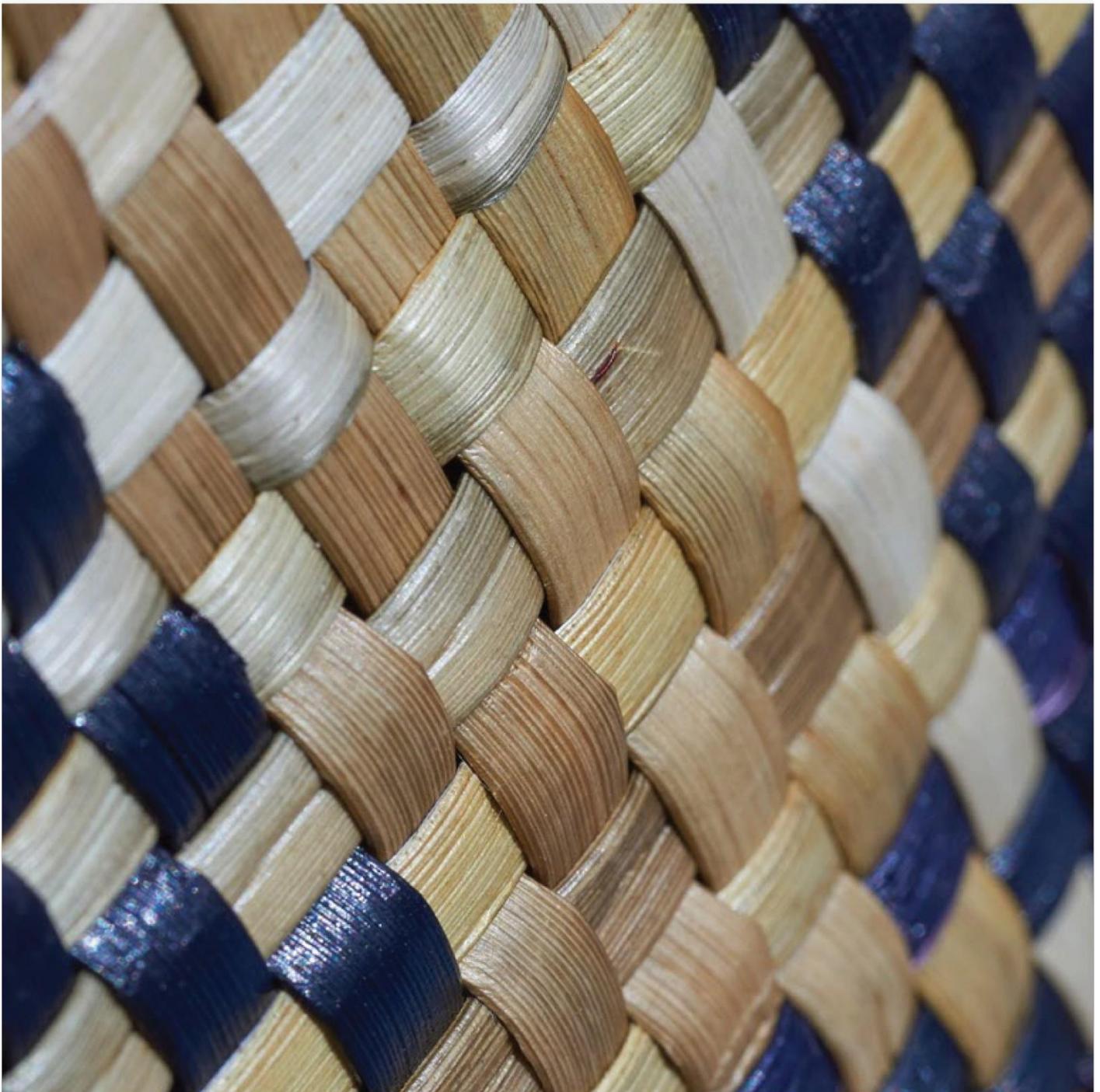




Listening, learning, changing
Mā Whakarongo me Ako ka huri te tai
Crown Response to the Abuse in Care Inquiry

Briefing to the incoming Minister for the Public Service

Crown Response to the Abuse in Care Inquiry



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Foreword

E Te Minita

Nau mai haere mai ki tou tūranga hou

This briefing recaps your responsibilities and role as the Minister responsible for the Crown's response to the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in State care and in the care of Faith-based Institutions (the Royal Commission), and summarises the key decision points and activity for the next six to twelve months.

This briefing was prepared by the Secretariat, Crown Response to the Abuse in Care Inquiry, with input and review from representatives from Archives New Zealand, Crown Law, the Department of Corrections, the Ministries of Education, Health, Justice, and Social Development, the New Zealand Police, Oranga Tamariki, the Public Service Commission, and Te Puni Kōkiri.

On behalf of the Sponsoring Group of Chief Executives, I look forward to once again working with you to support the Royal Commission to achieve the goals set out in its Terms of Reference, and to demonstrate a kind and empathetic Crown response consistent with the goals of your Government.

Mā whakarongo, me Ako ka huri te tai.
Listening, learning, changing.



Gráinne Moss
Chair, Chief Executive Sponsoring Group

Executive summary

1. Crown agencies have been working together, coordinated by a small, semi-autonomous, secretariat, to ensure the Crown collectively can respond rapidly and appropriately to meet the Royal Commission's needs and support it to be successful. The principal agencies are Archives New Zealand, Crown Law, the Department of Corrections, the Ministries of Education, Health, Justice, and Social Development, the New Zealand Police, Oranga Tamariki, the Public Service Commission, and Te Puni Kōkiri.
2. The abuse of children and vulnerable adults in the care of the State, and the early Crown responses to claims of abuse, has rightly caused a depth of anger in communities. In keeping with the principles underlying the Crown's strategic approach to the Royal Commission, Crown Agencies want to demonstrate their commitment to an open and compassionate government that acknowledges the abuse, addresses the pain of survivors, and makes any changes necessary to ensure such abuse cannot occur again.
3. Agencies are responding to the Royal Commission's lead and following its preferred approach – while keeping an appropriate distance to maintain its independence.
4. Current Crown Response activity mainly involves providing a large volume of documents to the Royal Commission and preparing agencies to participate in investigations and hearings. The current hearing on State redress (running in two phases from 21 September to 6 October and 19 October to 3 November) has heard grim survivor accounts of childhood abuse and a perceived lack of State empathy for survivors who later sought redress for that abuse.
5. Royal Commission activity has advanced significantly over the last year and it is now running eight concurrent investigations, each with its own investigation team. Agencies mostly have very small teams (often no more than two people) to cover all investigations. Therefore, when information requests occur concurrently, or with relatively little forewarning, they place significant pressure on agencies.
6. The number of investigations either at early stages, or underway, and the ongoing volume of information requests, suggests the pace of the Royal Commission's work will increase further in 2021. In addition, an interim report due in December 2020 will require a formal government response and may lead to policy work for some agencies.
7. Key items for your consideration in the next three to six months will be:
 - Withheld under s.9(2)(f)(ii) the Official Information Act 1982 (matter under active consideration) ;
 - Agreeing on the initial government response to the Royal Commission's interim report due to the Governor-General by the end of December 2020;
 - Agreeing, with the Attorney-General and the Minister of Justice, on a Cabinet report back date for work considering: i) potential reform of the Limitation Act 2010 in respect of historic abuse claims against the State; and, ii) options for a centralised historic claims process; and
 - Agreeing the approach to the next two State hearings - on Abuse in State children's residential care, in April-May 2021, and on Abuse in State psychiatric care: the Child and Adolescent Unit at Lake Alice psychiatric hospital, in June 2021.

The Crown's strategic approach to responding to the Inquiry

Communities had been calling for an inquiry into abuse in State care for many years

8. The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions (the Royal Commission) was established in 2018 in response to long-held anger in communities that children, young people and vulnerable adults were abused in the (direct or indirect) care of the State and in faith-based institutions. The Royal Commission is examining the nature and extent of this abuse, focused primarily on the period from 1950 to 1999.

