



16 July 2025



Ref: OIA-2024/25-1006

Tēnā koe ,

Official Information Act request relating to the transfer of recovery responsibilities and functions to the Department of Internal Affairs

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 26 June 2025. You requested:

“[1] all advice provided to the Minister for Emergency Management, the Minister for the Public Service, or the Prime Minister between 1 January 2024 and 30 June 2025 regarding the potential transfer of recovery functions to the Department of Internal Affairs.

[2] any briefing notes, memos, or Cabinet papers discussing the rationale, timeline, or impact of the transfer of recovery responsibilities to DIA.”

On 1 July 2025, we notified you of our decision to transfer part of your request to the Public Service Commission under section 14(b)(i) of the Act.

We have interpreted your request as being for formal advice relating to the transfer of residual functions of the Chief Executive, Cyclone Recovery to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) and dated on or between 1 January 2024 and 26 June 2025 (the date of your request).

For context, we note that the functional Chief Executive, Cyclone Recovery, hosted by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) through its Cyclone Recovery Unit (CRU), was always envisaged as a short-term arrangement, scheduled to wind up on 30 June 2025. This is reflected in Cabinet decisions, which have been proactively released on DPMC’s website. The relevant documents are:

- On 27 February 2023, Cabinet agreed to appoint a Chief Executive, Cyclone Recovery, supported by a CRU within DPMC, for a term of two years (CAB-23-SUB-0056 refers). That paper and the associated minute are available here: [CAB-23-SUB-0056: Cyclone Gabrielle: Recovery Arrangements \(August 2024\)](#).
- On 20 November 2024, Cabinet noted that the functional Chief Executive, Cyclone Recovery role would not extend beyond 30 June 2025, with any residual functions and associated appropriations to transfer to DIA and DPMC on that date (ECO-25-SUB-0274 refers). Cabinet agreed to disestablish the role on 1 July 2025. That paper and the associated minute are available here: [ECO-25-SUB-0274: Transfer of residual North Island Weather Event recovery activities from 1 July 2025 \(June 2025\)](#).

Information to be released

Also identified as relevant to the part of your request for formal advice discussing “*the rationale, timeline, or impact of the transfer of recovery responsibilities to DIA*” are two briefings to the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery, Hon Mark Mitchell,

dated 29 October 2024, and 13 November 2024, respectively, and one briefing to the Prime Minister, Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, dated 15 March 2024. These are listed in the table below.

Item	Date	Title	Decision
1	15 March 2024	<i>DPMC – Approach to Budget 24</i>	Release, some information not in scope
2	29 October 2024	<i>Handover of remaining NIWE activities post 30 June 2025 approval for Ministerial consultation</i>	Release, some information withheld under s9(2)(a)
3	13 November 2024	<i>Approval to lodge Cabinet paper and talking points: NIWE activities post 30 June 2025</i>	Release some information withheld under s9(2)(a)

I have decided to release the relevant parts of these documents, subject to information being withheld as noted, under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of individuals. Some information in the briefing to the Prime Minister is not relevant to your request and is marked as 'out of scope.'

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act. No public interest has been identified that would be sufficient to outweigh the reasons for withholding that information.

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

This response will be published on DPMC'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.

Nāku noa, nā,



Clare Ward
Executive Director
Strategy, Governance and Engagement

Briefing

DPMC - Approach to Budget 24

To: Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister

Date 15/03/2024

Security Level

~~BUDGET-SENSITIVE~~ UNCLASSIFIED

Purpose

1. This paper seeks your direction on how to approach funding for DPMC for Budget 2024.

Executive Summary

Out of Scope

Out of Scope

Streamlining DPMC

6. In addition, we have been undertaking work to streamline DPMC by transferring non-core functions to agencies with a stronger strategic alignment. This work includes transferring the hosting of Out of Scope the Functional Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery (CRU) and her supporting business unit to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA). There is a strong strategic rationale for transferring these functions to DIA, but there would be associated fiscal costs that neither department could currently afford. We therefore recommend that you defer a decision on whether or not to transfer these functions until later in 2024 by which time DPMC will have completed an internal capability review, including its corporate costing model.

Out of Scope

Streamlining DPMC

4. **note** that in December 2023 you agreed in principle, subject to further advice on costs, to transfer the hosting of Out of Scope the Functional Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery (CRU) and her supporting business unit to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) [DPMC-2023/24-489 refers];

5. **note** that while there are strong strategic reasons for transferring ^{Out of Scope} the CRU to DIA, current analysis indicates the fiscal cost to DPMC and DIA would be unaffordable;

6. **direct** officials to provide you with advice on the fiscal costs of transferring ^{Out of Scope} the CRU to DIA later in 2024 after DPMC has completed an internal capability review, including corporate costs; **YES / NO**

Out of Scope

Rebecca Kitteridge
Chief Executive


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Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister

...../...../.....

