



20 December 2024

9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your emails of 6 and 26 November 2024 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) from the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry):

1. *Is your agencies continuing to pursue the carbon neutral public service targets?*
 - i. *If so please provide any documents showing how this is being implemented.*
2. *A list of emissions reduction initiatives implemented or planned since the first year of CNGP emissions reporting, including asset procurement and replacement, that includes the following information:*
 - i. *A description of the initiative*
 - ii. *Any business needs that the initiative meets other than CNGP requirements*
 - iii. *The upfront cost of the initiative, broken down by year if it is multi-year expenditure, noting if it includes capital expenditure*
 - iv. *Any ongoing annual costs associated with this initiative*
 - v. *Any cost-savings associated with this initiative, whether they are upfront or realised annually.*
3. *Total EV's brought since the targets were implemented broken down by year?*
 - i. *Please provide notes on type of car.*
 - ii. *how many PHEVs and how many BEVs*
 - iii. *the make and model of each vehicle (e.g. Honda Civic)*
 - iv. *how many light vehicles and how many heavy vehicles*
 - v. *the body style of each vehicle (e.g., hatchback, van, station wagon)*
4. *Total spent on agency emissions inventories by year since the financial year that your agency was first required to report emissions for.*
 - i. *Please provide the most recent inventory.*
5. *How much is spent on voluntary carbon offsets for every year since your agency first reported its emissions to the CNGP? (Not the ETS)*
 - i. *Please provide expenditure on consultants for this and please provide the total tonnes of CO₂ (tCO₂-e) offset annually.*
 - ii. *Any reduction initiatives involving Agricultural emissions.*

Response to your request

The Ministry for the Environment has provided a response to each of your questions below:

1. Is your agency continuing to pursue the carbon neutral public service targets?

We are an active participant of the Carbon Neutral Government Programme (CNGP) and remain committed to achieving our emission reduction targets.

The Ministry has committed to reducing emissions by 35% from our 2017/18 baseline by 2025, and halving emissions from our 2017/18 baseline by 2030 in line with a 1.5-degree reduction pathway. These are explicitly set out in the Ministry's Sustainability Strategy: <https://environment.govt.nz/assets/sustainability-strategy-2022-2025.pdf>.

We report our sustainability performance and progress against these targets in our Annual Reports available on our external website: [Our sustainability | Ministry for the Environment](#).

The Ministry has been completing emission audits with Toitū for carbonreduce certification since 21 March 2018. Prior to 2020, Toitū was known as Enviro-Mark Solutions Ltd. Certifications are available on the Ministry's website: <https://environment.govt.nz/about-us/our-sustainability/> and Toitū's website: <https://www.toitu.co.nz/our-members/members/Ministry-for-the-Environment-Manatu-Mo-Te-Taiao>.

i. If so, please provide any documents showing how this is being implemented

This information is available in the Ministry's Annual Report(s).

I am refusing the Ministry's 2017/18 annual report under section 18(d) of the Act as it is already publicly available at <https://environment.govt.nz/assets/Publications/Files/Annual-report-2017-18-WEB.pdf>. The information can be found on Pages 14-15.

I am refusing the Ministry's 2018/19 annual report under section 18(d) of the Act as it is already publicly available at <https://environment.govt.nz/assets/Publications/Files/annual-report-201819-web-final.pdf>. The information can be found on Pages 22-25.

I am refusing the Ministry's 2020/21 annual report under section 18(d) of the Act as it is already publicly available at <https://environment.govt.nz/assets/Publications/Files/Ministry-for-the-Environment-Annual-Report-2019-2020.pdf>. The information can be found on Pages 22-25.

I am refusing the Ministry's 2021/22 annual report under section 18(d) of the Act as it is already publicly available at <https://environment.govt.nz/assets/publications/annual-report-2021-22.pdf>. The information can be found on Pages 29-34.

I am refusing the Ministry's 2022/23 annual report under section 18(d) of the Act as it is already publicly available at <https://environment.govt.nz/assets/publications/Corporate-publications/Ministry-for-the-Environment-Annual-Report-2022-23.pdf>. The information can be found on Pages 96-99.

I am refusing the Ministry's 2023/24 annual report under section 18(d) of the Act as it is already publicly available at <https://environment.govt.nz/assets/publications/annual-report-2023-24.pdf>. The information can be found on Pages 76-79.

2. A list of emissions reduction initiatives implemented or planned since the first year of CNGP emissions reporting, including asset procurement and replacement, that includes the following information:

i. A description of the initiative

ii. Any business needs that the initiative meets other than CNGP requirements

- iii. The upfront cost of the initiative, broken down by year if it is multi-year expenditure, noting if it includes capital expenditure**
- iv. Any ongoing annual costs associated with this initiative**
- v. Any cost-savings associated with this initiative, whether they are upfront or realised annually.**

The Ministry set and first reported against its corporate emissions reduction targets for FY2017/18, which is the Ministry’s base year. A summary of initiatives and their descriptions can be found in the Ministry’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and Management Report (IMR) for FY2023/24, which I have released to you in full as requested in **Q4.i**).