Multiple agencies are working together to cover the scope of the Inquiry

9. Cabinet agreed that a coordinated cross-government response should be led by the Minister of State Services. This reflects the broad scope and high importance of this work, and the need for a joined-up government response that includes all agencies with information the Royal Commission may need. The Department of Internal Affairs supports the operation of the Royal Commission itself.
10. The Crown Response involves multiple agencies that either provided State care or hold relevant records, including Archives New Zealand, Crown Law, the Department of Corrections, the Ministries of Education, Health, Justice, and Social Development, the New Zealand Police, Oranga Tamariki, the Public Service Commission, and Te Puni Kōkiri.
11. These agencies have been working together and proactively engaging with the Royal Commission, while recognising the Royal Commission's independence, since late 2018.

The Crown approach aims to support the Royal Commission to be successful

12. The Crown adopted a principles-based strategic approach to guide its engagement with, and response to, the Royal Commission. This was agreed by Cabinet in April 2019. The Crown wants the Royal Commission to be successful because of its importance to New Zealanders, and because of its potential to improve critical care services.
13. The strategic approach is focused on outcomes, that:
 - survivors are heard and feel heard;
 - harm is acknowledged (there is recognition and reconciliation);
 - the government care system is improved;
 - this type of harm does not happen again to children or vulnerable adults in the government care system;
 - Māori experiences and their impacts are recognised and respected; and
 - disabled peoples' experiences and their impacts are recognised and respected¹.

¹ A copy of the Cabinet submission outlining the strategic approach is attached for your information.

The Crown principles frame the Crown’s strategic approach

14. The Crown principles are: manaakitanga, openness, transparency, learning, being joined up and meeting our obligations under the Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Manaakitanga	Means treating people with humanity, compassion, fairness, respect, and responsible caring that upholds the mana of those involved;
Openness	Is being honest and sincere, open to receiving new ideas and willing to consider how we do things currently and how we have done things in the past;
Transparency	Sharing information, which includes the reasons behind all actions taken;
Learning	Involves active listening and learning from the Royal Commission and survivors, and using that information to change and improve systems;
Being joined up	Means agencies work together closely to make sure activities are aligned, engagement with the Royal Commission is coordinated and the resulting actions are collectively owned; and
Meeting our obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi	Is about honouring the Treaty, its principles, meeting our obligations and building a stronger Māori-Crown relationship through the way we operate and behave.

15. The Crown is applying these principles in its response to the Royal Commission in different ways. For example, agencies provide information to the Royal Commission proactively as well as in response to specific requests, and the Crown Secretariat maintains regular contact with Royal Commission staff to support transparency and openness.
16. The Crown must consider the people who have been affected by abuse in care. Disproportionate numbers of Māori were involved in the care system, and Māori are expected to comprise at least fifty per cent of survivors. The Crown Response is also looking at how Pacific people and disabled people were impacted by the State care system.

Royal Commission goals, and activity to date

The Royal Commission has a large and complex task

17. The Royal Commission is Chaired by Judge Coral Shaw, supported by four Commissioners: Sandra Aloffivae, Dr Andrew Erueti, Paul Gibson and Julia Steenson. Cabinet has agreed to the appointment of a sixth Commissioner after the election. This will be coordinated by the Minister of Internal Affairs.
18. The scale and impacts of abuse in care over the time in scope are not yet fully understood. The Royal Commission aims to build a full historical picture of what occurred, identify potential recognition or redress approaches, and recommend ways to improve current systems. Its staff include researchers, investigators and lawyers, led by an Executive Director. The Royal Commission has structured its work around themed investigations (see paragraph 25 for a list of current investigations).

The Terms of Reference have discretionary scope for expansion

19. The Royal Commission's [Terms of Reference](#) are extensive and can be expanded further at its discretion, particularly in terms of the time period it is focused on². Important aspects of the Terms of Reference are that they:
 - cover the period from 1950 to 1999 but can consider “issues and experiences” that occurred before 1950 and after 1999 up to the present day. Several of the scope documents are explicitly using this discretion already;
 - apply to children under the age of 18 and adults who are vulnerable by way of disability or mental health status;
 - define ‘abuse’ to include physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse, and neglect;
 - in addition to historical abuse, they include consideration of:
 - the circumstances that led to individuals coming into care;
 - redress processes for individuals who were abused in care;
 - current processes and frameworks to prevent and respond to abuse in care (including lessons learned and changes in processes over time); and
 - the impact of abuse including immediate, longer-term and intergenerational impacts; and
 - define ‘State care’ to include direct or indirect care in a wide range of settings including social welfare, health and disability, educational, and transitional and law enforcement. Examples include schools, early childhood education centres, hospitals, children’s homes, residential and non-residential disability and psychiatric facilities, borstals, foster care, adoptions, police custody and Court cells.

