

30 September 2024

9 ( 2 ) ( a )

CC: 9 ( 2 ) ( a )

Tēnā koe 9 ( 2 ) ( a )

## OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your official information request of 16 August for:

- *How many roles have been or will be disestablished overall? How many have been established?*
- *Any communication internally regarding concerns on the impact to the frontline from March 1 to August 16 2024*
- *Any communication between management and leadership regarding leaks around the change process, from March 1 to August 16 2024*
- *All communication between the CE and the Minister from March 1 to August 16, 2024 regarding the change process.*
- *How much has been spent on leadership leaving/arriving events or parties in 2024?*
- *How much has been saved on the contractors and consultant spend through the change process?*
- *How many times was the counselling service used between March 1 to August 16 2024, compared to the same time in 2023?*
- *The change process decision document*
- *Any reviews conducted after the change process was implemented, regarding the change process.*

Manatū Wāhine Ministry for Women sought clarification on the change process referred to from you on 19 August 2024. On September 3, 9 ( 2 ) ( a ) responded on your behalf confirming the request was in relation to the Government's cost-savings exercise.

The information you have requested is included, for ease of reference, each question has been responded to separately.

**How many roles have been or will be disestablished overall? How many have been established?**

The Ministry for Women disestablished five vacant positions as part of its cost-savings exercise.

**Any communication internally regarding concerns on the impact to the frontline from March 1 to August 16 2024.**

Not applicable.

**Any communication between management and leadership regarding leaks around the change process, from March 1 to August 16 2024.**

Nil

**All communication between the CE and the Minister from March 1 to August 16, 2024 regarding the change process.**

See **Appendix 1** for a copy of the briefing sent to the Minister for Women regarding the cost-savings exercise.

**How much has been spent on leadership leaving/arriving events or parties in 2024?**

Nil.

**How much has been saved on the contractors and consultant spend through the change process?**

The Ministry has saved approximately \$200,000 in contractor and consultant spend as part of its cost-savings exercise.

**How many times was the counselling service used between March 1 to August 16 2024, compared to the same time in 2023?**

All EAP and Rongoā Māori sessions are confidential so we would have no ability to attribute staff attendance to the cost-savings exercise.

**The change process decision document**

A change process document relating to the Ministry's cost-savings exercise does not exist. We have included the briefing to the Minister regarding the cost-savings exercise (**see Appendix 1**).

**Any reviews conducted after the change process was implemented, regarding the change process.**

No review has been conducted regarding the cost-savings exercise. The Ministry regularly reviews its work programmes and outcome areas to deliver on its strategic priorities, while ensuring value for money and delivery within its baseline.

**Official Information Act responses**

Please note that this response, with your personal details redacted, may be published on the Ministry's website. If you have any concerns or comments related to this, please let us know by emailing [ministerialservicing@women.govt.nz](mailto:ministerialservicing@women.govt.nz), within two weeks of the date of this letter.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Shortland". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Maxine Shortland**

Deputy Secretary, Organisational Performance and Services

## APPENDIX 1



**Hon Louise Upston**

**Acting Minister for Women**

**BRIEFING: Baseline savings submission to Minister of Finance**

<b>Date:</b>	9 February 2024	<b>Priority:</b>	High
<b>Security classification:</b>	Budget Sensitive	<b>Reference:</b>	MW BR 23-24 0086
<b>Deadline:</b>	16 February 2024		
<b>Proactive Release:</b>	This document will not be considered for proactive release		

<b>Contacts</b>			
Name	Position	Contact	1 <sup>st</sup> Contact
Kellie Coombes	Chief Executive	9(2)(a)	✓
Raj Narayan	Chief Financial Officer		

Minister's office to complete	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Declined
	<input type="checkbox"/> Noted	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs change
	<input type="checkbox"/> Seen	<input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events
	<input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's notes	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
Comments:		

## Purpose

---

- 1 The purpose of this briefing is to seek your approval and sign-off for the attached letter to the Minister of Finance on the savings proposals for the Women Portfolio. The draft letter covers all requirements as set out by the Treasury.

## Key Messages

---

- 2 The Ministry for Women is required to deliver savings of 7.5% (\$1.1m) from 2024/25.
- 3 The Ministry has completed an assurance process run by a panel established by the Treasury, which also included representatives from the Public Service Commission and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. The panel was satisfied with the Ministry's process and the quality of proposals being submitted.
- 4 As part of the process of identifying savings options, the Ministry engaged with staff including Public Service Association (PSA) members on options for savings and efficiencies.

