

POST-CABINET PRESS CONFERENCE: MONDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2022
HANSARD TRANSCRIPT

Hon Grant Robertson: Kia ora. Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa. I just apologise in advance: my introductory comment's just a little bit longer because you'll note that Minister Henare 's with me but I also want to make some reference to the Black Ferns as well, so we'll do that first and then get into that.

First up today, I do want to acknowledge the outstanding success of the Black Ferns at the Rugby World Cup final over the weekend. I believe that their triumph at Eden Park is one of New Zealand's greatest sporting moments. The Black Ferns are extraordinary athletes, exceptional people, and proud New Zealanders. As the Prime Minister said yesterday, rugby has always been our national sport, but the Black Ferns have made it feel like it's for everyone. To Ruahei Demant, Kennedy Simon, and the whole squad, we are so proud of what you have done. To come back from the depths of despair in 2021 and to win this tournament is a reflection of the mana, wairua, and mahi of champions. To the coaching team, especially "The Professor", Wayne Smith, the heartfelt thanks of a nation. The Black Ferns themselves are the first to say that they stand on the shoulders of giants, those who have gone before as Black Ferns who did not get the support or recognition that they deserved, and so to those players we say thank you as well. I want to acknowledge the England team, who played such a massive part in the final and deserve plaudits for their commitment, exceptional performance, and skill. To the organising committee of Rugby World Cup 2021, the chair Dame Julie Christie and chief executive Michelle Hooper and your team, congratulations on a superb tournament. It truly showcased all that is great about sport, and in particular about women's sport and Aotearoa New Zealand.

From the Government's perspective, we have supported New Zealand rugby from the time of the bid through close to \$20 million of support for the tournament, and that includes investment that is legacy-making in terms of facilities at a number of grounds around New Zealand. To see more than 42,000 people at Eden Park was a huge vindication for that investment, let alone the long-term benefits that will flow. As part of the women and girls in sport strategy that we launched in 2018, we said that we wanted to better value and make visible women's sport, and with three world cups and the International Working Group on Women & Sport, which started its meeting in Auckland today, we are delivering on those promises.

Finally, I acknowledge the importance of building on the legacy of this tournament. This is a job for all of us to ensure that women's rugby is supported at all levels, that the Black Ferns are given the resources and game time befitting their status, and that we continue to encourage women and girls to participate and excel in all forms of sport and recreation. As I said, this is not just the responsibility of New Zealand rugby or the Government but it is something that the community as a whole can get on board with.

Turning to a matter that we will deal with this week, tomorrow I will join Minister Parker to announce our new resource management regime—a faster, cheaper, better version of the Resource Management Act, that Government, Opposition, and industry alike have lamented for over 30 years. I'll leave the details of the announcement till tomorrow, but one thing I'd like to share today is how much our changes are estimated to generate in savings. Modelling from the Ministry for the Environment shows that by moving to the new resource management system, cost to users will decrease by about 19 percent a year, or about \$149 million a year, and there'll be much more detail on that tomorrow.

As you can see, today I'm accompanied by defence Minister Peeni Henare, and also our Vice Chief of Defence Force, Tony Davies, is here as well. We're here to announce further support for Ukraine in response to Russia's invasion, including an extension to our New Zealand Defence Force deployments and more funding for supplies. Since February, New Zealand has been providing a range of support to Ukraine as we play our part to uphold the rules of international law. That support to date has been significant and unprecedented, with more

than \$45 million of financial assistance, transport, equipment, the deployment of NZDF personnel, and sanctions targeting over 1,200 Russian and Belarusian individuals and entities, alongside trade restrictions. The current situation for Ukraine, however, is one of a continuing battle, with winter approaching and the further challenges that brings. All current deployments of NZDF personnel are also due to conclude at the end of this month, and so today Cabinet has agreed to extend and make further deployments across five key areas and to provide further support across diplomatic channels, the first of which is \$1.85 million to the World Food Programme.

We know this war has disrupted global food supply chains and made food security around the world even worse, with many countries at risk of famine or in famine-like conditions already. This funding is matched by a further \$1.85 million to the NATO trust fund, bringing our support there to over \$10 million. The fund will focus on providing supplies to Ukraine, such as winter clothing, food rations, generators, first aid kits, and fuel trucks, among other non-lethal military equipment.