² The full Terms of Reference for the Royal Commission is attached to this briefing.

The Royal Commission has built up its capacity over time

- 20. From 2019 onwards, the Royal Commission has gradually built up its staffing, capability and expertise, and it continues to firm up its work programme.
- 21. Two preliminary hearings (focused on legal processes) and one contextual hearing were held in 2019. The contextual hearing included evidence from survivors, their advocates, and academics, providing a broad overview of issues likely to be explored over the course of the Royal Commission.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted planned activity in 2020

- 22. The March-May 2020 lockdown and staged re-opening caused by the COVID-19 pandemic necessarily slowed Royal Commission activity and the Crown Response. For example, the first evidential hearing, on State redress, was deferred from 23 March until 21 September 2020.
- 23. The Royal Commission issued several information requests to the Crown before and during the lockdown. Unfortunately, much of that information could not be provided then, as it was in hard copy files needing digitisation on special scanners, and neither files nor scanners were accessible under alert levels 4 and 3. Many agencies were also directly involved in the COVID-19 response, reducing their capacity to focus on the Royal Commission. The Crown was able to resume full responses once New Zealand was back at Alert Level 2.
- 24. The Royal Commission released its [Annual Report](#) on 15 September, which contains further information on the Royal Commission’s activity in the year to 30 June 2020.

Work is likely to accelerate over the next year

- 25. The Royal Commission is using various methods to identify evidence, including public and private hearings, case studies, ‘round tables’ and research papers. It has announced eight concurrent investigations, some of which are well underway, with others still at early stages. The Royal Commission is gradually issuing scope documents and information requests for each investigation and case study as they are established.

Investigation topics:	Published scope documents:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redress • Psychiatric care • State residential homes • The Catholic Church • The Anglican Church • Māori • Pacific peoples • People with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redress for abuse in State care and faith-based institutions • Abuse in State psychiatric care • Case study into allegations of abuse at the child and adolescent unit at the Lake Alice psychiatric hospital • Abuse in the care of the Catholic Church • Case study into abuse in the care of the Hospitaller Brothers of St John of God at Marylands School • Case study into the redress processes of the Catholic Church, Anglican Church, and the Salvation Army • Māori experiences of abuse in care • Abuse of children in State residential care

26. Each Royal Commission investigation involves a team headed by an external barrister with legal counsel, investigators and researchers. Several of the investigation teams have requested information under section 20 of the Inquiries Act 2013 from core agencies and Crown entities such as district health boards and schools. Other investigation teams appear to be at relatively early stages, so they can be expected to request information and other support as they become more established in 2021.
27. The Royal Commission's Terms of Reference require it to produce an interim report by December 2020. This report will draw on information provided by the Crown, evidence from the contextual hearing, the redress hearing, private sessions, survivor case studies, literature reviews, and details of cohort numbers. Agencies will need to provide an initial response to any findings and recommendations the Royal Commission makes in the interim report, early in the New Year.

Crown activity to support the Royal Commission

The Crown has been actively engaging with the Royal Commission

28. The Crown Response is actively engaging with the Royal Commission to better understand its needs and provide it with the information requested. The Crown is also considering what issues are likely to be examined by the Royal Commission and it is commissioning research to build understanding and fill gaps in the picture of historic events and their consequences for different groups.

The Crown has been providing large volumes of information

29. The Crown Response has provided large volumes of information to the Royal Commission - both proactively, on a voluntary basis, and in response to formal requests for information under section 20 of the Inquiries Act 2013³. Information provided proactively has largely been background material to help the Royal Commission understand Crown agency's structure, history and recordkeeping processes.
30. The main responding agencies have received at least 26 formal information requests under section 20 of the Inquiries Act and have provided many thousands of documents. Legal privilege has been waived in a significant number of these documents to enable the documents to be used by the Royal Commission for the purposes of its investigations. Records provided include policies and procedures, research reports, key statistics, institutional records, and individual case files. Other agencies (such as the National Library) and Crown entities (such as district health boards, universities and the Human Rights Commission) have also received at least 19 information requests between them. Others, such as faith-based schools, have received requests via their church organisations – the Ministry of Education is assisting some schools' to respond.

Preparation for hearings is also a big focus of the Crown Response

31. The Royal Commission is currently holding its State redress hearing, its first substantive theme-based public hearing, which is discussed below in paragraphs 40-43.
32. Preparation for hearings involves drafting witness briefs and preparing Agency staff to act as witnesses for the hearing, when the Royal Commission has requested Agencies to produce a witness on a specific topic, and this will be required for all the public hearings. For example, the State redress hearing has had nine public servants providing in-person evidence on behalf of their agencies.

Māori are an important group who were heavily impacted by the State care system

33. To recognise the significance and impact of the State care system on Māori, the Crown Response has developed a Māori Action Plan, and commissioned independent kaupapa Māori research on the nature of Māori (tamariki, whānau, hapū, iwi, communities and Māori staff) involvement with the care system, along with its impacts and the extent to which the impacts were intergenerational.

³ Section 20 of the Inquiries Act 2013 gives an inquiry broad powers to require any person to provide information to it, for the purposes of the inquiry

34. The Māori Action Plan comprises four pou which will work together to strengthen the State care system for Māori. The pou are:
- to strengthen Māori capability;
 - understand the Māori experience;
 - collect quality Māori data and information; and
 - continue to improve and strengthen the care system in a way that reflects Te Tiriti o Waitangi and te ao Māori.

A review of the Crown Litigation Strategy is leading to further work to improve redress processes for abuse in State care

35. In 2019 the Crown Response reviewed the Crown Litigation Strategy for historic claims of abuse in care and, at Cabinet's direction, refocused it as the Crown Resolution Strategy. The updated Strategy aims to shift the Crown's emphasis away from litigation of claims and the use of legal defences towards the constructive resolution of claims.
36. The Crown Response, at Cabinet's direction, is undertaking further work related to the Crown resolution strategy, which requires it to:
- consider legislative reform of the Limitation Act 2010 in respect of historic claims of abuse in care; and
 - investigating potential options for the centralised assessment or review of historic claims.
37. The timing of Cabinet report backs on this work will need to be determined in consultation with the Attorney-General and the Minister of Justice. A separate briefing on these two work items will be provided in due course.

The Crown is working to improve its processes and to assist others to respond to the Royal Commission

38. The Crown Response is looking at improving how New Zealanders can access their own personal records of being in State care. An initial outline of a potential integrated records request process was prepared with the Department of Internal Affairs' Service Innovation Lab. The Crown Response is looking to contract a service design specialist to prepare a detailed scope document and development plan for a cross-agency, wrap-around, personal records request service.
39. The Crown is also working with the non-governmental organisation (NGO) sector who have provided care services for the Crown and some Crown entities, to support the sector to respond to the Royal Commission as needed. NGOs and Crown entities generally have limited funding for any activities beyond their core functions. The Crown Response respects the independence of NGOs and Crown entities to participate with the Royal Commission as they see fit.

Key issues and opportunities

The first evidential hearing on State redress is currently underway

40. Phase one of the first evidential hearing, *State redress: Evidence from survivors of abuse*, ran from 21 September to 2 October 2020, while phase two, *State redress: Witnesses for the Crown* began on 19 October and is now due to be completed by 5 November 2020. A summary of [Crown witnesses for phase two](#) of the hearing is attached.
41. The State redress hearing focusses on civil claims and litigation against the State, usually taken by adults who were in State care as children. It is one of several hearings likely to focus on the theme of redress, as part of the wider redress investigation. There is also a redress hearing focussed on faith-based institutions to be held from 23 November to 11 December 2020.
42. Issues raised as part of the redress investigation include: the time taken to settle claims, the quantum of redress provided, non-monetary redress, the level of evidence required to settle a claim, variations in all of the above across different agencies, options for an alternative redress system, the existence of the ACC bar⁴ and the vigorous defence of claims in Court by the Crown, in particular its reliance on the Limitation Act to defeat claims relating to abuse in State care (even when abuse is found to have occurred).
43. The Crown has listened carefully to the evidence presented at the hearing and will feed this into work considering different aspects of historic claims and litigation noted in paragraph 36 above. The Crown will also need to respond to findings and recommendations on redress processes, which may arrive as early as December 2020 as part of the Royal Commission's Interim Report.

