



22 February 2024

9(2)a

Tēnā koe 9(2)a

Thank you for your email of 7 January 2024 to the Minister Responsible for RMA reform requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). On 26 January 2024, the following request under the Act was transferred to the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) for response:

*Finally, given the importance of using government spending wisely, I seek information on the total costs spent by the government for developing the said two pieces of 2023 legislation, now repealed, and the budget, including policy and legislation staff resources, that would be required to develop any new options by 2026.*

In 2019, the Government appointed an expert panel led by Hon Tony Randerson KC (the Randerson panel) to review the RMA and consider whether it was achieving what it set out to do. The Randerson panel published its comprehensive review in July 2020.

In February 2021, the previous Government announced it would repeal the RMA and enact new legislation based on the recommendations of the Randerson panel.

Further information about the previous Government's work to repeal the RMA can be found on the Ministry's website at: <https://environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/rma/changes-to-resource-management/pathway-to-reform/>.

Due to the way our finance systems record and hold information, we are unable to separate the costs specifically associated with developing the Natural and Built Environment Act 2023 (NBEA) or the Spatial Planning Act 2023 (SPA) from the wider work programme related to the review of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).

The below table outlines the expenditure for the RMA Reform for the 2022/23 financial year, compared to the previous four financial years. I have also included the expenditure on RMA reform for the 2023/24 financial year up to 31 August 2023, since the SPA and NBEA became law on 23 August 2023.

Full information for the 2023/24 financial year will be made available after this year's Annual Review process, scheduled for December 2024.

Financial year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	20221/22	2022/23	2023/24 (as at 31 Aug 2023)
RMA Reform (\$ million)	0	0	9.8	44.0	70.1	11.8

The budget required to develop new options as part of the Government's commitment to reform the RMA is being developed as part of the Budget 2024 process. Any advice relating to budget submissions is yet to be provided to Ministers and Cabinet.

Therefore, I am withholding the budget information you have requested under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act, to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.

In terms of section 9(1) of the Act, I am satisfied that, in the circumstances, the withholding of this information is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable to make the information available in the public interest.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decision to withhold information relating to this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on their website at: [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Please note that due to the public interest in our work the Ministry for the Environment publishes responses to requests for official information on our [OIA responses page](#) shortly after the response has been sent. If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Ministerial Services team: [ministerials@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:ministerials@mfe.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Arun Patel', is positioned above the typed name.

**Arun Patel**  
General Manager, Finance and Procurement  
Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao