



13 October 2021

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Ref: OIA-2021/22-0322

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act request relating to the efficacy of lockdowns

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 22 September 2021. You requested:

*"Are lockdowns effective?
What proof do you have for your answer?"*

Our experiences to date demonstrate that this approach delivers better economic and social outcomes for New Zealanders, on average, over the course of the pandemic. The *Oxford Stringency Index* represents how New Zealand has consistently had some of the lowest government restrictions of all countries, as well as having very few cases of COVID-19.

Some important parts of the evidence base supporting New Zealand's strategy are discussed across the following locations.

Date	Document Title	Website Address
Submitted 10 June 2021, Published 11 August 2021	The Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group's Advice to Minister Verrall	https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/independent-advisory-groups/scphag
Various	The Treasury's Staff Insights Blog <i>In particular, see:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- "WEU Special Topic - Alert Level Assumptions Refresh (BEFU 2021)", published 23 April 2021; and- "Economic advice in a time of COVID: How the New Zealand Treasury navigated the uncertainty of the global pandemic", published 5 February 2021	https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publication/s/research-and-commentary/staff-insights-blog/search?start-date-quarter=default&start-date-year=default&end-date-quarter=default&end-date-year=default&page=1
22 December 20	Response to letter from Sundborn et al. on: 'Chasing elimination through lockdowns is stamping out livelihoods and lives'	https://www.publish.csiro.au/hc/Fulltext/HC15959

13 August 2020	New Zealand's COVID-19 elimination strategy <i>Michael G Baker, Amanda Kvalsvig, Ayesha J Verrall</i>	https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.5694/mja2.50735
Updated daily	Oxford Stringency Index	https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/covid-stringency-index

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response may be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Cheryl Barnes
Deputy Chief Executive, COVID-19 Response