

## Aide memoire: Upcoming Estimates hearing 2025/26

**Date submitted:** 13 June 2025

**Tracking number:** BRF-6335

**Security level:** CLASSIFICATION

<b>Actions sought from ministers</b>	
<i>Name and position</i>	<i>Action sought</i>
To Hon Chris BISHOP <b>Minister Responsible for RMA Reform</b>	For noting only

<b>Appendices and attachments</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hot Topics for Estimates hearing on 19 June</li> <li>2. A3 - Ministry Workforce (FTE, Operating Model, Restructure) talking points</li> <li>3. A3 - Finance talking points</li> <li>4. Overview of Vote Environment 2025/26</li> <li>5. Overview of Vote Environment 2025/26 crib notes</li> </ol>

<b>Key contacts at Ministry for the Environment</b>			
<i>Position</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Cell phone</i>	<i>First contact</i>
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Chief of Staff	Martin Workman		✓

# Estimates of Appropriations hearings 2025/26

## Purpose

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1. This aide memoire provides you with information about the upcoming Estimates of Appropriations hearings on 19 June and talking points on 'hot topics' at **Appendix 1**.

## Background

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2. Estimates of Appropriations (Estimates) hearings are part of Parliament's Financial Scrutiny Cycle.
3. The 2025/26 Estimates for Vote Environment includes two pre-hearing written deliverables and three hearings.

### Pre-hearing written deliverables

4. As appropriation Ministers within Vote Environment, the Minister for the Environment, Hon Penny Simmonds and the Minister of Climate Change, Hon Simon Watts were asked to respond to two written deliverables in advance of the hearings:
  - The Standard Estimates Questionnaire which was submitted to the Finance and Expenditure Committee on 23 May.
  - The Supplementary Estimates Questionnaire which was submitted to the Environment Committee on 12 June.
  - The Additional Supplementary Estimates Questionnaire, which will be submitted ahead of the hearing on 19 June. The Estimates 2025/26 update in your RMA Reform Weekly Update for the week ending 13 June refers.
5. As Vote Environment agencies, the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry), the Environmental Protection Authority, and the Climate Change Commission, contributed to responses to both Questionnaires.

### Hearings

6. Three hearings will be held during 'scrutiny week' on 19 June:
  - Vote Environment hearing – led by the Minister Simmonds, 10.00am to 11.00am.
  - Vote Environment (Climate Change) – led by the Minister Watts, 1.30pm to 2.30pm.
  - The Ministry Vote Environment hearing – led by the Secretary for the Environment, James Palmer, and our executive leadership team, from 2.50pm to 3.20pm.
7. The Ministry's hearing is a new addition for 2025/26 to address any outstanding matters from Ministers' hearings. It may be cancelled on the day if there are no outstanding matters the Committee wish to raise.
8. Minister Simmonds has invited you and the Associate Minister for the Environment, Hon Andrew Hoggard, to support her at the Vote Environment hearing on 19 June, 10.00am to 11.00am. Minister Simmonds has informed the Committee of your attendance.

## Preparing for the hearing

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9. The Estimates hearings will be presided over by the Chair of the Environment Committee, Catherine Wedd, with the support of the Deputy Chairperson, Grant McCallum. The Committee is made up of members from across the House (by surname):
  - Hon Rachel Brooking – Labour Party
  - Simon Court – ACT Party
  - Hon Marama Davidson – Green Party
  - Ryan Hamilton – National Party
  - Katie Nimon – National Party
  - Lan Pham – Green Party
  - Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan – Labour Party
10. At the hearing, you will sit alongside Ministers Simmonds and Hoggard. Minister Simmonds will deliver opening remarks, which will be followed by the Chair opening the hearing to questions from the Committee.
11. While the significant work programmes in your portfolio are funded by Vote Environment, and Minister Simmonds was provided with supporting RM Reform material, we anticipate the Minister will direct more specific Committee questions about the RM Reform programme to you for response.
12. Hearings are generally less formal than questions in the House. The right of reply is not as formal as in the House and are usually conducted as conversations rather than adversarial debate. The 2024/25 Estimate hearing for Vote Environment can be viewed at the following link:
  - [2024/25 Estimates for Vote Environment, Hon Penny Simmonds, Minister for the Environment.](#)

## Overview of material to support your attendance

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13. **Appendix 1** attaches talking points on 'hot topics' in your portfolio to support you at the hearing. Themes were identified for response through the Annual Review Debate, the Supplementary Estimates Questionnaire, correspondence, parliamentary questions, official information requests, and a media scan, and include:
  - Phase 2 RMA Reforms – Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024.
  - Phase 2 RMA Reforms - Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill.
  - Package 1 National Direction – Infrastructure and development.
  - Package 3 National Direction – Freshwater.
  - Implementation of Intensification Planning Instruments.
  - Phase 3 RMA Reform.

- Engagement with Iwi/Māori on RM reform.
  - Fast-track Approvals Act.
  - Budget 2025 and RM funding.
14. Additional collateral material for the Estimates hearing was provided to your office on 11 June and is re-attached at **Appendices 2 – 5**, for your information only. We do not anticipate you will be asked to provide a response to questions about this material.
- i. **Appendix 2** provides information on the Ministry's workforce (FTEs, operating model, and restructure).
  - ii. **Appendix 3** provides information on the Ministry's finances.
  - iii. **Appendices 4 and 5** provide detail on the funds appropriated through Vote Environment in Budget 25 (including for RMA Reform) alongside supporting explainer notes respectively.

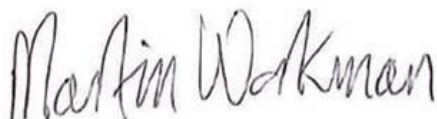
## Next steps

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15. Your office has advised you do not require preparation sessions with us. We remain available to support your debate preparations and will be led by your office as to whether any further support is required in advance of 19 June

## Signatures

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Martin Workman  
Chief of Staff  
**Office of the Chief Executive**  
**Date: 12 June 2025**

Hon Chris BISHOP  
**Minister Responsible for RMA Reform**  
**Date:**