



27 September 2024

OIAD-1212

9(2)(a)

Kia ora 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 19 August 2024 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) of the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry):

1. A detailed breakdown of all credit card expenses incurred by the following positions from the months, January, February, March, April, May, June and July 2024, itemised by employee and job title:

- *Chief of Staff*
- *Compliance Officer*
- *Executive Director*
- *Principal Analyst*
- *Programme Director*
- *Senior Information Centre Advisor*

2. Copies of all relevant invoices and receipts corresponding to these credit card expenses.

On 28 August 2024, the Ministry emailed you to request clarification of the second point of your request. We did not receive a response to this email.

I am releasing 36 monthly credit card bank statements to you in part to meet the first point of your request, one per credit card holder per month. Where a credit card holder did not use their credit card in a particular month, I have not provided a statement.

In each of these statements, I have withheld the credit card and bank account numbers under section 9(2)(k) of the Act to prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage.

In five of the statements, I have withheld personal details of a staff member under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.

In 16 of the statements, I have withheld staff names under section 9(2)(g)(ii) of the Act, to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the protection of employees from improper pressure or harassment.

I am also releasing to you a reconciliation statement for each credit card statement, to provide some information about the expenditure listed. In 12 of these statements, I have withheld staff names under section 9(2)(g)(ii) of the Act, to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the protection of employees from improper pressure or harassment.

I am also providing you with further contextual information about some of the expenditure and the Ministry's practices around use of credit cards:

- Some of the accommodation, vehicle fuel, and meal expenditure lines in the compliance and senior compliance officers' statements are for two staff members in the field at the time.

- The Ministry's Information Centre regularly buys books, standards, journal articles and reports by credit card. Some purchases are based on staff recommendations.
- Credit cards are used for licencing software and services or IT team training if the vendor only accepts credit card payments.

I am refusing your second point under section 18(f) of the Act, as that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation. While the Ministry requests receipts for purchases, these receipts are not captured within our systems and would require significant collation and reconciling effort to provide a complete list.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decision to withhold information relating to this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on their website at:

www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Please note that due to the public interest in our work the Ministry for the Environment publishes responses to requests for official information on our [OIA responses page](#) shortly after the response has been sent. If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Ministerial Services team: ministerials@mfe.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Arun Patel

General Manager, Finance and Procurement
Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao