024;

10.2 if policy decisions have not been made and/or final drafting instructions have not been issued by 1 August, the related bill is unlikely to be able to be introduced in 2024.

11 In reassessing the timeline and priority category for bills, Ministers and agencies are also asked to consider the following matters in relation to each bill:

11.1 its current status, including the completeness of policy approvals and drafting instructions to PCO;

11.2 its size and complexity (PCO can provide advice on these matters);

11.3 its relevance to the Government's stated quarterly commitments;

11.4 whether it relates to any coalition or manifesto commitments, particularly with regard to any specific timeframe commitments; and,

11.5 whether there is a legislative or legally imposed deadline that must be met for the bill to be effective.

Requested format for response

12 Responses are only required in relation to bills that fall into the categories in paragraph 6 above. No information is required at this time in relation to any new bills which are not to be introduced or enacted this year. Bids for the 2025 Legislation Programme will be sought later this year.

13 Where there is no change in either the timeline or the priority proposed for a bill in a bid submitted in February as part of the annual legislation bids process, and the bill remains on track and on time, this should be noted in the covering letter from the Minister. No other information is required.

- 14 Where the previous proposed timeline or priority has changed:
- 14.1 this should be noted in the covering letter, along with a short explanation of no more than one or two paragraphs; and
 - 14.2 an updated timeline for the bill to proceed should be attached, using the standard format for legislation bids as laid out in Annex Two to [Cabinet Circular CO \(23\) 13](#) (noting the expectations set out in that Circular around consultation on proposed timelines with PCO and the Office of the Leader of the House).
- 15 Where a bill is now required to be introduced or enacted before the end of 2024, and it was not the subject of a legislation bid in February 2024, this should be noted in the covering letter, and a timeline provided, in the manner outlined in paragraph 14.2.
- 16 To assist agencies, a suggested template for responses to this request is set out in the Annex to this Circular.

Information about the process

- 17 Once received, reassessments will be summarised for the Cabinet Legislation Committee (LEG) to consider, and for further assessment of priorities. Any updates to the 2024 Legislation Programme that are agreed by LEG will be confirmed by Cabinet.
- 18 Questions about this process from agencies and Ministerial staff can be directed in the first instance to the Cabinet Office Legislation Coordinator, via the email address below.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

Enquiries:

Sam Moffett, Legislation Coordinator, Cabinet Office
Sam.Moffett@dpmc.govt.nz

In Confidence

Office of the Minister of Examples

Response to request for reassessment of bills for the 2024 Legislation Programme

In February 2024, 4 bids were submitted from the Examples portfolio. I have received advice from officials on each of these, and my office has reassessed each in light of the Government's current priorities, and my own. The results of this reassessment are below, including a new bid, for the 123 Bill.

AB Bill

A bid was submitted for the AB Bill seeking a priority category of 3 (a priority to be passed by the end of 2024). No change to this priority category is required, and the bill is still progressing according to the submitted timeline.

CD Bill

A bid was submitted for the CD Bill seeking a priority category of 4 (to be passed by the end of 2024 if possible). I am now seeking a priority category of 6 (drafting instructions to be issued by the end of 2024) for this bill. A series of complex policy issues have arisen as a result of sector consultation on the proposed bill, and further policy work and instructions to PCO will be necessary to address these. Introduction of the bill will be delayed until 2025, to allow for robust analysis and further policy decisions. An updated timeline for this work is attached to this letter.

EF Bill

A bid was submitted for the EF bill seeking a priority category of 2 (must be passed by the end of 2024). I am now seeking a priority category of 8 (on hold) for this bill. I have instructed officials to consult on whether this legislation is still necessary as a standalone item, or whether key amendments could be included in another bill. An updated timeline indicating when I expect to make decisions on the future of this bill is attached.

GH Bill

In May 2024, the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee agreed to add the GH Bill to the 2024 Legislation Programme, with a priority category of 4 (to be passed by the end of 2024 if possible). I do not propose any change to this priority, and include a timeline on which I expect this bill to proceed.

123 Bill

A bid was also submitted for the 123 Bill, seeking a priority category of 7 (policy development to continue in or beyond 2024). This bill is outside the scope of this reassessment exercise.

Hon Bob Smith
Minister of Examples