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25 September 2025

Wendy McGuinness

By email: [REDACTED]  
Ref: H2025072285

Tēnā koe Wendy

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

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health – Manatū Hauora (the Ministry) on 5 September 2025. Please find a response to each part of your request below.

*1. Given that the New Zealand Pandemic Plan A framework for action (Interim update – July 2024 ‘does not address the full range of lessons identified during the COVID-19 pandemic’ (see Box 2 above), can you advise why these lessons were not addressed? Can you also provide a full list of these lessons?*

The lessons were not incorporated into the *New Zealand Pandemic Plan A framework for action* as the phase one Royal Commission of Inquiry report had not been released. Please note the Royal Commission published their report(s) in November 2024. You may wish to refer to the following material which is published on the Royal Commission website:

[www.covid19lessons.royalcommission.nz/reports-lessons-learned](http://www.covid19lessons.royalcommission.nz/reports-lessons-learned).

*2. Can you advise what the process from interim to final will be? In particular:*

- a. Will there be an opportunity for the public to engage with this process and provide feedback?*
- b. Have other departments been consulted when reviewing lessons? If yes, which departments have/will be consulted?*
- c. How will MOH engage with stakeholders throughout this process?*

*3. Given that the Royal Commission of Inquiry is due to provide their final report by February 2026, is there an estimate for when the final pandemic plan will be published?*

*4. Has any consideration been given to renaming the plan to ‘New Zealand Pandemic Strategy’?*

*5. Complete the attached excel, in particular Columns E-H of Sheet 2, and Columns C-F of Sheet 3.*

*7. Advise whether MOH will be producing a report on progress against the Phase One recommendations for tabling in Parliament (mentioned in Recommendation 39c of the Royal Commission).*

As you note in your request, New Zealand's Influenza Pandemic Plan received an interim update in July 2024, including expanding the scope to cover other respiratory-type pathogens of pandemic potential.

The Ministry is now developing a new pandemic strategic framework (the Framework), which will set the direction for New Zealand's approach to pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. An inter-agency group and science advisory group are supporting the development of the Framework.

The Framework will not be finalised until after Phase Two of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into COVID-19 (the Inquiry) is completed next year. The Ministry will support the Government's response to the Inquiry, once Phase Two is completed. For further information you may wish to refer to the following link to the Ministry's website: [www.health.govt.nz/publications/new-zealand-pandemic-plan-a-framework-for-action](http://www.health.govt.nz/publications/new-zealand-pandemic-plan-a-framework-for-action).

While it is permissible to seek information by asking questions under the Act, a distinction must be drawn between questions which seek information that is 'held', and questions which seek to elicit an opinion or explanation. An agency is not obliged to create information in order to respond to a request or questions posed to an agency.

Therefore, these parts of your request are refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as that the information requested is not held by the department and there are no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department.

*6. Provide the report of progress against the recommendations of Phase One of the Royal Commission (mentioned in Recommendation 39b of the Royal Commission).*

This part of your request has been refused under section 18(e) of the Act, that the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

*8. Can you provide a copy of Cabinet Papers, review report/s, or discussion papers that discuss the content and the process for selecting the content of the National Reserve Supply (NRS) since January 2020?*

The Ministry has identified one document in scope of your request, a memorandum titled "*Recommended items to be held in the National Reserve Supply.*" A copy of this document is enclosed in this response. Please note that some information has been withheld under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act, to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.

Where information is withheld under section 9 of the Act, I have considered the countervailing public interest in release in making this decision and consider that it does not outweigh the need to withhold at this time.

I understand the Ministry has also responded to previous requests for information you have submitted on this topic. Our previous responses, reference H2024038704 and H2024045080, may be of interest to you.

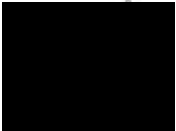
Please note in our prior responses reference above, the Ministry explained it has not written an official report or other documentation that describes the process to assess and decide on the content of the National Reserve Supply.

I trust this information fulfils your request. If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us, including this decision, please feel free to contact the OIA Services Team on: [oiagr@health.govt.nz](mailto:oiagr@health.govt.nz).

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).

Nāku noa, nā



**Acting Director Emergency Management  
Public Health Agency**