



Briefing

APPROVAL TO SPEND APPROPRIATION ON PUBLIC INFORMATION & ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

To: Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister for COVID-19 Response

Date	31/05/2021	Priority	High
Deadline	4/06/2021	Briefing Number	DPMC-2020/21-1040

Purpose


1. This paper seeks your approval as the Minister for the COVID-19 Response to delegate to the Chief Executive of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) the authority to spend up to \$21.024 million allocated for public relations and communications expenses for the 2021/22 financial year. The expenses are related to the COVID-19 Group's ongoing public information and engagement campaign.

Recommendations


1. **Note** that when the COVID-19 Group was established in December 2020, it was identified that dedicated funding would be required for the sustainable delivery of public communications and engagement going forwards. Cabinet as part of [CAB-20-MIN-0100] approved funding of \$21.024 million for public relations and communications for the 2021/22 financial year.

2. **Note** that Ministerial approval is required for public service Chief Executives to spend above \$0.150 million on publicity expenses from the COVID-19 All of Government Response appropriation.
3. **Approve** the delegation to the Chief Executive of DPMC to approve publicity expenses for the COVID-19 public information and engagement campaign of up to \$21.024 million for the 2021/22 financial year.

YES NO


Cheryl Barnes
Deputy Chief Executive, COVID-19 Group

31/5/2021


Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister for COVID-19 Response

2.../6/2021

Proactively Released

Contact for telephone discussion if required:

Name	Position	Telephone		1st contact
Cheryl Barnes	Deputy Chief Executive, COVID-19 Group	N/A	s9(2)(a)	✓
Michelle Veisaku	Chief Advisor, Public Information and Education	N/A	N/A	

Minister's office comments:

- Noted
- Seen
- Approved
- Needs change
- Withdrawn
- Not seen by Minister
- Overtaken by events
- Referred to

Proactively Released

APPROVAL TO SPEND APPROPRIATION ON THE PUBLIC INFORMATION & ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN

Purpose

1. This paper seeks your approval as the Minister for the COVID-19 Response to delegate to the Chief Executive of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) the authority to approve publicity expenses for public relations and communications in relation to New Zealand's COVID-19 response. The expenses are associated with the DPMC COVID-19 Response Group's ongoing public information and engagement campaign for the 2021/22 financial year, up to \$21.024 million.

Background

2. As part of the New Zealand government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic an extensive public information campaign under the 'Unite Against COVID' branding was established.
3. That campaign, launched in March 2020, has included website, social media, and paid advertising including across television, print media, social and digital media, bus shelters and airports, as well as targeted print and digital resources for key audiences.

Ministerial approval needed to continue funding public communications and engagement activities

4. The Chief Executive of DPMC has authority to approve spending under the COVID-19 Group's appropriation. However, the Cabinet Office circular 18(2) stipulates a spending limit of \$0.150 million for publicity expenses and that spending exceeding this limit requires approval from the relevant appropriation Minister, in this case yourself, as the Minister for the COVID-19 Response.
5. Accordingly, it is recommended you approve the delegation to the Chief Executive of DPMC of up to \$21.024 million in the 2021/22 financial year for public relations and communications expenses associated with the DPMC COVID-19 Group's ongoing public information and engagement campaign.

Financial Implications

6. The proposed spending falls within the COVID-19 All of Government Response appropriation agreed to in [CAB-20-MIN-0100].

Consultation

7. No consultation outside of DPMC has been required for the preparation of this briefing.

Communications

8. Communications regarding this delegation will be handled in line with the communications approach being used across the All of Government response to COVID-19. This may include the proactive release of this paper.

Proactively Released