

The Treasury

Budget 2026 Information Release

September 2026

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- The Budget website from September 2026 to May 2027 only at: <https://budget.govt.nz/information-release/2026>, and on
- The Treasury website from later in 2026 at: <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/budgets/budget-2026-information-release>

Information Withheld

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act that would apply have been identified.

Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to sections of the Act under which information has been withheld:

- [1] 6(a) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the government
- [2] 6(b)(i) - to avoid prejudice the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by the Government of any other country or any agency of such a Government
- [4] 6(c) - to avoid prejudice to the maintenance of the law, including the prevention, investigation, and detection of offences, and the right to a fair trial
- [7] 6(e)(ii) - to prevent serious damage to the economy of New Zealand by disclosing prematurely decisions to change or continue government economic or financial policies relating to the regulation of banking or credit
- [12] 7(a)(i) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of the self-governing State of the Cook Islands
- [13] 7(a)(ii) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of the self-governing State of Niue
- [14] 7(a)(iii) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of Tokelau
- [15] 7(a)(iv) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of the Ross Dependency
- [23] 9(2)(a) - to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people
- [25] 9(2)(b)(ii) - to protect the commercial position of the person who supplied the information or who is the subject of the information
- [26] 9(2)(ba)(i) - to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied
- [27] 9(2)(ba)(ii) - to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely otherwise to damage the public interest

- [31] 9(2)(f)(ii) - to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting collective and individual ministerial responsibility
- [33] 9(2)(f)(iv) - to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by ministers and officials
- [34] 9(2)(g)(i) - to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions
- [35] 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;
- [36] 9(2)(h) - to maintain legal professional privilege
- [37] 9(2)(i) - to enable the Crown to carry out commercial activities without disadvantage or prejudice
- [38] 9(2)(j) - to enable the Crown to negotiate without disadvantage or prejudice
- [39] 9(2)(k) - to prevent the disclosure of official information for improper gain or improper advantage
- [40] 18(c)(i) - that the making available of the information requested would be contrary to the provisions of a specified enactment
- [41] 18(d) - information requested is or will soon be publicly available

Where information has been withheld, a numbered reference to the applicable section of the Act has been made, as listed above. For example, a [23] appearing where information has been withheld in a release document refers to section 9(2)(a).

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Hon Nicola Willis

Minister of Finance
Minister for Economic Growth
Minister for Social Investment



15 April 2026

Hon Chris Penk
Minister of Defence, Minister for Veterans
Parliament Buildings

Dear Chris

Budget 2026 decisions – Defence Force

Following discussions with Budget Ministers, this letter confirms the decisions made as a part of Budget 2026. I will seek Cabinet's approval to the Budget 2026 package in early May 2026.

The attached summary includes all agreed initiatives under Vote Defence Force for which you are responsible. In the case of cross vote initiatives, the Treasury will work with the agencies to identify the final funding splits.

I would be grateful if you could direct your officials to work with the Treasury to complete the financial recommendations and prepare the necessary Estimates and Supplementary Estimates material, as these are due shortly.

Please note that these decisions remain Budget Sensitive. My office will provide further advice on the approach to Budget communications.

If any of the decisions in this letter affect the responsibilities of another Minister, I ask that you please refer this letter to them.

Thank you again for your support toward the successful delivery of Budget 2026.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicola Willis'.

Hon Nicola Willis
Minister of Finance

CC Air Marshal Tony Davies, Chief of Defence Force, New Zealand Defence Force

Defence Force

Budget 2026 Package

Operating expense given as average per annum and capital values are total capital. Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding.

New Spending (\$m)			Savings and Revenue (\$m)		
	Average Operating	Total Capital			
Pre-Committed Spending	101.8	1648.0			
Defence Capability Plan - ^[38]	101.8	1648.0			
	Average Operating	Total Capital			
Service Or Policy Cost Escalation	125.3	-			
Defence Capability Plan - Cost Increases	43.5	-			
Defence Force Remuneration Cost Pressure	30.0	-			
Depreciation expense arising from Asset Revaluations	34.9	-			
Veterans' Affairs Cost Pressure	1.5	-			
Veterans' entitlements arising from retrospective declarations of Qualifying Operational Service	15.4	-			
	Average Operating	Total Capital			
	^[38]				
New Capital Investment		700.1			
Defence Capability Plan – Defence Technology Accelerator	4.0	1.5			
Defence Capability Plan – Digital Modernisation Preparation	2.5	-			
Defence Capability Plan - Frigate Sustainment Programme Phase 2A ^[38]					
Defence Capability Plan – Homes for Families Tranche 1 Part 4					
Defence Capability Plan – Intelligence Advantage Need To Invest	0.7	-			
Defence Capability Plan – Maritime Fleet Renewal Persistent Surveillance (UXV) Phase 1a ^[38]					
Defence Capability Plan – Maritime Fleet Renewal Polar Patrol Phase 1 – Aotearoa Enhancement ISR UAS					

Defence Force Budget 2026 Package

Operating expense given as average per annum and capital values are total capital. Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding.

New Spending (\$m)			Savings and Revenue (\$m)	
	Average Operating	Total Capital		
Defence Capability Plan – Maritime Fleet Renewal Transformation and Programme Costs	12.7	-		
Defence Capability Plan – Maritime Platform Restoration Activities – ANZAC Frigates & Canterbury	17.9	142.6		
Defence Capability Plan – Mission Command Training Facility	[38]			
Defence Capability Plan - Modernised Army Training Capability programme design stage	0.6	22.9		
Defence Capability Plan - Small Scale capability projects	8.3	-		
Defence Capability Plan – Updating Classified Digital Services – Phase Two	[38]			
Defence Capability Plan - Workforce Recovery	5.0	-		
Defence Capability Plan: Building Resilience and Capacity to Strengthen National Security and Innovation	1.3	-		
Total Average Operating per Annum			Total Average Operating per Annum	
[38]			-	
Total Capital			Total Capital	
2,348.1			-	
Net Expenditure				
Total Average Operating per Annum			[38]	
Total Capital			2,348.1	