



09 March 2026

CRO OIA 1210/26

via email: [fyi-request-33338-6d7d54d6@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-33338-6d7d54d6@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Tēnā koe

I refer to your Official Information Act request of 20 December 2025, initially to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Your request was partially transferred to the Crown Response Office from the Office of the Hon Erica Stanford on 9 February 2026 to provide information in relation to the Abuse Inquiry Response Ministerial Advisory Group.

You originally requested the following information:

*"I am writing under the Official Information Act 1982 to request the following information regarding ministerial advisory groups established since the formation of the current coalition government (National, ACT, and New Zealand First) following the 2023 general election:*

1. *A complete list of all ministerial advisory groups formed since 27 November 2023, including their official titles, responsible ministers, and terms of reference.*
2. *For each such group, please provide:*
  - *The total allocated budget (including any revisions) for the group's operations for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years;*
  - *A breakdown and the totals of actual expenditures to date, including but not limited to: payments or honoraria to members, catering and venue costs, administrative or secretariat support, travel and accommodation, and any other operational expenses;*
  - *Copies of any Cabinet papers, funding approvals, or internal budgeting documents authorizing the group's financial resourcing.*

*This request follows recent public reports indicating significant spending by some advisory groups—for example, nearly \$24,000 on catering for meetings of the Ministerial Advisory Group for victims of retail crime—and growing public interest in transparency around such expenditures."*

## **Context**

On 12 May 2025, Cabinet approved the establishment of the Abuse Inquiry Response Ministerial Advisory Group. Eight members were appointed in September 2025 to provide independent advice and assurance to the Lead Coordination Minister and other responsible Ministers on the Crown's response to the Royal Commission's recommendations.

The Abuse Inquiry Ministerial Advisory Group can meet up to eight times per year. Travel is required, with several of the meetings being held in Wellington, while others are held online using teleconference facilities.

**Total allocated budget for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years**

The Crown Response Office is responsible for providing secretariat services for the Abuse Inquiry Response Ministerial Advisory Group. The costs to provide these secretariat services are met as part of the Crown Response Office’s operational expenditure.

In relation to your request for the total allocated budget for the Abuse Inquiry Response Ministerial Advisory Group for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years, I advise this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the OIA as the information requested does not exist, because the Group did not operate in these financial years.

**Breakdown of expenditure for the Abuse Inquiry Response Ministerial Advisory Group to date**

The Ministerial Advisory Group is funded from the Crown Response Office’s operational funding. The expenditure incurred to date for the 2025/26 financial year is set out in the table below.

The breakdown of expenditure is of 26 February 2026 and covers the four meetings of the Group to date, three of which were two-day meetings. To note, not all related invoices for the most recent meeting have been received and processed yet.

<b>Ministerial Advisory Group – summary of expenses</b>	
Fees paid to (8) members	\$61,560.00
Travel, accommodation, meals & incidentals	\$22,055.53
Catering for meetings	\$2,032.54
Support person	\$2,940.00
Wellbeing	\$55.00
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>\$88,643.07</b>

**Information being released**

The following document has been identified as in scope of your request and my decision on release is included.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Document Description</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1	No date	Abuse Inquiry Response Ministerial Advisory Group Terms of Reference	Released in full

The Abuse Inquiry Response Ministerial Advisory Group Terms of Reference notes that the fees for the Chair and members are set according to the Cabinet Fees Framework for members appointed to bodies in which the Crown has an interest. You can find more information, including a copy of the Framework, [here](#).

**Information publicly available**

The following information is also covered by your request and is publicly available:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Document Description</b>	<b>Link</b>
05/06/2025	Cabinet paper: Abuse in Care Inquiry: Crown response (May 2025)	<a href="#">Link</a>

Accordingly, I have refused your request for the document listed in the above table under section 18(d) of the OIA – the information requested is publicly available.

Some information has been withheld from the document available in the above link under the grounds described in the document and in accordance with the OIA.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the OIA. I do not consider that these considerations outweigh the need to withhold the information.

### **Publishing responses**

We may publish this OIA response on [www.abuseinquiryresponse.govt.nz](http://www.abuseinquiryresponse.govt.nz) (with your personal details having been removed). Publishing responses to OIA requests increases the availability of information to the public and is consistent with the purpose of the OIA to enable effective participation in the making and administration of law and policies, and to promote the accountability of Ministers and officials.

