



31 March 2026

Ref: OIA-2025/26-0578

Tēnā koe [REDACTED],

### Official Information Act request relating to COVID-19 policy decisions

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, which was received by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) on 12 March 2026. You requested:

*I request copies of epidemiological modelling, scenario analyses, or projections that were provided to Ministers or Cabinet to support decisions relating to:*

- COVID-19 lockdown measures
- vaccine mandates
- vaccination strategies.

*The timeframe for this request is 1 March 2020 to 31 December 2022.*

*If modelling was commissioned from external organisations or academic institutions, please include those reports.*

On 17 March 2026 you were advised that your request was partially transferred to the Ministry of Health (MoH) for any information they may hold. The MoH will respond to you directly.

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic generated a significant volume of work that was happening at pace. This was particularly the case during the early days of the pandemic response. DPMC led the coordination of the all-of-government response to COVID-19 and we hold a huge volume of documents, many of which were authored by other agencies and include various draft versions of documents. To be able to identify all of the documents that may include some information relevant to your request would require substantial collation and research and therefore it is refused under section 18(f) of the Act.

I have considered whether consulting you may enable a reframing of this query such that the reason for refusal is alleviated; however, I did not identify any amendment that would enable us to readily respond. I have also considered extending the timeframe for response and/or fixing a charge and determined that neither would enable or remove the reason for refusal.

However, we have been able to identify information which cover the key documents relevant to your request. These are all publicly available and are set out below.

### Information publicly available

One of the ways in which epidemiological modelling was provided to Ministers or Cabinet was in the form of the *COVID-19 Response Weekly Report*.

DPMC provided this report to the COVID-19 Minister which the team compiled by drawing on input from other agencies. These are proactively released and can be viewed at the following link: <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/publications/covid-19-weekly-reports-and-situation-updates>

This includes updates from the COVID-19 Modelling Governance Group which oversaw a modelling research programme. Established and chaired by The Treasury, DPMC was a member and managed a number of the contracts for modelling advice. The COVID-19 Modelling Governance Group provided strategic direction and oversight and prioritised the epidemiological, economic and social questions to be answered through modelling work. Information which will be of use to you has previously been released in this OIA: <https://fyi.org.nz/request/16178/response/70596/attach/4/TOIA%20Reply%2020210519%20Modelling%20Governance%20Group.pdf>

DPMC's policy advice was informed by these modelling and analysis efforts. Modelling advice provided to Ministers was included in Cabinet papers and briefings which have been proactively released here <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/our-programmes/other-work/historical-programmes/covid-19-proactive-releases>

Some examples include:

- Cabinet paper *COVID-19 Response: 6 September Review of Alert Level Settings*. On page 4 contains the updated modelling in relation to the current outbreak, available at the following link: <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-01/ALC6-06092021-COVID-19-Response-6-September-Review-of-Alert-Level-Settings.pdf>
- Cabinet paper *COVID-19: A Strategy for a Highly Vaccinated New Zealand* which contains eight references to modelling from pages 6-14, available at the following link: <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-01/COVID-19-A-Strategy-for-a-Highly-Vaccinated-New-Zealand.pdfv2.pdf>
- Cabinet paper *The COVID-19 Response after the peak of Omicron* which references modelling on a number of pages for example pages 5-6, 22, 41 and available at the following link: <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-01/PO01-21032022-The-COVID-Response-After-the-Peak-of-Omicron.pdf>

The below links also provide a summary of advice from the COVID-19 Modelling Governance Group and the COVID-19 Modelling Steering Group that was produced or co-produced by DPMC.

<https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-01/JU12-29062021-Vaccination-Modelling-in-the-International-Context.pdf>

<https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-Dec-2021/CRIAG-10-December-2021/DA07-27072021-COVID-19-Independent-Continuous-Review-Improvement-and-Advice-Group-Minutes.pdf>

In addition, The Treasury completed economic modelling, scenarios and analysis that was based on epidemiological modelling from MoH. The following COVID-19 information release includes material on this economic modelling which were used to support the below decisions ([COVID-19 information releases | The Treasury New Zealand](#), i.e. [Treasury Report T2020/973: Economic scenarios - 13 April 2020](#))

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 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.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alan Cassidy', is centered on the page.

Alan Cassidy  
**Deputy Chief Executive  
Corporate**