Three further hearings will be held between now and June 2021

44. Three public hearings have been confirmed between now and June 2021. The first, on Faith-based redress, will be in two phases like the State redress hearing. Public hearing dates as follows:
 - 30 November – 11 December 2020: Faith-based redress, phase one: the experiences of victims and survivors involved in claims against the Catholic Church, Anglican Church and the Salvation Army
 - 22 March – 1 April 2021: Faith based redress, phase two: evidence on redress processes from the Catholic Church, Anglican Church and the Salvation Army.
 - 27 April – 7 May: Abuse in State children's residential care: specific details of this hearing are not yet announced, but it will likely cover a case study of a residence run by the former Department of Social Welfare
 - 14-25 June 2021: Abuse in State psychiatric care: evidence about abuse of children and young people in the care of the Child and Adolescent Unit at Lake Alice psychiatric hospital in the 1970s
45. Decisions will need to be made about the approach to be taken to these and other future hearings as they arise, and you will be briefed on these in due course. The hearing schedule for the second half of 2021 is not yet known.

⁴The Accident Compensation Act prevents a person from bringing a suit for compensatory damages for a condition or situation covered by ACC.

Challenges are primarily around the volume and variability of workload demands and the need to respond at short notice

46. Information requests from the Royal Commission are typically highly resource-intensive, complex and time consuming for agencies, which face significant difficulties in locating, collating and digitising very large volumes of information that can span large periods of time.
47. The Royal Commission has worked hard to understand these difficulties, and often approves extensions to deadlines for producing information. Agencies typically send material in progressive tranches to provide the Royal Commission with some information before the extended deadlines.
48. Because of the evolving and broad nature of the Royal Commission's work programme, agencies may not know which topics will be addressed until an information request is received. As the Royal Commission's work is structured in separate concurrent investigations, information requests from different investigation teams can overlap , both in terms of the information requested and the timeframe for providing a response, placing heavy demands on agencies and making it difficult to plan and allocate appropriate resources to respond.
49. To meet these challenges the Crown Response regularly reviews its expenditure and tries to use its limited funding in the most effective and efficient ways. For example, it is considering contracting common support services for agencies to draw upon. Further information on current funding is outlined from paragraph 57.

Opportunities will arise for agencies to improve the care they currently provide

50. The Royal Commission is heavily focused on ways to improve the current care system, with most of the investigation scope documents stating explicitly that they "will also consider issues and experiences after 1999 in order to inform its recommendations".
51. Hundreds, if not thousands, of survivors of abuse in State care will share their experiences with the Royal Commission, and some will describe them at public hearings. Significant public criticism of the Crown's past approach to care, its redress processes, and elements of the current system, has already been heard and this will continue during the inquiry.
52. The Royal Commission may decide to make recommendations during its investigations. This would present a significant opportunity to identify problems with how the system currently operates and make improvements to it. Many agencies are working on large-scale programmes related to the care system, and agencies may be able to incorporate findings from the Royal Commission as they are released.