Finally, we will make further NZDF deployments across infantry training and intelligence in the UK, as well as logistics, liaison, and administration in Europe. We will extend and, in some cases, expand those deployments until June or, in some cases, July next year. Briefly, in summary, a team of 66 will head to the UK to help train Ukrainian soldiers. The 12-strong intelligence team in the UK will grow to 14. The four-strong logistics team will continue from a hub in Europe. Our liaison officers in the UK and Europe will continue, and eight personnel will be deployed to Europe to help with the overall administration.

Of course, I want to be clear: no deployments will enter Ukraine, and nor has any country sought to do that. The ongoing killing of Ukrainian soldiers and civilians as Russia's senseless attacks continue has seen New Zealand consistently pledge further support for Ukraine, including most recently in Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's bilateral with Ukraine's Prime Minister in September. We know that this type of support from countries distant to Ukraine but who share our values is deeply appreciated, because Russia's continued pursuit of this war is fundamentally wrong. We continue to call on Russia to reverse course and withdraw from Ukraine. I'm happy to take your questions. We'll start with all the questions on Ukraine so we can let Minister Henare go, and then return to other matters.

Media: Why are you halving the number of personnel that we're sending over to train the troops; it's about 120 now and 60-odd going in until June and July?

Hon Peeni Henare: Our expectation is that the new lot of people that will be going over will be continuing to do the same amount of training over the extended period of time in the mandate. What we also have to balance here is the regeneration of our New Zealand Defence Force. It's well known, the challenges that our New Zealand Defence Force have at this point in time. So the fine balance we strike here is the opportunity for deployment, which is something that our personnel look towards as an opportunity in their career, but also making sure that, one, we have the ability to respond to matters here in New Zealand domestically and, of course, in the Pacific as we come into cyclone season—and then, of course, our 120 who have been there for the past few months, from all the feedback, are ready to come home.

Hon Grant Robertson: There's one more matter, too—perhaps to add, Jess—that other partners are now beginning to contribute to this as well. So I understand that there will be Australian and Canadian trainers too. So the work that we've been doing is now being shared among partners. And so we're confident that the contribution we're making will still be highly valuable and highly appreciated, but there will also be others doing that work now too.

Media: Do we not have enough personnel to send over and maintain that 120 if they're being stretched and need to be here in New Zealand?

Hon Peeni Henare: No, that's not the case at all. In fact, working very closely with the New Zealand Defence Force to say, "What is our best contribution here when we work with partners?" As the Deputy Prime Minister has just, rightly, described, the load is being shared, and we've also got to—as I've mentioned—strike the balance of making sure we can continue

to respond here; we've only just entered into the cyclone season in the Pacific and we want to make sure that we can get that balance right.

Media: The time extension that you've made through to mid next year: what does that tell us about the assumptions you're making about the war?

Hon Peeni Henare: Well, what we know is the war has gone on for some time, winter is a predictably challenging time for the war in Ukraine, and we want to make sure that with those who are able to be trained from Ukraine, that we're going to continue to play our part. Of course, that'll happen in the UK. And so we've, in discussions with our partners, made sure that when we start up training again next year, that the time frame we've given for this mandate is the correct time.

Media: Is New Zealand in it for the long haul?

Hon Grant Robertson: Well, we absolutely are here to support Ukraine, and I think we've shown this is the most sustained and largest commitment we've made in recent memory. And, you know, while the war continues, we believe that those who share our values have some responsibilities here. This is not a conflict—as you are all alluding to—that we know the end date of. And so we have to be prepared to continue to make these decisions. By taking ourselves out to mid next year, we're clearly signalling our commitment.

Media: Are you sensing any frustration from New Zealand Defence Force members about not being able to partake on the ground?

Hon Peeni Henare: No, I'm not sensing any frustration whatsoever.

Media: And now, what details have you got on the former New Zealand soldier that's reportedly fighting on the ground in Ukraine?

Hon Peeni Henare: Other than what's being reported—I might invite, though, Vice Chief of Defence Force to answer.

Air Vice-Marshal Tony Davies: The Defence Force has no links with the soldier that has been reported to be fighting on the ground presently, other than that he was a member of the New Zealand Defence Force up till about three years ago.

Media: Are you looking to try and contact him, or what actions is the Defence Force going to take?

Air Vice-Marshal Tony Davies: We have very limited options presently. We have, since reports surfaced several months ago about potentially former NZDF people serving in Ukraine, sought to go out to all those people that have a reserve connection with the NZDF or who are in some way connected, to remind them of their obligations, and that we in no way condone any form of presence in the Ukraine if you are in any way linked with the New Zealand Defence Force.