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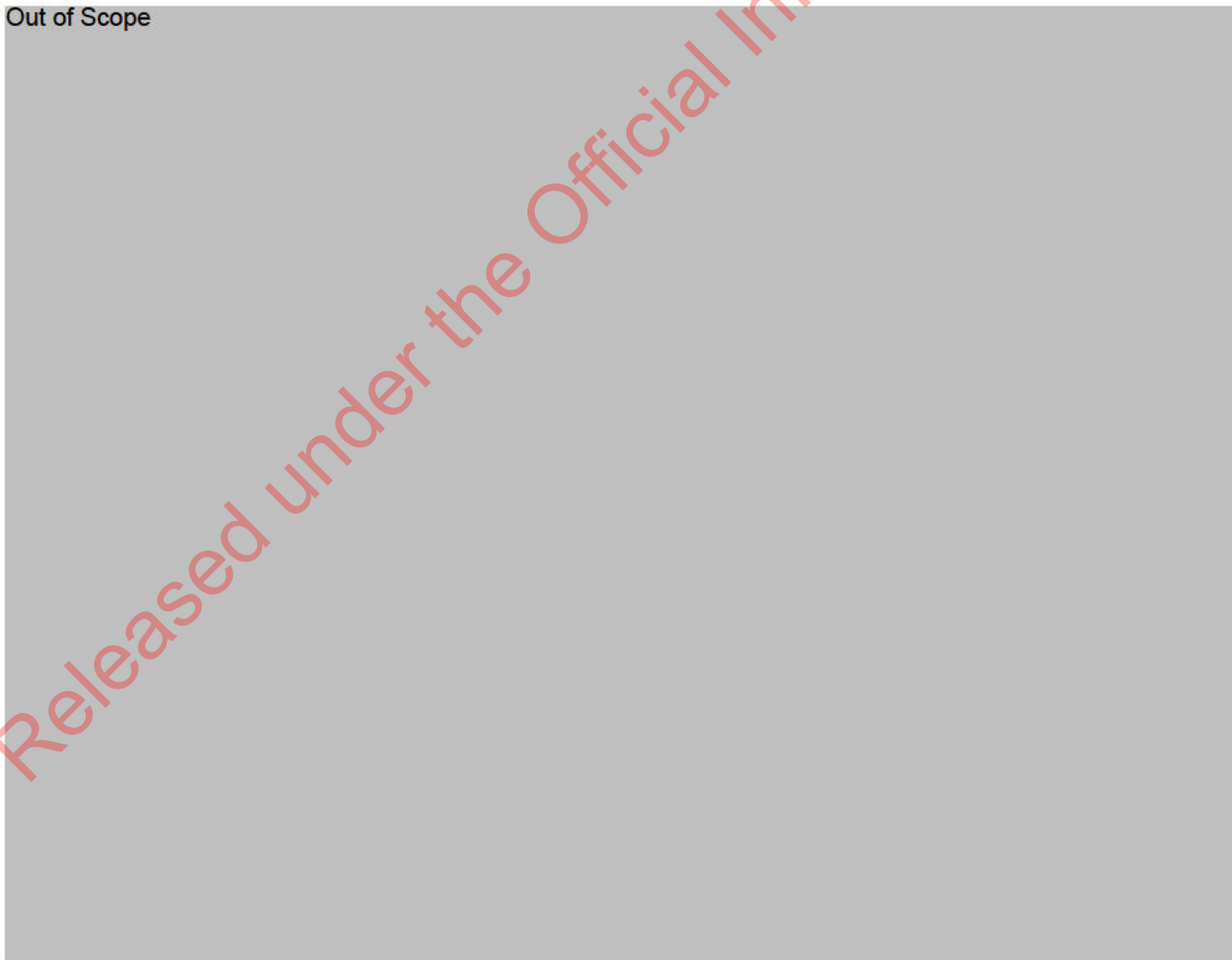
Out of Scope



Streamlining DPMC

10. On 2 December 2023, you agreed in principle, subject to further advice on the costs involved, to transfer the hosting of Out of Scope the CRU to DIA [DPMC-2023/24-489 refers].

