

**Subject:** OIA: Request for citation information missing on Cabinet papers that relate to climate change (OIA 2024/13)  
**Date:** Monday, 27 May 2024 at 11:25:24 AM New Zealand Standard Time  
**From:** Wendy McGuinness <wmcg@mcguinnessinstitute.org>  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**CC:** Patrick Shonakan <ps@mcguinnessinstitute.org>  
**Attachments:** 20240523 Climate-related Cabinet papers [143].xlsx

To whom it may concern,

**Our OIA 2024/13: Request for citation information missing on Cabinet papers that relate to climate change**

Please find attached our Excel listing all Cabinet papers that relate to climate change since 2001 to today. This table is a work in progress and will become a McGuinness Institute Working Paper. The paper will aim to provide a resource for further research and citation purposes.

**Background**

We have had trouble in the past identifying the dates (and in some cases a Cabinet reference) of Cabinet papers for our citation purposes. We have consistently requested that when Cabinet papers are uploaded onto a department's website, that they should be properly referenced. In the attached Excel you will notice that there are 61 instances out of 143 where we could not identify the date of the paper [Col A]. Further, coincidentally there are 61 instances out of 143 where we could not identify the Cabinet reference [Col B] (but some of these relate to different documents than those with missing dates).

The [Proactive Release of Cabinet Material: Updated Requirements](#) (June 2023), see Appendix (p. 9.) sets out best practice. We consider a coversheet is an excellent way forward for all papers being published by Cabinet. Publishing Cabinet papers without a date or Cabinet reference creates unnecessary confusion, wastes time and decreases accountability and transparency. It is in everyone's interest that departments consider the needs of users when publishing Cabinet material. Further, we believe it would be useful if the 2023 circular (link above) clarified that [Date of issue] means [Date of issue, being the date the paper was submitted by a Minister to a Cabinet committee/Cabinet], and that Cabinet papers, as a matter of good practice, are signed.

**Our Request**

We are requesting that each of the four departments, together or separately, check and complete column A (the reference) and Col B (the appropriate date) in our Excel attached. You can search by government department, in [Col E] of the Excel or via the [table](#) on our website.

Note 1: While scoping for this OIA, we noticed that there are at least three different types of dates might exist. If Cabinet has a preferred date style (e.g. 1, 2 or 3 below), please advise. We simply want a standard date that can be relied upon to identify a Cabinet Paper in our publications.

1. the date the paper is prepared for Cabinet by a Minister or official (e.g. Proposals not yet tabled).
2. the date the paper first becomes part of the agenda of Cabinet (e.g. Proposals that have been tabled).
3. the date of the Cabinet meeting at which final decisions were made (e.g. Minutes/Decisions).

Note 2: The aim of this list is to create a comprehensive and accurate list of all climate-related Cabinet papers. If there is a Cabinet paper missing, please add to the excel and/or email us directly (with a link to the paper).

Many thanks for considering this request.

Best wishes,

Wendy McGuinness

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