



Report of the

REMUNERATION AUTHORITY

TE MANA UTU MATUA

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Presented to the House of Representatives Pursuant to
Section 27 of the Remuneration Authority Act 1977

G.17



28 August 2026

Hon Brooke van Velden
Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

Dear Minister

In accordance with section 27 of the Remuneration Authority Act 1977, I am pleased to submit the Annual Report on the operations of the Remuneration Authority | Te Mana Utu Matua for the year ended 30 June 2026.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dg Welch', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dallas Welch
Chair

REPORT OF THE REMUNERATION AUTHORITY TE MANA UTU MATUA FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

1. Introduction

This report covers the 12 months to 30 June 2026.

The Remuneration Authority | Te Mana Utu Matua (**the Authority**) sets the remuneration for a wide range of senior public office holders and statutory officers who are required to exercise a high degree of independence. Authority decisions are called determinations.

During the year ended 30 June 2026, the Authority issued 163 determinations covering approximately 2,500 role-holders. The number of determinations issued is similar to 2024/25.

2. Jurisdiction

The Authority is established under the Remuneration Authority Act 1977 (**the Act**). It is an independent statutory body which determines the remuneration (sometimes including superannuation/retirement savings, expenses and allowances) for a variety of senior public office holders and, in some cases, their spouses, partners and family members. These office holders, also known as the Authority's clients, include the Governor-General, members of Parliament (MPs), judicial officers, elected members of local authorities and a wide range of statutory officers.

In carrying out its duties the Authority is required to balance a number of statutory criteria (sections 18 and 18A of the Act and clause 7 of schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002), which include the need to:

- achieve and maintain fair relativity with the levels of remuneration received elsewhere;
- be fair both to the person, persons or group of persons whose remuneration is being determined and to the taxpayer or ratepayer;
- recruit and retain competent persons;
- take into account the requirements of the position concerned;
- consider the conditions of service enjoyed by the person or persons whose remuneration is being determined and those of persons in comparable roles; and
- take into account any prevailing adverse economic conditions.

3. Economic Conditions

As required under section 18A of the Act, the Authority must take account of any prevailing adverse economic conditions, based on evidence from authoritative sources. In making its 2025/26 determinations, the Authority acknowledged economic uncertainty arising from cost-of-living pressures, constrained economic growth, and global instability by exercising prudence in all its decisions. However, it did not conclude that these conditions met the test in section 18A(2) of the Act that would have led it to determine remuneration at a rate lower than it otherwise would have.

4. Consultation

In all cases, the person, persons or client groups covered by a determination were consulted before a determination was issued. They are also entitled under the Act to make written or oral submissions to the Authority in relation to their determinations.

Any person or any organisation can make written submissions to the Authority in relation to its functions under the Act.

Section 15(6) of the Act states that “Except as expressly provided in this Act, determinations of the Authority shall not be published by the Authority”. Where permitted by legislation, determinations are published on the Authority’s website: www.remauthority.govt.nz.

5. Determinations

5.1. Governor-General and Former Governors-General

Under the Governor-General Act 2010, the Authority determines the remuneration of the Governor-General and determines the rates of annuities for former Governors-General and their surviving spouses or partners.

The Authority made two determinations under the Governor-General Act:

- The **Governor-General (Salary) Determination 2025** increased the salary for the Governor-General by 2.4% from 1 November 2025.
- The **Governor-General (Annuities) Determination 2026** increased the annuities payable to former Governors-General (or surviving spouses or partners) by 2.2% from 1 April 2026.

5.2. Members of Parliament

MPs’ salaries and allowances are set pursuant to section 8 of the Members of Parliament (Remuneration and Services) Act 2013 (**the MOP Act**) and to the Remuneration Authority Act 1977.

In accordance with sections 19(7) and (8) of the Act, the Authority makes a determination once at the start of each term of Parliament, as follows:

- a) the period beginning on the day after polling day and ending on the next 30 June; and
- b) the period beginning on 1 July after the 30 June referred to in paragraph (a) and ending on the next 30 June; and
- c) the period beginning on 1 July after the 30 June referred to in paragraph (b) and ending on the next 30 June; and
- d) the period beginning on 1 July after the 30 June referred to in paragraph (c) and ending on polling day for the next general election.

The Review

The Authority's review and three-year determination of MPs' remuneration was completed in the 2024 year; see the Authority's full report *Review of MPs salaries and allowances 2023/24 report* on its website.

Salaries from 1 July 2025 are set out in Part 3 of Schedule 1 of the Parliamentary Salaries and Allowances Determination 2024. The salary of an ordinary member of Parliament increased by 2.4% from 1 July 2025.

5.3. Former Prime Ministers

Under section 43 of the MOP Act, the Authority is required to determine the annuities of former Prime Ministers and their surviving spouses or partners.

In making its determination ***Parliamentary Annuities Determination 2025*** for the year commencing 1 January 2026, the Authority continued to have regard to changes in public sector salary and wage rates as shown in the Labour Cost Index as published by Stats NZ. Annuities were increased by 2.4% for the 2026 year.