Out of Scope



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Out of Scope

Streamlining DPMC - transferring Out of Scope CRU to DIA

17. In addition to strengthening and sustaining DPMC, you also indicated your desire to streamline the department by transitioning non-core functions elsewhere, including transferring Out of Scope the CRU to DIA.
18. Our work to progress the transfers of Out of Scope the CRU has confirmed that DIA would be a better host for both functions. Out of Scope
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
19. Out of Scope CRU also requires strong working links with local government. Additionally, when CRU's time-limited funding runs out there is likely to be a longer tail of operational work that will extend beyond June 2024 that would not fit with a more tightly focused DPMC. Having these three agencies operate under one organisation would reduce overall complexity for the emergency management system, which experience tells us is critical for managing effective responses.
20. While there is a strong strategic rationale to transfer Out of Scope CRU to DIA, there would be fiscal costs. As we have previously discussed with you, these functions have been cross-subsidising core costs within DPMC. In addition, transferring these functions would incur a loss of economies of scale for DPMC. Our current analysis indicates that transferring these functions would be unaffordable for DPMC.
21. Because of the cost implications, we do not recommend transferring Out of Scope the CRU to DIA in 2024/25. Instead, we recommend you direct us to provide further advice on this later in 2024 once DPMC has completed an internal capability review, including its corporate costing model.

Out of Scope

Annex A: DPMC's savings and cost pressures

Out of Scope



Further offsetting savings

Option	2024/25 \$m	2025/26 \$m	2026/27 \$m	2027/28 \$m
Reallocate savings from disestablishing the Cyclone Recovery Taskforce to DPMC	(2.000)	0	0	0

Out of Scope





Briefing

Handover of remaining NIWE activities post 30 June 2025 approval for Ministerial consultation

To: Hon Mark Mitchell
Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery

Date	29/10/2024	Report Number:	DPMC-2024/25-468
		Priority level:	High

Purpose

1. This briefing seeks your approval to begin Ministerial consultation on the attached Cabinet paper, titled *Transfer of residual North Island Weather Event recovery activities from 1 July 2025*.

Discussion

2. The attached Cabinet paper seeks approval to allocate a discrete number of residual North Island Weather Events (NIWE) recovery activities from the Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery (CE-CR) to other Crown agencies effective from 1 July 2025.
3. The CE-CR role will not extend beyond 30 June 2025. The Public Service Commission will revoke the authorising Order in Council in due course to give effect to this. It is working through whether it will do so via a recommendation in this paper during ministerial consultation and before the paper is finalised.
4. Most North Island Weather Event (NIWE) activities will be completed by then, but four discrete activities will remain and must be transferred to another Crown agency effective from 1 July 2025:
 - implementation of the Crown Funding Agreements and the Agreements associated with marae relocation and management of the contract with Crown Infrastructure Partners;
 - Orders in Council and administration of the Severe Weather Emergency Recovery Legislation Act 2023 (the SWERL Act);
 - ownership of the recovery policy settings and decision-making tools supporting initial advice to Ministers following a nationally significant natural hazard; and
 - residual close out and accountability activities associated with time-limited appropriations.

5. The Cabinet paper proposes that the remaining activities are transferred to either the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) or DPMC, along with \$2.75m funding sourced from CRU savings to support these activities, as follows:
 - to the DIA, implementation of the Future of Severely Affected Locations (FOSAL) (including whenua Māori and marae) contracts and funding agreements, with \$1.5m transferred from CRU savings to support these activities; and
 - to DPMC, with \$1.25m transferred from CRU savings to support these activities:
 - i. administration of the Severe Weather Emergency Recovery Legislation Act 2023, including reporting on the legislation and supporting the Severe Weather Events Recovery Review Panel (no further stewardship of Orders in Council will be provided to agencies from 1 July 2025);
 - ii. ownership of the recovery policy settings and decision-making tools; and
 - iii. residual close out activities associated with time-limited appropriations.
6. The Chief Executives of DIA and DPMC have agreed to receive these activities and associated funding. The Cabinet paper also seeks approval to transfer the remaining associated appropriations from 1 July 2025 to DIA.
7. The Cabinet paper also recommends the following regarding Ministerial and CE delegations from 1 July 2025 as follows:
 - existing delegations to yourself, the Minister of Finance and Minister for Local Government to remain for Category 3 buyouts in Auckland;
 - remaining implementation decisions on FOSAL Category 3 cost-sharing agreements with councils delegated to the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Infrastructure jointly;
 - remaining implementation decisions on FOSAL Category 3 whenua Māori and marae funding packages delegated jointly to the Minister of Finance, Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Māori Development;
 - decisions on whenua Māori and marae funding packages under \$5 million delegated to the Secretary for Internal Affairs; and
 - remaining decisions regarding FOSAL contracts and funding agreements to the Secretary for Internal Affairs.