### **Right of review**

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available via [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



John Henderson  
**General Manager Enabling Services**

## **Terms of Reference: Abuse Inquiry Response Ministerial Advisory Group**

### **1. Purpose**

The Abuse Inquiry Response Advisory Group (the Advisory Group) is a ministerial advisory group established to provide independent advice and assurance to the Lead Coordination Minister for the Crown's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into Historic Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions (Royal Commission). The Advisory Group will provide advice directly to the Lead Coordination Minister and other relevant Ministers on the Crown's approach to and progress in responding to the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

### **2. Background**

The Royal Commission was established in 2018 to examine the nature and extent of the abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults that occurred in State care and in the care of faith-based institutions from 1950–1999. The Royal Commission has since released two reports outlining recommendations for the Crown to consider and implement. *He Purapura Ora* Interim Redress Report (2021) contained 95 recommendations, and *Whanaketia* (2024) contained 138 recommendations, across Crown and Faith-based institutions.

The Crown Response was developed by 25 government agencies, led and coordinated by the Crown Response Office, to respond to the above reports. It groups the recommendations for State action under ten action areas, that contribute to three objectives, which are to:

- Address the wrongs of the past
- Make the current care system safe
- Empower those in care, their families, whānau and communities

The Advisory Group will engage with survivors, advocates, and care providers, to provide advice to inform the implementation of the Crown Response, including:

- providing advice to the Lead Coordination Minister and relevant Ministers on relevant matters; and
- considering, reflecting, and including the interests, rights and experiences of children, young people and adults in care and survivors of abuse in care.

### **3. Objectives and Responsibilities**

The Advisory Group will provide independent advice to the Lead Coordination Minister and other relevant Ministers on the approach to, and progress of, the Crown Response.

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In this first instance this this will focus particularly on making the current care system safer and the implementation of changes to the redress system.

The Lead Coordination Minister will, through the Chair, direct its work by seeking advice on various topics. These topics may include providing advice and feedback to agencies on work programme initiatives. The Advisory Group, through the Chair, may raise additional topics it considers important for the Minister to consider. However, the Advisory Group should not begin additional work unless this is agreed by the Minister.

The Advisory Group may provide advice on matters including:

- the progress of the Crown Response work programme and its priorities;
- the monitoring approach;
- risks and or barriers that may impact the work programme;
- the design, development, and implementation of planned initiatives;
- the transition to phase two, exploring models of accountability, monitoring, and oversight entities; and
- other matters as directed by the Lead Coordination Minister.

The Group is not responsible for developing policy or implementing initiatives. It has no formal decision-making powers or accountabilities. It does not have powers to direct any agency, although it may provide feedback on draft proposals and can expect its advice to be given appropriate consideration.

Where the Advisory Group provides advice to Ministers or feedback to agencies, it is preferred that a consensus is reached, but alternate viewpoints may also be provided.

#### **4. Advice and Release of Information**

Advice will be subject to the Official Information Act 1982. Advice may also be proactively released with the agreement of the Lead Coordination Minister.

#### **5. Membership**

The Advisory Group will be appointed by the Lead Coordination Minister after an appropriate nominations process and confirmed by the Cabinet Appointment and Honours (APH) Committee. Membership will comprise five to nine members, including a Chair, who collectively demonstrate:

- experience in and/or a strong understanding of care safety settings and environments, including mental health, disability, education, and social services settings;
- experience with, or a connection to survivor experience and expertise;

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- knowledge of and expertise in Crown obligations under the Human Rights Act 1993, the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and how they relate to care settings<sup>1</sup>;
- experience and or strong understanding of the diversity of people in care settings;
- experience in working with government; and
- reflect the initial focus on the implementation of changes to the current redress system and making the current care system safe.

The Appointments and Honours Committee will confirm the Group Chair. The Chair will:

- chair meetings of the Advisory Group.
- be responsible for representing the Advisory Group to the Lead Coordination Minister and other relevant Ministers, as required;
- represent the collective interests of Advisory Group members;
- be the principal point of contact with the Lead Coordination Minister and the Crown Response Office to ensure advice is delivered in the prescribed timeframe and format; and
- be responsible for keeping Advisory Group members informed of relevant discussions with the Minister and the Crown Response Office.

In addition, the Chair will also have the following attributes:

- mana - a person of high trust and standing;
- experience working with Government;
- a commitment to a safe care system;
- be alert to the challenges in the work programme arising from the Royal Commission's reports; and
- experience in governance and leading groups to support collectively agreed outcomes.

