

20-D-01264

s 9(2)(a)

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s 9(2)(a) @stuff.co.nz

Dear s 9(2)

Thank you for your email on 7 July 2020, requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*What was the agency's total greenhouse gas footprint in the most recent year in which records exist (if such records exist)? Please provide a breakdown of those emissions if they are available.*

*- Does the agency have a policy of requiring employees and/or contractors to offset work-related emissions, eg domestic or international flights?*

*- Does the agency have an emissions reduction plan, or emissions reduction targets, either in place or in development? If so, please provide details of the plan and/or targets.*

*Please let me know if I can clarify or refine my request.*

*This information will be used in a report on emissions policies within the state sector.*

The Ministry for the Environment has identified two documents in scope of your request, as listed in the attached table. These documents have been refused under the following sections of the Act:

18(d) the information requested is or soon will be publicly released.

As this information is being refused in full, the Ministry considers this request to be refused. However, in order to be as helpful as possible the Ministry is providing some information in this response.

**What was the agency's total greenhouse gas footprint in the most recent year in which records exist (if such records exist)? Please provide a breakdown of those emissions if they are available.**

The Ministry for the Environment has been measuring, reporting and reduction its emissions with the Toitū Envirocare carbon reduce programme since 2017/18. The reports are publicly available [here](#).

Our emissions for the 2019/20 reporting year are currently being audited by Toitū Envirocare. Once completed these will be publicly available (this is expected to be in the next month). This will detail significant emissions reductions over the last year.

**Does the agency have an emissions reduction plan, or emissions reduction targets, either in place or in development? If so, please provide details of the plan and/or targets.**

The Ministry recently set a new emissions reduction target. We expect to release these details and our Sustainability Strategy 2020/22 in the next month.

### **Sustainability at the Ministry for the Environment**

Our [Annual Report 2018/19](#) covers our current sustainability strategy and targets.

In brief, sustainability for us as an organisation means operating within our baseline, minimising our environmental footprint, and giving our people what they need to thrive. In addition to the Annual Report 2018/19, detail on our sustainability strategy is available [here](#). These will soon be superseded by our new targets and strategy (expected for public release next month).

Our current strategy commits us to measuring, reducing and reporting on our emissions profile and having it externally verified. We are also committed to emissions reduction goals on our travel (20 per cent), head office energy use (10 per cent), and waste to landfill (50 per cent).

**Does the agency have a policy of requiring employees and/or contractors to offset work-related emissions, e.g. domestic or international flights?**

The Ministry for the Environment does not currently offset carbon emissions from staff air travel. The Ministry's primary focus to date has been on making emissions reductions across the organisation, and decoupling growth in our full-time equivalent staff (FTEs) and work programmes from our emissions. This follows [best practice advice](#) on reducing emissions as much as practicable before voluntary offsetting.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my decision to refuse your request by the Office of the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on their website at: [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Please note that due to the public interest in our work, the Ministry for the Environment will publish responses to most of our requests for official information on our web site on our [OIA responses page](#) shortly after the response has been sent to you.

If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Executive Relations team.

Yours sincerely



Neil Hurley  
Director – People Experience, People and Culture

**List of documents**

Document no.	Document date	Title & document type	Decisions	OIA sections applied
1	17 June 2020	Memo Setting an organisational Science-Based Target for MFE	Withheld in full	18(d) The information requested is or soon will be publicly released
2	17 June 2020	Memo Setting MFE's next Sustainability Strategy	Withheld in full	18(d) The information requested is or soon will be publicly released

Released under the provision of  
the Official Information Act 1982