

5 September 2025

Carolyn Tremain  
Chief Executive  
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment  
PO Box 1473  
Wellington 6140  
New Zealand

Dear Carolyn,

## **Our OIA 2025/16 – Questions on the Wage Subsidy Scheme and follow-up on recommendations**

### **Background**

The Institute has recently published a final draft of *Discussion Paper 2025/03 – Time to prepare: Lessons from the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy*. This discussion paper remains a final draft as we have a number of questions that we are hoping government departments might be able to answer. Please note the green font in the final draft of the discussion paper contains OIA information related directly to our OIA request to Treasury. This is because Treasury's OIA was the most extensive and complex. Other OIAs can be seen on the Institute's website (see our list of OIA's on Table 1 [here](#)).

We are writing to see if you would be able to answer the following six OIA questions.

### **COVID-19 Wage Subsidy**

1. Can you provide copies of all cabinet material that relate to all five iterations of the Wage Subsidy Scheme in the discussion paper: *Discussion Paper 2025/02 – How to Tell the Difference Between an Emergency and a Crisis and Why it Matters* (see our Table A3.1 on p.54)? We note that the link ([here](#)) contains selected cabinet material that MBIE has published, but we were after an extensive list and copies so that we can expand on our earlier work.
2. Has MSD implemented any of the recommendations from the Royal Commission of Inquiry's Phase 1 report of the *Lessons from COVID-19 to prepare Aotearoa New Zealand for a future pandemic*? Please explain with regard to the specific recommendation number, what has been implemented and what has not – and why.
3. What other measures, instruments or actions (in addition to those in Question 7 above) have been put in place for the next pandemic?

### **Follow-up on recommendations**

Attachment 5 is an excel that contains a consolidated list of recommendations from both the Phase One of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into COVID-19 Lessons Learned – Te Tira Ārai Urutā (Sheet 2, Table 1 of the excel) and the Office of the Auditor-General (OAG) (Sheet 3, Table 2 of the excel). Sheet 1 contains a key, as well as provides links to the documents where the recommendations were sourced from. We are interested in knowing to what extent particular recommendations have been implemented.

Can you please:

4. Complete the attached excel, in particular Columns E-H of Sheet 2, and Columns C-F of Sheet 3.
5. Provide the report of progress against the recommendations of Phase One of the Royal Commission (mentioned in Recommendation 39b of the Royal Commission).
6. Advise whether MBIE will be producing a report on progress against the Phase One recommendations for tabling in Parliament (mentioned in Recommendation 39c of the Royal Commission).

Thank you again for your help with the above. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in contact with myself or Arne Larsen (copied in).

Kind regards,



Wendy McGuinness  
Chief Executive

Attachments:

1. [\*Discussion Paper 2025/03 – Time to prepare: Lessons from the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy\*](#) (final draft)
2. [\*COVID-19 Nation Dates: Additional Dates since September 2024\*](#) (draft)
3. [\*Discussion Paper 2025/02 – How to Tell the Difference Between an Emergency and a Crisis and Why it Matters\*](#)
4. 20250904 COVID-19 recommendations (Excel)