Incorporation of agency feedback

8. The CRU worked closely with the Treasury and DPMC on the finance, appropriations and delegations section of the paper. Note recommendation 13 is currently a placeholder, as Treasury will finalise the wording of this recommendation in the coming days.
9. Substantive comments and inputs on this paper from DPMC, DIA, Public Service Commission (PSC), Te Puni Kōkiri and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).
10. Feedback has been integrated into the paper as follows:
 - NEMA and PSC sought clarity about the policy work associated with the ownership of the recovery policy settings and decision-making tools. They queried whether this was creating a new function, and if so, how that would align with the other papers considering the wider emergency management system being considered by Cabinet recently. They also queried the definition of significant natural hazard emergencies.
 - i. The Cabinet paper clarifies that there is no new function being created as part of this work. DPMC already provides (and will continue to provide) immediate

strategic advice to the Prime Minister and Ministers following a nationally significant severe natural hazard emergency stemming from its role chairing both the Officials Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination and the Natural Hazards Board. The decision-making tools will support DPMC in undertaking those existing functions to ensure that decisions are consistent and well-reasoned, and able to be made quickly. DPMC would do this in consultation with NEMA and other agencies. Current lead agencies responsible for the policy that sits under the menu of options will continue to be responsible for developing policies to support the menu options.

- ii. The Cabinet paper also clarifies that the tools are being designed for natural hazard events where the impacts are nationally significant, and the recovery is expected to be complex, lengthy and costly. These are the situations that warrant Government consideration of whether and how to tailor recovery settings outside of business-as-usual emergency management arrangements. Categorising the size, scale and impact of events using consistent terminology with the thresholds used in existing emergency management systems will ensure that the tools align with the existing framework.
- DIA were concerned about capacity to absorb any additional un-funded FTEs required into their already stretched baseline and sought clarification of resourcing and workload impacts. The CRU will continue to meet with DIA and discuss workload and resourcing. DIA has been reassured that the Crown Funding Agreement workload is currently being supported by 1.5 FTE within the CRU, that the resources required will taper off as the Crown Funding Agreements mature, and that the funding proposed to be provided is more than adequate to cover this.

Next steps

11. Your approval is sought to begin Ministerial consultation on the attached Cabinet paper.
12. There are tight timeframes for the submission of this Cabinet paper, proposed to be considered by ECO in the final sitting week of November. If the timeframes set out in Table 1 below are not met, this paper likely will not be considered until February 2025.


Table 1: Timeframes for Cabinet paper

Activity	Date
Ministerial consultation on Cabinet paper	Thurs 31 October to 4pm Tues 12 November
Cabinet paper to Minister's office	Wed 13 November
Lodge Cabinet paper	Thu 14 November
ECO committee considers Cabinet paper	Wed 20 November
Cabinet consideration of Cabinet paper	Mon 25 November

Recommendations

13. We recommend you:

1. **agree** to begin Ministerial consultation on the attached Cabinet paper titled *Transfer of residual North Island Weather Event recovery activities from 1 July 2025* no later than Thursday 31 October, for completion by 4pm Tuesday 12 November. **YES / NO**

 Katrina Casey Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery
30 October 2025
Mobile phone: +64 s 9(2)(a)

Hon Mark Mitchell Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery/...../.....

Attachments:	Title	Security classification
Attachment A:	Draft cabinet paper <i>Transfer of residual North Island Weather Event recovery activities from 1 July 2025</i>	IN-CONFIDENCE UNCLASSIFIED

Released under the Official Information Act 1982



**DEPARTMENT OF THE
PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET**
TE TARI O TE PIRIMIA ME TE KOMITI MATUA

Attachment A: Draft cabinet paper *Transfer of residual North Island Weather Event recovery activities from 1 July 2025*

The final version of this Cabinet Paper has been proactively released here: <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2025-06/pr-eco-25-sub-0274-transfer-of-residual-north-island-weather-event-recovery-activities.pdf>

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Briefing

Approval to lodge Cabinet paper and talking points: NIWE activities post 30 June 2025

To: Hon Mark Mitchell
Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery

Date	13/11/2024	Priority level:	High
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Purpose

1. This briefing seeks your approval to lodge the attached Cabinet paper, titled *Transfer of residual North Island Weather Event recovery activities from 1 July 2025*. It also provides you with talking points to assist in your discussion of the paper at the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee (ECO) on 20 November.