Hon Grant Robertson: And to be clear, when somebody is no longer in the employ of the Defence Force, is no longer associated with them, clearly, options are extremely limited as to the influence that one can have. So, as the Vice Chief has just indicated, our position hasn't changed. People shouldn't be in the Ukraine to fight—New Zealanders—and that won't change regardless of the situation.

Media: Apparently there is some representation there wearing a Kiwi and a flag involved as well. Are there any concerns there?

Hon Grant Robertson: Well, you know, if somebody is a New Zealander they'll express themselves the way that they choose to do that. I think the Vice Chief has been very clear about what the NZDF's position is.

Media: Perhaps the same question to the Vice Chief—have you had expressions of frustration, you are perhaps hearing more about what's happening on the ground about frustration in not being to do what they're trained to do and help out in a more practical way?

Air Vice-Marshal Tony Davies: No, not in the Ukraine. Our people are very clear on what the rules and the lines are around Ukraine, and in fact there are no other nations similar to us that are involved on the ground there. So our people understand that. I think what they are very pleased to be able to do is to use their skills and to be able to contribute in this way, as the Deputy Prime Minister has just outlined, and partake in a deployment such as has just been announced today—that's quite fulfilling for them.

Media: With the New Zealander, could we get their age and are you liaising with their family as well?

Air Vice-Marshal Tony Davies: Currently we don't know who that person is. We have very little information to go on there.

Hon Grant Robertson: OK, anything else on Ukraine before we finish up? No. Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Tony. Other questions.

Media: Have you been talking to Wellington mayor Tory Whanau about a parade for the Black Ferns?

Hon Grant Robertson: I had some contact with the mayor this morning to talk about what might be possible. From our perspective we want to be able to recognise the Black Ferns. We're looking, and we've been talking with the team and New Zealand Rugby today at an event here at Parliament. We've done that before for the men's Rugby World Cup; the Silver Ferns netball team as well. So that's what we're working towards. The team itself is on a two-week break at the moment, as you would expect after a long tournament, getting back to see their friends and family. So we're working with New Zealand Rugby and the team on something that we can do here.

Media: Would you be supporting player payments for them following the win?

Hon Grant Robertson: Do you mean bonuses?

Media: A bonus, similar to the All Blacks.

Hon Grant Robertson: Look, these are ultimately decisions for New Zealand Rugby, and I certainly heard the chief executive of New Zealand Rugby this morning indicate that that's what they are working towards. I'd be delighted if that happened. I think they deserve that. We've made considerable progress in player payments overall for women rugby players, but there's always more to do and I certainly think, given the performance through the tournament, they deserve everything that we can get them.

Media: So we should expect a parade?

Hon Grant Robertson: Look, it wouldn't necessarily be a parade. It will depend a little bit on circumstances, but what we're looking to do is make sure we have an event. If you recall the one's we've had, they've been outside. Many, many people get to be a part of that. So we're just working through those details, but we certainly believe we should recognise what they've done and we should recognise it here as we've done for other teams.

Media: Why not do a parade?

Hon Grant Robertson: Well, a parade in the end is more the council and that's to do with logistics and how we can move people around and what that means for the particular time of year we're at. I'm not saying no to that. What I'm saying is from our perspective we want to hold an event here to recognise the amazing achievements and that's what we're working towards with the team.

Media: Do you think a bonus scheme should've been sorted out before they won?

Hon Grant Robertson: Again, that's up to New Zealand Rugby. It wasn't part, as I understand it, of the contract negotiations that the team had there—the players' association. You would have seen the players' association head, Rob Nichol, talk about the fact that the overall packages that New Zealand Rugby's elite women players are on are in fact better than other teams who had bonuses built in, and even if you included the bonus, the package

would still be worth more. So that was ultimately that. Obviously, as I say, this is something for their employer, New Zealand Rugby. I wholeheartedly support what I heard the chief executive say today, which is that that's what they're working towards.