### **6. Remuneration and Hours of Work**

Members are to be appointed for an initial term of two years. Fees for the Chair and members are set according to the Fees Framework for Members Appointed to Bodies in which the Crown has an Interest (the Fees Framework) and are outlined in the letter of appointment. Members

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<sup>1</sup> Noting that the group will not be expected to provide legal advice to the Minister.

are also entitled to reimbursement for reasonable and actual expenses under the Framework for carrying out work on behalf of the Advisory Group.

The Advisory Group will meet up to eight times per year, to provide ongoing advice and review progress. Advisory Group members may spend up to 16 hours (two days) per meeting on Advisory Group activities. The Chair's commitments per month may vary depending on the work programme. Supports and services available to the Advisory Group to assist them in their work will be agreed with the Chair.

A member may resign by advising the Chair in writing. A decision about whether and how to replace that Advisory Group member will be made by the Lead Coordination Minister.

## **7. Meeting Operation**

### *Logistics:*

- Meetings will be a combination of virtual and in-person meetings.
- Alternates are not permitted to attend meetings in place of a member.
- A quorum will be half the number of the members, including the Chair.
- The Advisory Group may choose to appoint a Deputy Chair from among its membership.
- The Lead Coordination Minister and/or any other relevant Minister will, where feasible, attend part of a meeting.

### *Engagement with the Minister and others:*

- The Advisory Group will work closely with the Crown Response Office to support the Lead Coordination Minister to implement the Crown Response.
- The Advisory Group will be expected to meet with Crown Response Ministers from time to time. The Advisory Group may also engage with other agencies responsible for delivering specific elements of the Crown Response and liaise with other Advisory Groups and Boards involved in the care system as per their work programme.
- Advisory Group members will be expected to do some work to prepare for meetings, such as additional reading and research outside of meeting times. Time spent on these activities should not, however, exceed the 16 hours of allocated for each meeting.
- The Chair may invite expert attendees to meetings, whose qualifications or experience would assist the Advisory Group in its role when considering a particular matter, subject to budget availability. While not a member of the Advisory Group, they will be entitled to remuneration on the same basis as members and be expected to uphold the code of conduct.

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- Government officials may provide information to the Advisory Group at its meetings, or via the Secretariat, at the invitation of the Chair. This may include information on draft proposals agencies may seek the Advisory Group's feedback on.
- Experts and observers will be entitled to take part in the discussions of the meeting in relation to that matter but will not take part in provision of advice to Ministers.

### **8. Code of Conduct and Conflicts**

Advisory Group members are expected to work in an inclusive, collaborative manner where diverse voices are listened to in an environment of trust and respect, including:

- acting in accordance with communication processes and protocols agreed by the Lead Coordination Minister and the Chair;
- attending scheduled meetings and doing any required pre-meeting reading to ensure they can engage fully at each meeting;
- working transparently, consistent with all privacy and legal requirements;
- disclosing any real, potential or perceived conflicts of interest as they arise and agreeing to their appropriate management, as determined by the Chair;
- uphold confidentiality of any sensitive information shared during Advisory Group activities; and
- only claiming for legitimate expenses, they incur.

The Advisory Group's advice will be determined by majority decision-making. Minority opinions can be appropriately recorded a part of the Advisory Group's formal records. The Advisory Group may wish to present a range of options with relevant assessments for part of its advisory role.

Disputes or points of clarification will be referred to the Chair for consideration and resolution.

The Chair will be the primary contact for media enquiries. If a journalist or media outlet seeks the views on an individual Advisory Group member, the member will make clear that any views they present represent their personal views, or those of another group they represent, and not those of the Advisory Group, the Crown Response Office, Ministers, or any other part of Government.

### **9. Secretariat**

The Crown Response Office will provide secretariat services to support the Advisory Group. Responsibilities include:

- providing regular and timely updates on the Crown Response Plan work programme and any additional matters of relevance to Advisory Group members;
- organising Advisory Group meetings and members' travel (as appropriate);

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- assisting the Chair with drafting meeting agenda and recording minutes;
- arranging payments of members' fees;
- assisting members liaison with Ministers and government officials, as required;
- with the Chair, the induction of new members;
- maintaining a page on the Crown Response Office website about the Advisory Group's membership and advice; and
- managing and responding to OIA requests and other correspondence.

**10. Review of Terms of Reference**

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed, as required, with the agreement of the Minister and the Advisory Group.

Amendments will be developed by the Crown Response Office in consultation with the Advisory Group as appropriate, for consideration and decision by the Lead Coordination Minister.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982