How the Crown Response is managed and governed

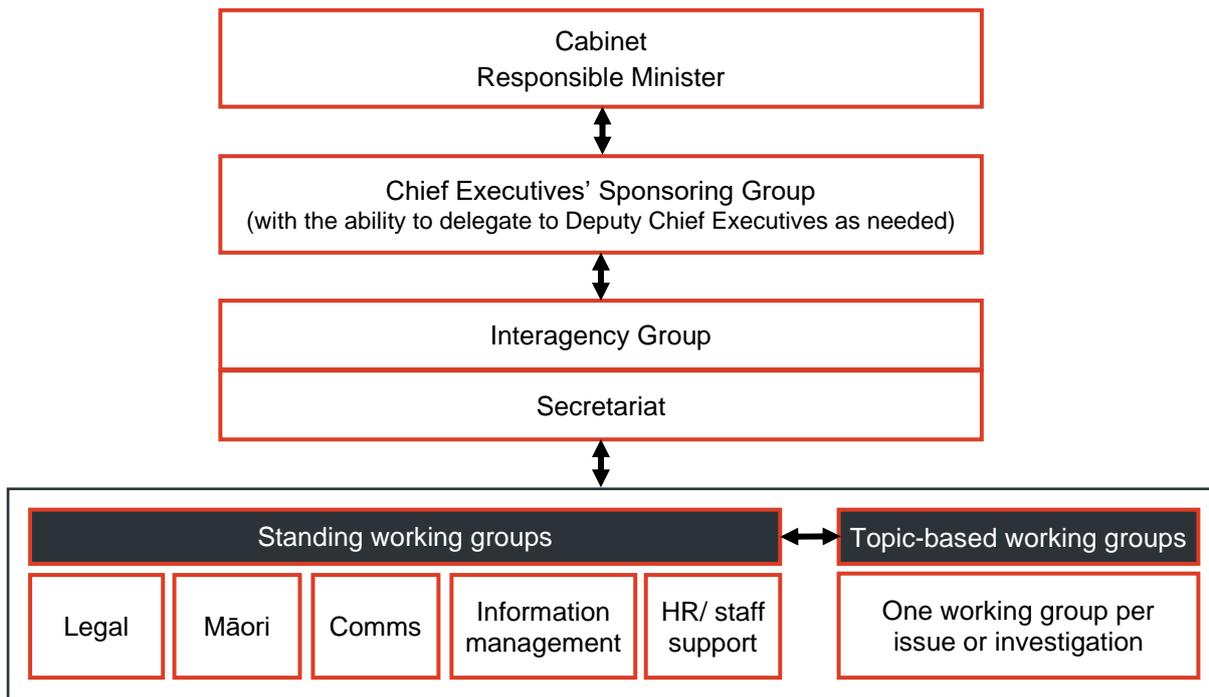
The Crown Response was established late in 2018

53. The Crown Response was established soon after the Royal Commission’s Terms of Reference was published, in late 2018, to ensure the Crown responds to, and engages with, the Royal Commission in a joined up, effective and timely way. A cross sector response was required because of the importance, scale and longevity of the Royal Commission and the breadth of its impact across agencies.

The Crown Response is collectively governed by five Chief Executives

54. Strategic governance of the Crown Response is provided by a Sponsoring Group comprising the Chief Executives of Oranga Tamariki, the Ministries of Education, Health, and Social Development, and the Crown Law Office. The Chief Executives collectively agreed that the lead Chief Executive for the Crown Response would be Gráinne Moss, the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki, and she reports to you for this work.

Figure 1: Governance of the Crown Response



Day-to-day work is progressed by an Interagency Group

55. An Interagency Group of senior officials provides working-level decision-making and operational input into the Crown Response. Agencies involved include: Archives New Zealand, Crown Law, the Department of Corrections, the Ministries of Education, Health, Justice, and Social Development, the New Zealand Police, Oranga Tamariki, the Public Service Commission, and Te Puni Kōkiri. These agencies or their predecessors have been most directly involved in providing State care, or in managing care-related records. Agencies that are not represented on the Sponsoring or Interagency Groups are consulted on decisions that affect them, as required.

The Crown Response is coordinated by a small semi-autonomous Crown Secretariat

56. A small, semi-autonomous, Crown Secretariat, was established to manage and coordinate the Crown Response. The Secretariat is housed within Oranga Tamariki because it reports to the Chair of the Chief Executives Sponsoring Group, Gráinne Moss. The Secretariat, consists of a Director and six staff, and it:
- develops and drives the overall work programme, ensuring agencies' efforts are integrated and produce the required deliverables;
 - supports the operation of the Sponsoring and Interagency Groups, including providing information to support Crown Response planning and decision making;
 - leads collaboration and joined-up activity with all affected agencies and groups, including initiating cross-agency work groups, facilitating meetings, and providing templates, guidance and general support services;
 - provides the primary leadership with the Royal Commission, including acting as the Royal Commission's contact point for information and response, triaging and assigning all requests to relevant agencies; and
 - leads all-of-government communications and response initiatives.

