



Standard Estimates Questionnaire 2009/10

Report of the Finance and Expenditure
Committee

Contents	
Recommendation	2
Introduction	2
Appendix A	3
Appendix B	4

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Recommendation

The Finance and Expenditure Committee recommends that the House note the Standard Estimates Questionnaire for 2009/10, which is attached as Appendix B.

Introduction

The Finance and Expenditure Committee has approved a Standard Estimates Questionnaire to be used in the select committee examinations of the 2009/10 Estimates of appropriations. The questionnaire is attached as Appendix B.

Appendix A

Committee procedure

The committee met on 1 April and 8 April 2009 to consider the 2009/10 Standard Estimates Questionnaire.

Committee members

Craig Foss (Chairperson)

Amy Adams

David Bennett

John Boscawen

Brendon Burns

Hon David Cunliffe

Raymond Huo

Rahui Katene

Peseta Sam Lotu-Iiga

Stuart Nash

Dr Russel Norman

Chris Tremain

Appendix B

Standard Estimates Questionnaire 2009/10

Outcomes desired from Vote

1 What are the outcomes expenditure under this Vote will contribute to, and which Ministers and agencies (departments, Crown entities, offices of Parliament, public organisations, or State enterprises) are responsible for achieving these outcomes? Where outcomes are shared, please indicate the responsible Ministers and contributing agencies.

2 How do the outcomes sought from the Vote reflect the Government's priorities of Economic Transformation, Families-Young and Old, and National Identity, realising the Government's approach to sustainable development, reducing economic and social inequalities for Māori and Pacific peoples, and implementing the New Zealand Disability Strategy?

Expenditure under the Vote

3 What is the quantum of this Vote, and what proportions of the Vote are applied to departmental, non-departmental, and other expenditure (such as benefits or capital)?

4 What current or emerging social, environmental, or economic factors have affected the type and amount of the appropriations sought under the Vote in 2009/10?

5 Is a risk management/recession management element included in this Vote? Does the department or entity administering this Vote have a specific recession management plan?

6 Please explain briefly the major changes affecting this Vote for 2009/10, including:

- all significant changes to existing policies, and all new policies, with short explanations of their purposes (please explain the threshold used to recognise a "significant" change)
- any reprioritisation of outputs within baselines and any outputs that have been discontinued
- any changes to output class structures, or increases or decreases of 10 percent (or \$10 million, whichever is lesser), in the amounts appropriated to each output class, and the reasons for them
- any funds carried forward or transferred from previous appropriations
- any changes to staffing levels in the 2009/10 financial year and outyears, including: full-time equivalent staff (FTEs); total headcount; and the distribution between "frontline" and "back office" staffing levels (i.e. numbers and percentages of staff defined as "frontline" and "back office").

7 For which output classes is funding being increased for 2009/10, over the 2008/09 financial year? By how much in each case?

8 For which output classes is funding being reduced for 2009/10? By how much in each case?

9 What management issues arise from fiscal pressures (if any) facing the department that administers this Vote? Please provide details.

10 Which appropriations provided under the Vote are considered priorities in 2009/10 for achieving the outcomes desired from the Vote, and why?

11 Is the department administering this Vote reviewing, or intending to review, any legislation for which it is responsible? If so, what legislation is in need of updating, amendment, or repeal, and why? How would any legislative change affect the outputs within this Vote?

Effectiveness of expenditure

12 How do the agencies providing outputs under this Vote intend to measure the impact of their outputs towards achieving desired outcomes? Please explain fully the measurement methods to be used, providing supporting research or data including the findings of previous evaluative activity.

Crown entities funded under the Vote

13 In relation to the Crown entities funded under the Vote:

- Are there any significant changes to the outputs they produce, and, if so, how do they affect the appropriations sought?
- What changes, if any, have Crown entities made to the structure and scope of their output classes to ensure they are consistent with the relevant appropriations in this Vote?
- How is the performance of the Crown entities being monitored?
- What changes, if any, have been made to Crown entities' performance information presented in this Vote?
- How is the monitoring regime consistent with best practice guidance?
- Have any concerns arisen regarding the performance of the Crown entities over the previous financial year? If so, please provide details.
- What mechanisms are being used to support compliance with the 2009/10 governance and accountability requirements (such as the development of statements of intent) for Crown entities?

14 What expectations have been set for your entity regarding:

- balance sheet strength
- debt and gearing (\$ and %)

- dividend pay out (\$ and %)?
- 15 What human resource, financial, or operational issues or risks may arise in meeting these expectations? How will any issues and risks be managed?
- 16 Are any plans being developed or options being analysed or considered to:
- form or enter into any type of joint venture or public-private partnership?
 - access external equity?

In each case please provide details.

Capability of agencies to deliver outputs

- 17 Do any agencies providing outputs under this Vote have insufficient capability to deliver them? If so, please explain the specific capability challenges, and the remedial action being taken.
- 18 Does the department administering the Vote intend to use external resources (including external consultants, leased executives, advisers, contractors etc) in providing its outputs in 2009/10? If so, please provide the following details regarding this expenditure:
- the total budget for 2009/10, compared with the overall departmental budget
 - the purpose of each engagement
 - the reason that internal resources cannot be used.

Other information

- 19 Please indicate any areas of the Estimates documentation for the department administering the Vote that need improvement as a consequence of the Review of Accountability Documents or otherwise, and what you are doing about it. What advice has your department previously received from central agencies and the Office of the Controller and Auditor-General about the performance information areas that need improvement, and what steps have been or are being taken to improve them?
- 20 Do you wish to bring to the attention of the committee any other matters relevant to your Vote that have not been described in the Estimates documents, in your Budget press statements, or in response to other questions in this questionnaire?
- 21 Please provide 25 copies of each output plan drawn up between you (or an agent) and a department and/or other party for the supply of outputs for the 2009/10 year related to this Vote. If output plans have not yet been finalised, and you do not wish to provide draft plans, please notify the timetable for finalisation, and provide 25 copies of each output plan as it is completed.