Media: The All Blacks are on track to get bonuses of \$150,000 if they win the World Cup. Is that fair—that they contract to get that? Black Ferns so far have said—

Hon Grant Robertson: I'm going to sound a little bit like a broken record, because these are matters that are for New Zealand Rugby, who are the employer of both of those teams. I heard the chief executive today indicate that he thought that they were working towards bonuses for the Black Ferns. Overall, this is an area that I've spoken about a lot since we launched our women and girls in sport strategy. I believe we should be working for pay parity across sport. There are lots of reasons why individual sports will tell you that that isn't possible. One of those, in the past, has been the commercial value—of the Black Ferns in this case. I think we saw amply demonstrated on the weekend that there is an extraordinary brand value there in the Black Ferns, and I am in no doubt that New Zealand Rugby will now be considering that for future negotiations, contracts, etc.

Media: Do you think we'll see a time when the Black Ferns are paid the same as the All Blacks?

Hon Grant Robertson: I think that will happen in the future, yes. I think that's a great thing. We've seen that in other codes, in other sports. And, as I say, Eden Park on Saturday night—I've been to Eden Park a lot in my life—I have never felt an atmosphere like what we had at Eden Park. I think that the talent and skill level of this team is extraordinary. There is a heap of work for all of us, and I do not put all of this on New Zealand Rugby, to do to make sure that we build up not just women's rugby but other sporting opportunities for women and girls across our communities, make sure that we have a pipeline of players to come forward to teams like the Black Ferns. And so, over time, this will happen, but we've got to get on with it, because the quality of what we're seeing deserves the support that should be coming.

Media: Do you think it's a bit disappointing—it sort of appears that any celebrations for the victory have been a bit of an afterthought. Do you think that's a bit disappointing that there weren't—you know, the team's demobbed; everyone's kind of gone away.

Hon Grant Robertson: Not particularly, Luke. I was there yesterday in Auckland, and that was great—it was brilliant; it was a really great opportunity, and a lot of Aucklanders took that up. The team itself wants to get back and spend time with their friends and family. They've been away for a long time. What we're working towards is, once that's completed, we will have a celebration and we will recognise them here at Parliament for what they've done and give the public an opportunity to be a part of that.

Media: In an era of heightened professionalism, do you think the Black Ferns have kind of made rugby a bit accessible again to ordinary New Zealanders?

Hon Grant Robertson: I quoted the Prime Minister in my opening comments, certainly where she said that our national game is rugby but the Black Ferns have taken that to a place where, I think, a broad range of New Zealanders really feel part of it. They are first and foremost extraordinary athletes, and what I've seen over this World Cup, by all teams actually, not just by the Black Ferns, is rugby of the highest quality. I'd like a dollar for every time someone has said to me over the course of the last six weeks "This is how I remember rugby.", played brilliantly but also played by a team with the most exceptional spirit, enjoying the game. Talking to Wayne Smith yesterday, that's one of the main take-aways he's got from this: the importance of the fact that they play hard and they play to win but they enjoy every single moment of that, and that transmits to everybody who's watching. I think, in turn, that does change the game. This has been a turning point for women's rugby and, I think, women's sport in New Zealand, and I'd note that we've got one more of our World Cups to go next year, with the FIFA Women's World Cup, where I think we'll see again the level of skill in women's sport. And I'm delighted, having put in place our first strategy for women and girls in sport, in 2018, that we're now in a position to reap the benefits of this.

Media: Are you satisfied with the speed that New Zealand Rugby is moving at to improve pay and conditions?

Hon Grant Robertson: I'm not just going to put New Zealand Rugby in the frame here. I think the moment of women's sport that we're seeing now means that national sporting organisations are going to have to move quicker than they would have in the past. I want to go back and give some credit to New Zealand Rugby. We've seen the seven-a-side team go on to full-time contracts and be paid the same as their male counterparts. We've seen the 15-a-side team go on to full-time contracts, not at the same level but at a level around about a Super Rugby player's level. That's good progress, but what we saw over the last six weeks and on Saturday night indicates that we can go faster and quicker, and that there's huge opportunity for New Zealand Rugby in supporting this team.

Media: How should they also be recognised for their ability to promote Māori tikanga and Māori culture in sport as well on that international playing field?

Hon Grant Robertson: Yeah, look, I think that's been a feature of the tournament, and—I think I'm right in saying—about 70 percent of the team are either Māori or Pasifika, and that really flows through. You can see that in the way that they go about what they do. You know, the All Blacks have been very associated with the haka over a long period of time, but I think there's even a broader sense of the way in which the Black Ferns reflect Te Ao Māori but more broadly Aotearoa New Zealand's culture. You know, they do it magnificently.