Funding and budgetary arrangements

57. The Crown Response has been funded year-by-year since it was established, to reflect the uncertainty of costs as the Royal Commission's work programme has developed. In Budget 2020 the Crown Response received funding of \$8.130 million, as detailed in Table 1 below.
58. Most of the Crown Response appropriation is administered by the Secretariat via Vote Oranga Tamariki (because the Secretariat is housed in Oranga Tamariki), with you as responsible Minister. The external legal advice funding covers support from Crown Law, counsel representing the Crown at hearings, and external providers helping to prepare evidence. This funding, and any cross-agency funding held by the Secretariat, can be drawn on by all responding agencies. Some agencies have also had to find funding in their 2020/21 baselines to help respond to the Royal Commission. This funding covers all forecast 2020/21 Royal Commission-related costs. Any unexpected costs will need to be considered separately, with alternative funding sought if needed.
59. A specific allocation for Archives New Zealand is administered through Vote Internal Affairs and overseen by the Minister of Internal Affairs, reflecting the volume of work by Archives in digitising hard copy records requested by the Royal Commission.

Table 1: Crown Response Budget 2020 funding by Vote and function

Vote	Function	Amount, \$ million
Oranga Tamariki	Secretariat (including cross-agency support)	2.316
	External legal advice	3.648
	Total funding administered through Vote OT	5.964
Internal Affairs	Archives NZ records digitisation	2.166
	Total available	8.130

60. Withheld under s.9(2)(f)(ii) the Official Information Act 1982 (matter under active consideration)

The next six month's work programme will be busy

61. It is expected that the Royal Commission work programme will increase over the next six months, as the established investigations move into hearings and the newer investigations are established in parallel with the existing ones. This will potentially put some pressure on the Crown's ability to respond in a timely manner.
62. The Crown Response's work programme for the next six months involves:
- participating in the current State redress hearing, and any follow-up work;
 - responding to any findings and recommendations in the interim report, due in December 2020;
 - monitoring the hearings on redress for survivors of abuse in faith-based care in November-December 2020 and then in March-April 2021;
 - preparing for the hearings on State children's residential care in April-May 2021 and on abuse in psychiatric care (focussed on the Child and Adolescent Unit at Lake Alice hospital) in June 2021;
 - preparing for virtual hearings should COVID-19 levels be re-imposed when Royal Commission hearings are scheduled (ongoing);
 - implementing the Crown Response's Māori Action Plan, including managing research on the involvement of Māori with the State care system;
 - responding to notices to produce (under section 20 of the Inquiries Act) and other information requests from the Royal Commission on the multiple investigations;
 - progressing consideration of options for a centralised assessment or review process for historic claims;
 - progressing consideration of potential reforms to the Limitation Act 2010 for people who have historic claims of abuse against the State;
 - continuing to engage with the NGO sector and Crown entities to ensure they are appropriately supported to engage with the Royal Commission; and
 - fully scoping a seamless, integrated approach for people who have been in State care to be able to request their personal records from multiple agencies.

Next steps: Decisions to be taken in the next three to six months

63. You will need to make decisions in the next three to six months on:
- How to respond to the Royal Commissions interim report which is likely to include findings, and possibly also recommendations, and is due in December 2020.
 - Withheld under s.9(2)(f)(ii) the Official Information Act 1982 (matter under active consideration)
 - Agreeing a date, with the Attorney-General and the Minister of Justice, to report back to Cabinet on the work considering the Limitation Act and centralised historic claims process options.
 - The Crown's approach to be taken to each hearing, depending on the topic.
64. It is proposed to provide you with monthly status reports on the Crown Response, to keep you updated on general developments across the full Crown Response. Additional briefings will be provided as required on specific items.
65. The Secretariat Director and lead Chief Executive are available to provide you with an in-person briefing, at your request.