

Reference: 20210251

2 July 2021

fyi-request-15658-35795813@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Sir or Madam

Thank you for your Official Information Act request, received on 3 June 2021. You requested:

The 2021 Budget included an item to implement the following petition from the Government Superannuitants Association presented on 3 July 2018.

"That the House of Representatives pass legislation amending the Government Superannuation Fund Act 1956 to ensure all Government Superannuation Fund and National Provident Fund annuitants are treated consistently with regard to the annual cost of living adjustments being based on 100% indexation of the Consumers Price Index, as was the objective of the Government Superannuation Fund Amendment Bill 2008."

The Finance and Expenditure Committee considered this petition in May 2019 and recommended:

"We find that the indexation formula included in the Government Superannuation Fund Amendment Act 2009, intended to achieve 100 percent indexation against the Consumers Price Index, appears to be a different formula to that used in previous iterations. We recommend to the Government that it take note of this finding and consider options for addressing the resultant lesser payments received by contributors and beneficiaries of the fund."

Consequently a bid was made to implement this recommendation in the 2021 Budget.

Could you please provide a copy of your responses to the Minister of Finance in relation to this bid?

Information being released

Please find enclosed the following documents:

Item	Date	Document Description	Decision
1.	25 February 2021	Aide Memoire: Meeting with Government Superannuitants Association	Release in part

2.	1 March 2021	Email communication on GSA COLA options	Release in part
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I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed above, subject to information being withheld under one or more of the following sections of the Official Information Act, as applicable:

- names and contact details of officials, under section 9(2)(g)(ii) – to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through protecting ministers, members of government organisations, officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment,
- advice still under consideration, section 9(2)(f)(iv) – to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials,
- direct dial phone numbers of officials, under section 9(2)(k) – to prevent the disclosure of information for improper gain or improper advantage. We have redacted the direct dial phone numbers of officials under section 9(2)(k) in order to reduce the possibility of staff being exposed to phishing and other scams. This is because information released under the OIA may end up in the public domain, for example, on websites including Treasury’s own website.

Information publicly available

The information listed in the table below is also covered by the request and will soon be available on the Budget website.

Item	Date	Document Description	Website Address
3.	4 February 2021	Treasury Report T2021/183: Request for Invitation for Late Budget 2021 Initiatives – Finance Portfolio	https://budget.govt.nz/

Accordingly, I have refused your request for the documents listed in the above table under section 18(d) of the Official Information Act:

- the information requested is or will soon be publicly available.

Information to be withheld

There are additional documents covered by the request that we propose to withhold in full, under the following section of the Official Information Act, as applicable:

- advice still under consideration, section 9(2)(f)(iv) – to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials.

Item	Date	Document Description	Proposed Action
4.	09 March 2021	Budget 2021 initiative summary: Cost of living adjustment for pre-1985 retirees	Withhold in full
5.	10 March 2021	Email communication COLA number for the budget	Withhold in full
6.	11 March 2021	Budget 2021 initiative assessment: Cost of living adjustment for pre-1985 retirees	Withhold in full
7.	30 March 2021	Email communication GSF/Treasury on GSF COLA Bid	Withhold in full

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Treasury website.

This reply addresses the information you requested. You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision.

Yours sincerely

Joseph Sant
Manager, Financial Institutions