

Joseph P Stockman

By email: [fyi-request-14272-1511eb50@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-14272-1511eb50@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Ref: H202009189

Dear Joseph P Stockman

### **Response to your request for official information**

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 11 December 2020 for information on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Information in response to each part of your request is as follows.

*“Please provide all briefings, aide memoirs, cabinet papers, and internal documents (excluding emails) that discuss the budgeted costs for, and supply issues relating to, personal protective equipment (PPE) as required in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.”*

Ten documents have been identified within scope of this part of your request. These documents are outlined in Appendix One with copies enclosed. The table in Appendix One also lists the specific grounds under which information has been withheld.

Further information regarding funding for PPE has been proactively released on the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) website at:

- <https://covid19.govt.nz/updates-and-resources/legislation-and-key-documents/proactive-release/health-response/>
- <https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/proactive-release-2020-october/HR33-CAB-Paper-COVID-19-Public-Health-Response-Additional....pdf>
- <https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/proactive-release/COVID-19-Public-Health-Response-Additional-Funding-.pdf>

Please note that documents pertaining to further funding for PPE for 2021 will also be proactively released on the Ministry website in due course.

*“Please provide as dollar amounts the total budget for PPE during 2020 (both any initial budget, and any additional budget planned for due to COVID-19).  
Please provide the total actual government spend on PPE for the financial year 18/19.  
Please provide the total actual spend on PPE for the financial year 19/20.  
Please provide the total actual spend on PPE to date for financial year 20/21.”*

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, all PPE for business as usual use was purchased by the respective district health board (DHB) or provider. The Ministry did not play a role in this purchasing and as such is unable to provide information on the amount spent in 2018/19.

In April 2020, the Ministry centralised the supply of PPE to the New Zealand health and disability system to ensure there was continued access for those who needed PPE for both business as usual needs and for responding to COVID-19. \$450 million has been budgeted for PPE as outlined in the attached documents, and in the publicly available links below:

- [www.beehive.govt.nz/release/govt-sets-aside-remaining-14bn-covid-fund](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/govt-sets-aside-remaining-14bn-covid-fund)
- [www.beehive.govt.nz/release/govt-balancing-crucial-investment-careful-management](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/govt-balancing-crucial-investment-careful-management)
- [www.beehive.govt.nz/release/extending-support-covid-19-elimination-strategy-june-2022](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/extending-support-covid-19-elimination-strategy-june-2022)

The amount spent on PPE in 2019/20 is also publicly available in the Ministry's Annual report: [www.health.govt.nz/publication/annual-report-year-ended-30-june-2020](http://www.health.govt.nz/publication/annual-report-year-ended-30-june-2020) (page 118 of the PDF version). \$204.4 million has been spent as at the end of November 2020 in the 2020/21 year.

Please note that this only includes the amount budgeted and spent on PPE for the health and disability sector. Other agencies will have purchased PPE for their own needs which will not be included in the above information. The Ministry is aware that in some cases there have been purchases made by DHBs or providers rather than sourcing from the central supply that are also not included in the above.

*"Please provide any emails sent by the Director-General of Health (during 2020) to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Health, or the All-of-Government Response Controller (John Ombler) where the email primarily discusses PPE cost and supply issues during the COVID-19 response."*

All emails within scope of this part of your request is listed as Document 11 in Appendix One and is enclosed with this letter. The table in Appendix One also lists the specific grounds under which information has been withheld.

I trust this information fulfils your request. Under section 28(3) of the Act you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: [www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests](http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests).

Yours sincerely



Dr Kelvin Watson

**Group Manager, COVID-19 Immunisation, Testing and Supply  
COVID-19 Health System Response**

## Appendix One: List of documents for release

#	Date	Title	Decision on release
1	12 May 2020	Memorandum: PPE update	Release with some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.
2	22 May 2020	Memorandum: Additional Information: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) domestic supply	Release with some information withheld under the following sections of the Act; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons and</li> <li>• 9(2)(b)(ii), as it is commercially sensitive. The greater public interest is in protecting the commercial position of the subject of this information.</li> </ul>
3	18 June 2020	Memorandum: Response to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Domestic Supply Query and Forward Actions and Activities	Release with some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.
4	30 June 2020	Memorandum 20201069	Release with some information withheld under the following sections of the Act; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons and</li> <li>• 9(2)(f)(iv), as it is under active consideration. The release of this information at this time would be likely to prejudice the ability of government to consider advice and the wider public interest is in effective government would not be served.</li> </ul>
5	15 July 2020	Health report: Response to the Auditor-General's recommendations on the procurement, distribution and management of PPE stocks	Release with some information withheld under the following sections of the Act; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons and</li> <li>• 9(2)(f)(iv), as it is under active consideration. The release of this information at this time would be likely to prejudice the ability of government to consider advice and the wider public interest is in effective government would not be served.</li> </ul>

#	Date	Title	Decision on release
6	16 July 2020	Memorandum: Update on the quality review of PPE	Release with some information withheld under the following sections of the Act; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons,</li> <li>• 9(2)(h), as it is legally privileged.</li> </ul>
7	NA	Memorandum: DHB experiences with PPE distribution	Release with some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.
8	NA	Memorandum: Quality Review of PPE	Release with some information withheld under the following sections of the Act; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons,</li> <li>• 9(2)(b)(ii), as it is commercially sensitive. The greater public interest is in protecting the commercial position of the subject of this information and</li> <li>• 9(2)(f)(iv), as it is under active consideration. The release of this information at this time would be likely to prejudice the ability of government to consider advice and the wider public interest is in effective government would not be served.</li> </ul>
9	NA	Personal PPE distribution across the health sector: Follow up	Release with some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.
10	NA	Cabinet Paper: COVID-19 Response Paper 3 – Funding the health system response to COVID-19 into 2021/22	Refused in full under section 18(d) of the Act, as this document will soon be made publicly available.
11	31 March – 5 August 2020	Various email correspondence	Release with some information withheld under the following sections of the Act; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons,</li> <li>• 9(2)(b)(ii), as it is commercially sensitive. The greater public interest is in protecting the</li> </ul>

#	Date	Title	Decision on release
			<p>commercial position of the subject of this information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 9(2)(g)(i), to protect the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions.</li></ul> <p>Information deemed out of scope has been excluded.</p>