



19-D-00433

s 9(2)(a)

Dear s 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your request, transferred by the State Services Commission to the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) on 11 March 2019, asking for the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

An approximate cost estimate of the average response to an OIA request. This should necessarily require an averaging of:

- a. The average wage per hour typically committed to OIA responses, multiplied by*
- b. The average number of hours committed to responding to an OIA request*

This can be expressed as: $\sum(\text{average wage}_{\text{agency}} \times \text{average number of hours}_{\text{agency}}) / \text{number of agencies}$.

For the period 1 January 2017 – 1 January 2019, the number of OIA requests sent from or on behalf of the New Zealand Tax Payers Union.

Please also provide a narrative explaining the method used to determine the average wage and average number of hours across agencies as requested in 1a and 1b of this OIA request.

MfE is unable to provide you with an approximate cost estimate for responding to OIA requests. This is because MfE does not have a centralised team that drafts OIA responses. When a new request is received this will be allocated to the appropriate team based on the subject matter. This means a wide variety of staff from various teams can be responsible for drafting an OIA response including analysts, senior analysts, or even managers in some cases if the request is complex. MfE does not record the hours taken by various staff members to complete an OIA, and wages or other costs are not recorded or attributed to each OIA. This part of your request for a cost estimate for responding to OIAs is refused pursuant to section 18(g) of the Act, as the information is not held.

MfE has conducted a search through records for OIAs from the NZ Taxpayers Union, and found 12 requests between January 2017 and January 2019. However, this figure will only include requests where the requestor specifically identified they were from the NZ Taxpayers Union and this was recorded.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of my decision on this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. Details can be found at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Sincerely

Neil Hurley
Director, People and Culture