## Recommendations

---

- 5 The Ministry for Women recommends that you:
  - 1 **Note** that the Ministry has completed the required expenditure savings proposals for Vote Women. YES / NO
  - 2 **Sign** the attached standard letter to the Minister of Finance by 1 pm Friday 16 February 2024. YES / NO
  - 3 **Forward** a signed copy of the letter to the Minister of Finance to the Ministry of Women by 1 pm Friday 16 February 2024 to upload via the Crown Financial Information System (CFIS). YES / NO



Kellie Coombes  
Chief Executive  
Ministry for Women



Hon Louise Upston  
Acting Minister for Women

- 14 / 02 / 2024

BUDGET SENSITIVE



## **Background**

---

- 6 As part of setting the fiscal objectives for Budget 2024, the Government established savings targets for agencies to meet from 2024/25. As the Ministry's full time equivalent staff numbers (FTE) increased by more than 50% since 2017, our savings target is 7.5% (or \$1.1m) of eligible baseline expenditure.
- 7 At a broad level, the savings target will be achieved by creating efficiencies in back-office support services, reductions in contractors and consultant expenditure, reducing future property requirements, and rescoping our policy work programme. Annex 1 summarises the savings initiatives and the implications of reducing expenditure.
- 8 In arriving at the preferred savings proposals, the Ministry has considered the risks to delivery of core services and the ability to realise savings from 2024/25. The Ministry is confident it can achieve the expected savings while managing the risks.
- 9 As part of the process to identify savings, the Ministry facilitated internal workshops with staff to identify potential areas for efficiencies and savings. The Public Service Association (PSA) organised a workshop for its members.
- 10 To further explore the opportunities identified through this process, a project team has been established as part of a continuous business process improvement approach. This programme is led by the Ministry's Chief Financial Officer on my behalf.

## **Consultation**

---

- 11 The Ministry has consulted with the Treasury Vote team on its submission and as noted earlier, has gone through an assurance review process run by the Treasury.

## **Financial implications**

---

- 12 The proposals have an impact of reducing Vote Women appropriations by \$1.1 million annually from 2024/25 financial year.

## **Next steps**

---

- 13 Sign and forward the attached letter to the Minister of Finance, and to the Ministry for Women, by 1pm Friday 16 February 2024. Once this has been signed, the Ministry will upload the documents to the Crown Financial Information System (CFIS). Ministry officials are available to discuss these proposals further if required.

**BUDGET SENSITIVE**

## **Appendices**

---

Appendix 1: Letter to Minister of Finance on baseline savings proposals.

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

**BUDGET SENSITIVE**

Hon Louise Upston

Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector  
Minister for Social Development and Employment  
Minister for Child Poverty Reduction



Hon Nicola Willis  
Minister of Finance  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

Dear Nicola

I am confirming that I, the Acting Minister for Women, have submitted the Initial Baseline Exercise for the Ministry for Women, which covers all proposals for the Women Portfolio.

The Budget 2024 Initial Baseline Exercise Summary template for the Women Portfolio is attached as Annex 1.

The individual baseline reduction initiatives outlined below for the Women Portfolio have also been submitted as part of our Budget 2024 Initial Baseline Exercise return:

ID 15413	Back-office support services - Delivering efficiencies
ID 15414	Consultants and contractor spend - Reducing costs
ID 15415	Ministry of Women new accommodation - Reducing footprint
ID 15416	Policy work programme review - Rescoping services and partnering with other agencies

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Louise Upston', written over a large, faint diagonal watermark that reads 'RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982'.

Hon Louise Upston  
**Acting Minister for Women**



## Annex 1: Budget 2024 Initial Baseline Exercise Summary Template

### Section 1: Overview

Summary of proposed operating baseline changes through Budget 2024

	Impact \$m increase/(decrease)					
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28 & Outyears	Total
Total submitted for baseline reduction target	-	(1.100)	(1.100)	(1.100)	(1.100)	(4.400)
If required: total amount of targeted policy savings	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total amount of revenue options	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total savings/revenue proposed</b>	-	<b>(1.100)</b>	<b>(1.100)</b>	<b>(1.100)</b>	<b>(1.100)</b>	<b>(4.400)</b>
If invited: cost pressure funding sought	-	-	-	-	-	-
If invited: new spending sought	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total new funding sought</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net impact of all Budget 2024 proposals</b>	-	<b>(1.100)</b>	<b>(1.100)</b>	<b>(1.100)</b>	<b>(1.100)</b>	<b>(4.400)</b>

## Section 2: Alignment with Government Priorities

The Ministry's work programme and strategic objectives are informed by, and reflect, the Minister for Women's priorities.

9(2)(f)(ii)

Currently, there are four strategic objectives that have informed the Ministry's work programme, which focus on improving the lives of women and girls across New Zealand. These cover social and economic wellbeing, participation, safety, and improving outcomes for Wāhine Māori. These outcomes require the Ministry to look at women and girls in all their diversity and focus on areas that make the biggest difference to women and girls.

The Ministry will allocate resources within its baseline to deliver on its strategic priorities. This will include rescoping, pausing, and stopping work that is not aligned.