Media: Poi in the crowd and singing "Tūtira Mai Ngā Iwi" isn't something that you get very often at any other sporting games, but they are able to incorporate that on an international scale.

Hon Grant Robertson: They do the poi—we need to give credit. That was through the Rugby World Cup organising committee that that happened and the Government was able to support that programme specifically, and that was an amazing part of being at the games. I sat next to Prince Faisal of Jordan on Saturday night and, as the Black Ferns scored their tries, he was twirling the poi, and it was an amazing thing to be a part of. But, yeah, look, I think they are a team who exemplify everything that is good about Aotearoa New Zealand, and I hope we can capitalise on that.

Media: Queensland has moved to an amber alert setting for COVID-19 in the face of a fourth wave of COVID. Our numbers are ticking up by the week. Are we going to see the return to any sort of mask recommendations or mask mandate?

Hon Grant Robertson: We'll always take our advice from health officials on that matter, and I'm not aware of any advice for us to do that at this stage. Queensland has its own framework. We no longer have the COVID protection framework with different levels and so on in it, but we will always listen to the advice of experts about what we should do.

Media: In hindsight, in looking at what Queensland is doing using that framework, was it a mistake to get rid of the framework?

Hon Grant Robertson: No, I do not believe so.

Media: Minister, there's a report out today from the CTU and the FIRST Union on electricity industry profits and dividends, including the three gen-tailers the Government owns. Do you agree that they have paid out too much in dividends and not invested enough in renewable generation in the last eight years?

Hon Grant Robertson: Yeah, look, there's a lot of factors in what people do in terms of dividend. It's not entirely based around profits, obviously. It's around cash flow, and there are other things that the energy companies need to deal with. In terms of the point around investment in generation, I mean, there's a huge number of proposals out there at the moment for renewable generation that don't come particularly from the gen-tailers, and I think over time you might see that that is the way that the energy system develops. You know, there are players, including Kiwi Solar Farms, BlueFloat Energy, Todd, Sunergise, Elemental Group, Lodestone—these are people who are all looking at major renewable investments, as

well as the main electricity companies looking at that. So I haven't had time, Bernard, yet to study the report in detail, but I do think renewable investment will come in many different forms over the next few years.

Media: The report writers have again called for a windfall tax on the electricity sector. What's your view on that?

Hon Grant Robertson: Yeah, again, I want to take a bit of time to have a look at this. As I've said more broadly on the topic of windfall taxes, it is important to make sure that we understand what the windfall is—whether or not it is a genuine windfall from an event or from something that has caused the profits to rise as opposed to some of the longer-term structural settings that we've got. But I will take the time to read the report, and I continue to say what I've previously said—that at a time where cost of living is high, we have expectations upon our large companies to bear in mind the position of their customers.

Media: Is there a case that those big firms be required, though, to reinvest a proportion of those profits into new generation?

Hon Grant Robertson: Yeah, well, it's important to say that the position we're in at this time is that those decisions are not made by politicians; those decisions are made by the boards of those entities. They are independent of us in that regard.

Media: As a major shareholder, though, you could—

Hon Grant Robertson: Yeah, and as I say, that would require a significant shift in policy. It's not something that we have contemplated, and we know right now that we're in a period of time where there's a lot of pressure on the consumers of those companies, so we bear that in mind, but we haven't got a proposal to change that at this point.

Media: There's been other competitors of the gen-tailers and the Major Electricity Users' group, who have argued that the industry structure needs to be reformed. Why hasn't the Government reformed the structure, which appears to allow these big established gen-tailers to not invest and pay bigger dividends than profits and gear off their pet—

Hon Grant Robertson: Yeah. Look, I think the first thing I'd say is that in terms of the period of the report, actual price rises since 2014—I think it's been about 8.6 percent in nominal terms, and in real terms there's actually been a fall in the prices. So the prices that consumers pay is one element to bear in mind in that regard. If we're talking about generation, as I say, I believe that there is a lot of proposals out there for generation. The gen-tailers themselves obviously need to make consideration for where they think investment should go. From the Government's perspective, you know, we're very focused on issues like solving the dry year hydrological problem to make sure that we can actually put ourselves in a position to be a genuinely renewable energy country, and so our focus has been there. And then finally I would say that, you know, we do have a rather full dance card when it comes to major reforms of structural parts of the economy.

