

Reference: 20200166

23 July 2020

Gerry Hetet
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Dear Gerry

Thank you for your Official Information Act request, received on 6 May 2020. You requested the following:

...any communications, reports, documents and papers, that were provided to the Prime Minister, Rt. Hon Jacinda Ardern, immediately prior to or after NZ entering Covid-19 Alert Level 3, specifically those that the Prime Minister referred to on 4 May 2020 stating the New Zealand economy was operating at 75 percent according to the Treasury.

As you are aware, on 2 June 2020 we extended the timeframe to respond to your request by 40 working days.

The Prime Minister was provided Treasury advice on economic scenarios, by way of the following report, which is publicly available on the Treasury website: [Treasury Report T2020/973: Economic Scenarios – 13 April 2020](#). She was also provided a copy of the Weekly Economic Update of 1 May 2020. This was published on the Treasury website on 1 May 2020: [Weekly Economic Update – 1 May 2020](#).

It is our understanding the statement by the Prime Minister that “the New Zealand economy was operating at 75 percent according to the Treasury” was inferred from the economic scenarios set out in the report; in particular, a reduction in output by 25 percent from normal activity under Alert Level 3, and an excerpt in that Weekly Economic Update.

The Update stated:

Businesses across the country reopened on Tuesday as lockdown restrictions eased, with some creatively adapting their business models to comply with ongoing health and safety measures. Businesses unable to comply with the measures and we expect activity to be around 25% below normal levels until restrictions are eased further. Alert level 3 currently remains in place for two weeks and will be reviewed by Cabinet before 11 May.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Treasury website.

This reply addresses the information you requested. You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision.

Yours sincerely

David Hammond
Team Leader Ministerial Advisory