In addition to determining the annuities, the Authority also has the responsibility to determine the entitlements to travel services within New Zealand for former Prime Ministers and their spouses or partners. The determination applies to former Prime Ministers who ceased to hold office on or after 21 September 2014.

As in previous years, during the 2025/26 year, the travel service entitlements of the former Prime Ministers and spouses or partners were reviewed and guided by the following principles:

- former Prime Ministers and spouses or partners should not personally have to meet the expenses related to performing their role and functions; and

- any personal benefits to former Prime Ministers and spouses or partners should be kept to a minimum.

As an outcome of the review, no changes were made to the travel services entitlements and their rates, and the rates contained in the ***Members of Parliament (Former Prime Ministers Travel Services) Determination 2017*** remained in effect throughout the year.

5.4. Judicial Officers

The Authority determines the salaries, allowances and superannuation entitlements for the judges of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, the High Court, the Court Martial Appeal Court, the District Court (including the Family Court, Youth Court and Environment Court), the Court Martial, the Employment Court, the Māori Land Court, and the Coroners Court.

To fulfil its requirements under the Act, the Authority invited submissions from all of the benches, met with bench representatives, the Chief Justice, and other parties who have relevant knowledge and experience of the judicial sector, and considered a wide range of economic and remuneration-related data.

The Authority commented last year that judicial officers are working in increasingly complex, demanding, and high-pressure environments with greater workloads and public scrutiny. Though the Authority remains of this view, it also considers that the general working environment in New Zealand is increasing in complexity, faces continuous change, and is more visible through social media. The Authority reiterates that simply increasing remuneration is not the long-term way of addressing these issues, although remuneration must continue to be fair and reflect the value of the role.

Judicial Officers Salaries and Allowances (2025/26) Determination 2025

In determining the judicial officers' remuneration for the 2025/26 year, the Authority applied the mandatory criteria, that it must take into account, listed in sections 18 and 18A of the Act.

As a result of considering these criteria, most judicial officers received an increase to their remuneration of 2.8 %, effective 1 October 2025.

5.5. Local Government Elected Members

The Authority determines, under clauses 6 and 7A of schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002 (**the LG Act**), the remuneration, allowances and expenses payable to local authority elected members.

The Authority completed its triennial review of the framework for determining local

government remuneration in 2025. The review found that the current approach was working well and no changes were made to the framework. Updated size indices data, councillor workload information and the legislated criteria resulted in variable increases in councils' governance remuneration pools following the October 2025 local elections.

During the year, the Authority continued to implement the outcomes of that review. Amendments were made to clarify that, where a member holds 2 or more offices, the remuneration payable is that for the office carrying the highest annual remuneration. Vehicle-kilometre allowance rates were updated in line with Inland Revenue's published kilometre rates and the Authority clarified that the cost of installing a home security system includes the cost of purchasing the system. In addition, the Mayor of the Chatham Islands Council became eligible to claim hearing fees, reflecting the Authority's determination that the role is part-time.

Following the October 2025 local elections, councils were required to provide the Authority with proposals on how their governance remuneration pools should be distributed among councillors. The Authority considered those proposals before determining remuneration for councillors with and without additional responsibilities. During the year, the Authority also considered requests arising from changes to council governance structures and approved reallocations of governance remuneration pools where appropriate. In addition, the Authority determined interim remuneration arrangements for members of the Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board following exceptional and temporary circumstances that reduced the number of members on the Board from 7 to 3.

Local Government Members (2026/27) Determination 2026

In June 2026, the Authority issued its determination for the 2026/27 year. In making the determination, the Authority considered feedback received from local authorities, economic and labour market indicators, including the public sector Labour Cost Index, and the increases received by elected members from 1 July 2025 and following the October 2025 local elections.

The Authority decided to maintain allowances and hearing fees at their post-election levels, except for the vehicle-kilometre allowance, which was adjusted to reflect Inland Revenue rates at the time. The Authority also removed the requirement that elected members may claim a home security system allowance only if their primary place of residence is within the local authority area and clarified that allowances are inclusive of GST. Remuneration rates for regional councils, community boards and most territorial authorities were maintained, while increases of up to 1.7% were applied to 19 territorial authorities that had received an increase of less than 1.7% following the October 2025 local elections.

5.6. Statutory Officers

Statutory officers who fall under the Authority's responsibility include certain chief executives and other officers of public service and non-public service departments, officers of Parliament, members of all independent Crown entities, members of those Crown agents or autonomous Crown entities that are a corporation sole, and the heads and members of certain tribunals. These statutory officers are listed in schedule 4 of the Act, in the Crown Entities Act 2004 or within their own legislation.

The remuneration of statutory officers is determined on appointment and, thereafter, reviewed annually. The review date for most of these positions is 1 July each year, while a number of positions are reviewed on 1 October each year.