Media: Are you receiving any reports on—I mean, I suppose Treasury gives you the regular economic update on the European energy crisis over the winter and the effects it might have on the New Zealand economy in the next couple of quarters?

Hon Grant Robertson: Yeah, obviously there'll be more to say in HYEUFU about the broader state of the global economy and its effect on New Zealand. But it won't escape anybody that—be it the energy crisis in Europe, or slowdown in China, or the US-China conflicts, or anything like that—all of that has an impact on New Zealand's economic prospects. Specifically when it comes to the energy crisis in Europe; I'm not aware of any recent reports that Treasury has given me on that, but it does fit into a global scene that is going to make for a very challenging 2023 for New Zealand.

Media: What's your thinking around—obviously, there is this inflation problem, but that recessionary pressure from Europe, or the Northern Hemisphere in general, is strong. It puts you in an awkward position about what to do if that triggers a crisis in New Zealand regarding additional stimulus without triggering further inflation.

Hon Grant Robertson: Lots of “ifs” and “buts” and “maybes” in there. Look, the global conditions are ones that we clearly have in mind. As I’ve said many times, New Zealand has a better starting point for dealing with that than most other countries with relatively low levels of public debt and unemployment at historically low levels. So we have to deal with what the world throws at us—and clearly we are putting a Budget together with that in mind, as well as with the importance of maintaining investment in public services and supporting New Zealanders through what they’re dealing with, with the cost of living. In terms of the next couple of quarters, we’re going to have a period where tourists are returning to New Zealand; and I think you’ll clearly see the impact of that. But long term—or medium term, perhaps—we will undoubtedly be impacted by what’s happening in those other countries, be it recession or anything else.

Media: Just on the Ferns, you’ve said that they deserve the resources and the game time that befits their status. So how many games should they be playing per year?

Hon Grant Robertson: Ha, ha! That is undoubtedly a matter for New Zealand Rugby, but I think—I was expressing the view that a team of this quality, that can draw this kind of support, clearly merit being able to play more often; the players want that. And I think New Zealand Rugby wants that as well, and I know they’ve been working on a strategy in that regard. I’m not going to pick a number of tests for them to play, but I certainly know that there’s plenty of New Zealanders who want to see them play.

Media: Do you know—if we were to win the FIFA World Cup next year—if the team would get bonuses?

Hon Grant Robertson: I don’t know that!

Media: Do they?

Hon Grant Robertson: Well, yeah, I’ll tell you what: if they did win, they definitely should get bonuses.

Media: Government was getting advice on the minimum wage next year; have you received it?

Hon Grant Robertson: No, haven’t received that.

Media: Would you encourage New Zealanders to leave some Black Ferns merchandise under the tree this Christmas?

Hon Grant Robertson: I beg your pardon?

Media: Would you encourage New Zealanders to leave some Black Ferns merchandise under the tree this Christmas?

Hon Grant Robertson: Are you asking me to give you a present, Thomas, is that what you’re asking? I would encourage all New Zealanders to continue to show their support for the Black Ferns.

Media: With your finance and sports hats on—do you think the Government should be contributing more to encourage kids into sport, given that Britain a few years ago had a significant increase in state funding and it seemed to flow through into better participation and results.

Hon Grant Robertson: Yeah, and we already have—that’s the short answer to that question—and I strongly believe that we should do that. We’ve had a focus not only on doing that overall with the significant amount of support we put in through the COVID period but we’ve refocused Sport New Zealand’s strategy to be on tamariki and rangatahi because we know, as you’re saying, that it’s got flow-on benefits well beyond just playing sport, but physical, mental health, connection to your community. So we’ve done that. And then within that we’ve got the sub-strategies. So we’ve got women and girls. We also have disability. We also have Māori. We also have others who are traditionally underrepresented. We are putting that resource in to make sure that we do that where, I think, you know, some of the largest

sporting codes in New Zealand also need to come along with that as well, the ones who we don't fund so much directly, and many of them are, including New Zealand Rugby, doing that. You know, the Minister for Sport and Recreation has a meeting of minds with the Minister of Finance, but my bids as sport and recreation Minister are considered by someone else, so we may have to see how we go.

Media: Would you expect to increase it again, more?

Hon Grant Robertson: Look, as the Minister for Sport and Recreation, I'd like to think that would happen. But I hear this guy, the Minister of Finance, keeps talking about a really tight Budget in 2023. Thanks, everyone.

conclusion of press conference