Discussion


2. We provided you with a version of the attached Cabinet paper, titled *Transfer of residual North Island Weather Event recovery activities from 1 July 2025*, on Wednesday 6 November for Ministerial consultation.
3. Following the conclusion of Ministerial consultation, the CRU has made the following changes to the paper, as appended as **Attachment A**:
 - inserted a recommendation (and associated discussion in the body of the paper) that invites the Minister for the Public Service to instruct the Parliamentary Counsel Office to prepare an Order in Council disestablishing the role of Chief Executive – Cyclone Recovery, to come into effect on 1 July 2025;
 - confirmed with Treasury the final wording of recommendation 11 regarding responsibility for administration of the Crown balance sheet;
 - various minor amendments and edits as requested to improve readability; and
 - decisions about Ministerial responsibilities post June 2025 do not need to be made by Cabinet so discussions can occur between ministers in due course. References to Ministerial responsibilities have been amended to reflect that decisions will be made early in 2025.
4. During the Ministerial consultation period the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) provided its Minister and the CRU with feedback and an annotated version of the Cabinet paper with significant changes to the proposed Ministerial responsibilities. Given the timing of this feedback and the fact these decisions don't need to be made by Cabinet the paper was instead amended to reflect Ministerial delegation decisions being made in early 2025.
5. There was also a suggestion from DIA to add in reference to future costs coming from within baseline "or any expense transfers that may be applicable". The CRU does not recommend provision for future expense transfers is made as our analysis and knowledge

of the forecasted work has informed the funding proposed, and we remain confident it is sufficient.

- 6. Talking points to assist you at ECO are attached in **Attachment B**.
- 7. The Cabinet paper is now ready to be lodged by your office, should you agree.

Recommendations

- 8. We recommend you:
 - 1. **note** that changes made as a result of Ministerial consultation; and
 - 2. **agree** that your office will lodge the paper as attached for consideration by the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee on 20 November 2024. **YES / NO**



Katrina Casey
Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery

13 November 2024

Mobile phone: +64 s 9(2)(a)

Hon Mark Mitchell
Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery

...../...../.....

Attachments:	Title	Security classification
Attachment A:	Cabinet paper to lodge: <i>Transfer of residual North Island Weather Event recovery activities from 1 July 2025</i>	IN-CONFIDENCE UNCLASSIFIED
Attachment B:	Talking Points for Cabinet Economic Policy Committee	IN-CONFIDENCE UNCLASSIFIED

Appendix A: Cabinet paper to lodge: *Transfer of residual North Island Weather Event recovery activities from 1 July 2025*

This Cabinet Paper has been proactively released here: <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2025-06/pr-eco-25-sub-0274-transfer-of-residual-north-island-weather-event-recovery-activities.pdf>

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Attachment B: Talking Points for Cabinet Economic Policy Committee

Summary

- Following the North Island Weather Events in early 2023, Cabinet established the Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery role to lead the Government's recovery efforts. The Cyclone Recovery Unit was hosted by DPMC to support the work of the Chief Executive.
- This Cabinet paper seeks approval to formally disestablish the Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery role as of 1 July 2025. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) will disestablish the Cyclone Recovery Unit at that point as well.
- The NIWE recovery work programme will be concluded by then, with the following remaining activities:
 - implementation of the Crown Funding agreements, such as buyout cost share agreements and funding of infrastructure projects such as flood resilience and roading works (to transfer to the Department of Internal Affairs with funding of \$1m in 2025/26 financial year and \$0.5m in the 2026/27 financial year);
 - administration of the Severe Weather Emergency Recovery Legislation Act 2023, including Orders in Council and maintenance of the Review Panel (to remain with DPMC with funding of \$0.25 million in the 2025/26 financial year);
 - ownership of the recovery policy settings and decision-making tools approved for development by ECO in October 2024 (to remain with DPMC with funding of \$0.25 million in the 2025/26 financial year); and
 - residual close out reporting (to remain with DPMC with funding of \$0.75 million in the 2025/26 financial year).
 - The funding being transferred is available because the Chief Executive and team have managed this year's budget to identify underspends. No new funding is required.

Changes to Ministerial responsibilities are to come

- Changes will need to be made to current Ministerial responsibilities. I will work with Ministers and the Prime Minister early next year to determine Ministerial responsibilities following the disestablishment of Cyclone Recovery functions on 30 June 2025.