A summary of emission reduction projects from the IMR is reported in Table 1, noting the below limitations.

Staffing costs are not reported against project initiative costs. The Ministry does not time sheet employees and this work was completed within allocated fulltime equivalent (FTE) baselines of the Sustainability and Climate Risk team and wider work programme.

The Ministry does not report on expenditure for these projects where the expense of activities, e.g. FMIS software, are not captured as a sustainability incurred cost. The Tandem travel booking system and financial management system are procured by business support and finance budgets to enable their respective functions. The system tools and reporting benefit the reduction projects in Table 1 but were not procured for nor are a direct project cost.

I am refusing part v) of this question under section 18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist. The Ministry has not conducted a comprehensive analysis for cost savings in relation to planned or completed emissions reductions initiatives.

Table 1: Projects to reduce emissions between FY2017/18 to FY2023/24. Source: GHG Emission Inventory 2023/24.

Initiative <i>Description and progress</i>	Business benefits (wider than CNGP)	Upfront cost	Ongoing cost
PROJECT: Reduce staff domestic and international air travel			
<p>The Ministry’s Business Planning process includes emissions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departmental budgets are set by the executive leadership team for the organisation and allocated out to business groups to manage within throughout the financial year. • Setting carbon budgets as part of business planning was implemented in 2020. The air travel and rental car emissions are forecast in the Ministry’s financial management system. • Roles holding delegated financial authority are scrutinised for accountability, emission budgets are 	<p>Organisational benefits realised through cost reductions, reporting and informed budgetary decisions. Planned travel also reduced FTE resourcing demands to enable business</p>	<p>\$20,000 invested for improved reporting dashboards in 2022/23. This was a one-off cost.</p>	<p>Managed within FTE baseline, Tandem booking system and FMIS system</p>

Initiative <i>Description and progress</i>	Business benefits (wider than CNGP)	Upfront cost	Ongoing cost
<p>weighted like financial budget performance.</p> <p>The Ministry intends to continue to monitor and understand travel behaviour and provide that information to all staff. This supports individual accountability. Ongoing staff education and awareness will support sustainable reductions over the longer term.</p>	<p>support teams to operate within baselines as planned travel improved</p>		
<p>Ongoing investment in improved online meeting technologies and office space.</p> <p>This includes ongoing partnering with suppliers around emissions informed from data use and broader ICT.</p> <p>This project captures indirect benefits from the ICT work programme owned by the Chief Information Officer. Return on investment against sustainability outcomes is not a reporting metric so data for ICT investment cannot be provided.</p>	<p>Ongoing investment in Information Technology programmes involves wider benefits to flexible and remote working.</p> <p>This includes working with our externals e.g. contractors, consultants. Encourage travel only when essential.</p>	<p>Sits within ICT work programme and not reported this way.</p>	<p>Investment is not reported this way.</p>

Support greater use of sustainable and low emissions ground transport options

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate when and why staff use low occupancy vehicles (rental cars, private cars, taxis, Ubers) and public transport. <p>This work is part of the Sustainability Strategy and considers holistic sustainability, personal health and wellbeing, security, and the safety of staff.</p>	<p>Potential cost savings, improved staff awareness and use of low emission transport options, investigating any improvements to make it easy for staff to travel (and low emissions.)</p>	<p>Within FTE baselines.</p> <p>From Nov 2022-Nov 2023, the Ministry paid \$1,800 for a pilot programme e-bike lease (1 bike). This was not renewed and lapsed in Nov 2023.</p>	<p>N/A.</p>
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Set and measure new baseline targets in our head office building in Wellington

<p>Analyse data collected on emissions sources (i.e. categories 2, 3, 4, value chain)</p>	<p>Data analysis will provide intervention points to provide further options in reducing the emission profile of the organisation</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Ongoing task that is completed within FTE baselines.</p>
<p>Scope 3 assessment and review</p>			
<p>Review our Scope 3 emissions to identify any new and material emission sources.</p>			
<p>Working from Home (WFH) engagement and initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and run educational and awareness raising initiatives to encourage energy efficiency and waste minimisation for our WFH staff, and data/survey collection where/if practical. Reduction in WFH (and household) waste-to-landfill and electricity use. Noting any reductions cannot be captured in reporting, due to current calculation methodology. Manage expectations surrounding the need to change heating and lighting. 	<p>Upfront cost to WFH staff who choose to upgrade to more energy efficient heating and lighting.</p>	<p>No cost incurred by the Ministry.</p>	

<i>This project has been limited by resource constraints.</i>			
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3. Total EV's brought since the targets were implemented broken down by year?