### Consideration of Savings Proposals

The target set for the Ministry is \$1.1 million of savings per annum from 2024/25. This equates to 7.5% of the eligible baseline expenditure.

As part of looking for savings within baseline, the Ministry held internal workshops with staff to identify potential areas for savings and efficiencies. The Public Service Association (PSA) also facilitated a workshop with its members.

The Ministry has established a project team to identify ongoing savings and efficiencies as part of continuous business process improvement. This programme is led by the Ministry's Chief Financial Officer on behalf of the Chief Executive (CE), working with the Ministry's staff and leaders to identify options and understand implications.

Savings will be achieved by creating efficiencies in back-office support services, reductions in contractors and consultant expenditure, reducing future property requirements, and rescoping its policy work programme. The Ministry has advised that there will be savings of at least five FTE equivalents by way of managing existing vacancies, and resourcing from existing staff. Recruiting to vacancies will require CE approval before going to market. Work programme items that could be stopped or paused have been identified. The Ministry will seek to share common services and resources with other agencies to reduce duplication and improve efficiency.

The following table below provides a ranking of the preferred savings proposals and implications.

	Ranking of savings proposals	\$m	Implications
1.	Back-office support services: delivering efficiencies	0.200	Work will be reallocated across relevant teams to ensure all key deliverables and requirements are met. Service offerings in some areas may be reduced, but this will not adversely impact the Ministry's ability to meet organisational priorities. The Ministry will continue to meet its legal obligations.
2.	Consultants and contractor spend: reducing costs	0.200	The Ministry will undertake less research/project-based initiatives which require specialist skills. Instead, skills within the Ministry will be utilised.
3.	Ministry for Women new accommodation: reducing footprint	0.200	The Ministry will request a smaller quantum of floor space during the accommodation moves led by the Government Property Group in 2025. This will require working in a slightly different way through a hybrid working model. This change to future property requirements may impact the Government Property Group's Bowen House project. This has been raised with the Government Property Group project team.
4.	Policy work programme – rescoping services and partnering with other agencies	0.500	<p>The Ministry has options to reprioritise and rescope its work programme to ensure resources are directed to strategic priorities. This will include areas such as reducing investment on in-house data insights capability, reducing contribution to the Public Service Commission's Equal Pay Taskforce, and rescoping the refresh of the Bringing Gender in Tool.</p> <p>As part of Budget 2022, the Ministry received funding to build its data, insights, and research capability. This may be scaled back. The Ministry will explore other options to access additional expertise and capability when required in other ways (e.g. secondments, inter-agency approaches). This could impact on the Ministry's ability to influence across Government, but the Ministry is confident this can be mitigated through implementing other approaches.</p> <p>The Ministry received funding of \$400,000 per annum to support the Public Service Commission's Equal Pay Taskforce. This taskforce has a focus on reducing pay gaps</p>



		<p>within the public service. The Equal Pay Taskforce is located in the Public Services Commission (currently 7 FTE) and is jointly funded by the Public Service Commission, the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE), and the Ministry for Women. There is the potential for savings, which agencies are exploring including apportionment of savings.</p> <p>The other areas available for rescoping include the refresh of the Bringing Gender in Tool, and support services to the Mana Wāhine Inquiry programme.</p> <p>These services will be prioritised and rescoped to deliver the balance of the required \$1.1 million of savings annually from 2024/25.</p>
--	--	--

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

### Section 3: Planning for Managing Within Baselines

The Ministry has established a project team to identify ongoing efficiencies as part of continuous business process improvement. This programme is led by the Ministry's Chief Financial Officer on behalf of the Chief Executive, working with the Ministry's staff and leaders to identify options and understand implications.

In addition to 7.5% required savings, the Ministry has identified savings proposals of up to 10% to help manage other cost pressures within its baseline. The Ministry's key cost driver is FTE related costs. The Ministry plans to deliver most of the savings and manage future cost pressures by managing vacancies carefully, creating efficiencies in back-office support services, reductions in contractors and consultant expenditure, reducing future property requirements, and rescoping its work programme.

The reprioritisation of the Ministry's work programme and the identification of ongoing efficiencies from support services will be used as the overall strategy for managing within baselines.

The Ministry is one of the first agencies to go into bargaining for our collective agreement, with bargaining starting in March. Ministry employees did not receive a Public Service Pay Adjustment (PSPA). This, in addition to the broader environment, could create challenges in the context of bargaining. The Ministry will work within the Government's workforce planning expectations and will ensure it is affordable and within baseline funding. The other area of cost pressure is the general increase in costs, which will be managed through effective procurement, cost sharing opportunities and process efficiencies.

The combined impact of the cost pressures to be managed are estimated below.

	\$m					Total
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28 & Outyears*	
Operating cost pressures to be managed in baselines	-	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.2
Capital cost pressures to be managed in baselines (if not signalled through capital pipeline review)	-	-	-	-	-	-