The Authority has no statutory ability to consider performance in the role when determining a statutory officers' remuneration. Section 15(6) of the Act does not allow the Authority to publish the determinations of statutory officers.

The Authority wrote to each statutory officer inviting them to make a submission on any matters which they thought it should take into consideration in its review of their remuneration.

After considering these submissions received and the market and prevailing economic indicators and forecasts, including wage inflation and market-related remuneration information, the Authority's determinations in effect during the year resulted in an average movement of 1.8%, with adjustments ranging from 0% to 2.6% for the lower and upper quartiles.

Continuing its usual practice, the Authority made higher determinations for a small number of roles where the Authority considered current remuneration fell short of its fair and proper level, or where a role has changed significantly.

6. Authority Membership

The Authority is a small organisation made up of three members who are appointed by the Governor-General and supported by two permanent staff. The combination of the knowledge and skills of members and staff ensured that the Authority has available at all times a high level of technical competence as well as public management expertise.

In June 2026, Geoff Summers concluded his term as Chair, after serving as a member of the Authority since 2015. Dallas Welch was appointed Chair of the Authority, having served as a member since September 2021 and Deputy Chair since November 2022. Vern Walsh was reappointed for a further three-year term and Wynand du Plessis was appointed as a new member.

7. Appreciation

The Authority takes this opportunity to recognise and farewell Geoff Summers, whose term as a member of the Authority concluded in June 2026. Geoff served as a member of the Authority from 2015 and as Chair from 2022. A highly respected HR and remuneration expert, Geoff brought to the role more than 50 years' experience in employment relations, people management and executive remuneration. His career included leadership positions as Director of Human Resources at Victoria University of Wellington and Executive Director of Strategic Pay, as well as service as President of Human Resources New Zealand. During his time on the Authority, Geoff led its work on statutory officer remuneration, as well as the 2023 review of Members of Parliament remuneration and the review of the Governor-General's salary. The Authority acknowledges Geoff's leadership, expertise and commitment over the past decade and thanks him for the significant contribution he has made to the success of the organisation.

We would like to thank the Parliamentary Counsel Office, Crown Law, Parliamentary Service, Ministerial Services, and Stats NZ, for the professional and timely advice, information and services they provide to it. It acknowledges the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment which provides the Authority with corporate and support services.

The Authority members also record their ongoing appreciation and thank the Executive Director and the Analyst/Administrator for their input and support during the year.

Dallas Welch
Chair

Vern Walsh
Deputy Chair

Wynand du Plessis
Member

Annex

Membership of the Authority during the reporting period

- Mr Geoff Summers (Chair until mid-June 2026)
- Ms Dallas Welch (Deputy Chair until mid-June 2026; Chair from mid-June 2026)
- Mr Vern Walsh (Member until mid-June 2026, Deputy Chair from mid-June 2026)
- Mr Wynand du Plessis (Member from mid-June 2026)

Staff

The Authority is supported by an Executive Director of the Office of the Remuneration Authority and an Analyst/Administrator. Specialist consultants and advisers are engaged as the need arises.

Determinations

The Authority issued and/or oversaw the following determinations during the 2025/26 year.

Governor-General

Issued and operative during the year:

- Governor-General (Salary) Determination 2025
- Governor-General (Annuities) Determination 2026

Operative during the year (issued in prior years):

- Governor-General (Salary) Determination 2024
- Governor-General (Annuities) Determination 2025

Members of Parliament

Issued and operative during the year:

- Parliamentary Annuities Determination 2025

Operative during the year (issued in prior years):

- Parliamentary Salaries and Allowances Determination 2024
- Parliamentary Superannuation Determination 2003
- Members of Parliament (Accommodation Services for Members and Travel Services for Family Members) Determination 2023
- Parliamentary Annuities Determination 2024

- Members of Parliament (Former Prime Ministers Travel Services) Determination 2017

Judicial Officers

Issued and operative during the year:

- Judicial Officers Salaries and Allowances (2025/26) Determination 2025

Operative during the year (issued in prior years):

- Judicial Officers Salaries and Allowances (2024/25) Determination 2024
- Judicial Officers Superannuation Determination 2019

Local Government Members

Issued and operative during the year:

- Local Government Elected Members (2025/26) Amendment Determination 2025
- Local Government Elected Members (2025/26) Amendment Determination (No 2) 2025
- Local Government Elected Members (2025/26) Amendment Determination 2026
- Local Government Elected Members (2025/26) Amendment Determination (No 2) 2026
- Local Government Elected Members (2025/26) Amendment Determination 2025 (No 3) 2026

Operative during the year (issued in prior years):

- Local Government Elected Members 2025/26 Determination 2025

Issued during the year (operative in future years):

- Local Government Elected Members (2026/27) Determination 2026

Individual Independent Statutory Officers and Members of Boards

- Issued and operative during the year: 63 determinations
- Operative during the year (issued in prior years): 82 determinations
- Issued during the year (operative in future years): 90 determinations

Website

www.remauthority.govt.nz