- i. Please provide notes on type of car.**
- ii. How many PHEVs and how many BEVs**
- iii. The make and model of each vehicle (e.g. Honda Civic)**
- iv. How many light vehicles and how many heavy vehicles**
- v. The body style of each vehicle (e.g., hatchback, van, station wagon)**

The Ministry does not have a vehicle fleet and as such has not bought any electric vehicles since it set its emissions reduction targets.

I am refusing this question under section 18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist. The Ministry does not have a vehicle fleet.

4. Total spent on agency emissions inventories by year since the financial year that your agency was first required to report emissions for.

- i. Please provide the most recent inventory.**

The Ministry's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Inventory and Management Report for FY2023/24 has been released to you in full.

The Ministry's GHG emission inventories are developed as part of procured audit accreditation services. The audit includes independent audit verification and accreditation in accordance with ISO 14064:1:2018. Please refer to Table 2.



Table 2. Expenditure on audit services per financial year, the process in which emission inventories are developed and verified by an independent third-party auditor.

Transaction	Financial Year (Cost incurred)	Cost (GST exclusive)
CEMARS Certification <i>Measure period: July 2017 to June 2018</i>	FY2018/19	\$3,927.13
CEMARS Certification <i>Measure period: July 2018 to June 2019</i>	FY2019/20	\$3,180.00
Toitū carbonreduce - Audit / Certification <i>Measure period: July 2019 to June 2020</i>	FY2020/21	\$3,460.00
Toitū carbonreduce - Audit / Certification <i>Measure period: July 2020 to June 2021</i>	FY2021/22	\$3,688.00
Toitū carbonreduce - Audit / Certification <i>Measure period: July 2021 to June 2022</i>	FY2022/23	\$5,056.00
Toitū carbonreduce - Audit / Certification <i>Measure period: July 2022 to June 2023</i>	FY2023/24	\$5,076.00
Toitū carbonreduce - Audit / Certification <i>Measure period: July 2023 to June 2024</i>	FY24/25	\$5,703.00

The Ministry opts in to the Tōitū Certified Emissions Measurement Reduction Annual Membership which provides the Ministry access to carbonreduce software and technical support. The Ministry does not report on this by financial year due to the variance in invoice issuing. The membership period does not align with financial (July to June) or calendar year. Please refer to Table 3.

Table 3. Expenditure on membership reported by membership term

Transaction	Membership Period	Cost (GST exclusive)
CEMARS Annual Membership Fee* <i>Includes a one-off \$600 establishment fee.</i>	April 2018 - March 2019	\$6,350.00
CEMARS Annual Membership Fee	April 2019 - March 2020	\$5,749.57
Toitū carbonreduce Membership Fee	April 2020 - March 2021	\$5,750.00
Toitū carbonreduce Membership Fee	April 2021 – March 2022	\$5,750.00

Transaction	Membership Period	Cost (GST exclusive)
Toitū carbonreduce Membership Fee	April 2022 – March 2023	\$5,750
Toitū carbonreduce Membership Fee	April 2023 – March 2024	\$6,038
Toitū carbonreduce Membership Fee	April 2024 – March 2025	\$5,750

5. How much is spent on voluntary carbon offsets? (Not the ETS)

- i. Please provide expenditure on consultants for this and please provide the total tonnes of CO2 (tCO2-e) offset annually.
- ii. Any consideration or actions involving Agricultural emissions

The Ministry has not spent any money on or otherwise acquired any voluntary carbon offsets to date.

I am refusing part i) of this question under section 18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist. The Ministry has not spent any money on consultants for purchasing voluntary carbon offsets and has not purchased or otherwise acquired any voluntary carbon offsets.

I am refusing part ii) of this question under section 18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist. The Ministry does not conduct any agricultural activities and as such is not responsible for any agricultural emissions.

In terms of section 9(1) of the Act, I am satisfied that, in the circumstances, the withholding of this information is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable to make the information available in the public interest.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decisions relating to this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found 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.

Nāku noa, nā



Kathleen Mackie

General Manager – Strategy/Planning and Performance
Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao

Document schedule

Title	Decision	Grounds
Ministry for the Environment Annual Report 2017/18	Refused in full	18(d)
Ministry for the Environment Annual Report 2018/19	Refused in full	18(d)
Ministry for the Environment Annual Report 2019/20	Refused in full	18(d)
Ministry for the Environment Annual Report 2020/21	Refused in full	18(d)
Ministry for the Environment Annual Report 2021/22	Refused in full	18(d)
Ministry for the Environment Annual Report 2022/23	Refused in full	18(d)
Ministry for the Environment Annual Report 2023/24	Refused in full	18(d)
Ministry for the Environment's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and Management Report 2023/24	Released in full	