



24 September 2024

OIAD-1234

9(2)(a)

Dear 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 27 August 2024 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

**2. Redundancy payouts, staffing cuts and further saving plans:**

1. *Before this year's restructure: total number of permanent employees; fixed-term employees; secondees; contractors.*
2. *Same numbers as Q1 post restructure (or what is planned if restructure not completed).*
3. *Breakdown of number of job cuts (or planned cuts if not complete) including voluntary redundancies, forced redundancies, vacancies, FTEs, contractors, fixed terms. Please also provide breakdown by gender, ethnicity and age (over 50 vs under 50)*
4. *Regional breakdown of job cuts (or planned)*
5. *Percentage of workforce cut in restructure (or planned).*
6. *Amount of savings achieved/expected in restructure.*
7. *Did your recent restructure include contractors - ie were contractors also laid off?*
8. *Were permanent staff prioritised over contractors - ie if a position needed to be disestablished and there were permanent staff and contractors doing that work, would the permanent employee be kept and the contractor let go?*
9. *What was the total amount spent in redundancy payouts - for how many people? If the amounts have not been finalised yet please provide the expected/projected spend. Please provide a breakdown between voluntary and forced redundancy payouts.*
10. *Are there any further savings targets to be achieved? If so, please provide the amount that needs to be saved, and the number of job losses forecasted to achieve these.*

As requested, the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) has treated your request as two separate requests. This responses letter addresses the second point of your request for information regarding 'Redundancy payouts, staffing cuts and further saving plans.'

The Ministry has compiled the information in scope of your request, which is being released to you in full. Please see the breakdown below for our response to each point of your request.

**1. Before this year's restructure: total number of permanent employees; fixed-term employees; secondees; contractors.**

**Answer:** 993 staff members

Please note, the Ministry has interpreted your request for information 'Before this year's restructure' as information as at 5 June 2024, the date upon which the Ministry's change proposal document, titled '*Resetting the Ministry - Proposal for consultation and feedback*', was disseminated to all permanent, fixed-term and seconded-out Ministry staff members.

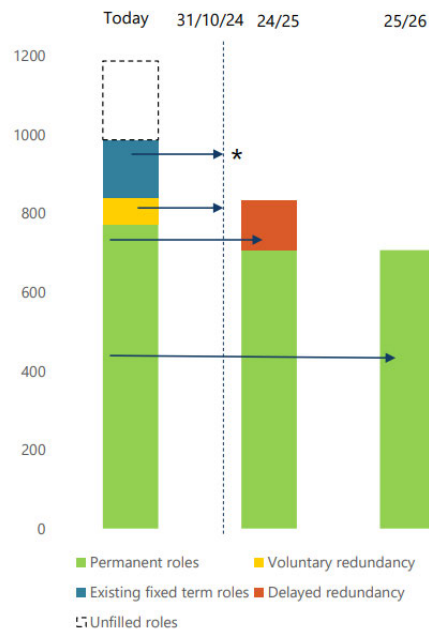
The numbers shown above are information that can be provided consistent with the PSC standards and as such numbers for *permanent employees*; *fixed-term employees*; and *seconded-out staff* are the ones accounted for.

## 2. Same numbers as Q1 post restructure (or what is planned if restructure not completed).

**Answer:** As the restructure is yet to be completed, what is planned is outlined below. The completion of the current restructure would see the Ministry's FTE numbers drop to:

- 836 FTE in FY2024/25 and;
- 707.5 FTE in FY2025/26

The breakdown of this stepped approach can be seen in the diagram below:



Please note that the stepped approach in staff reduction will be achieved over two financial years (24/25 - 25/26). At the end of October 2024, contracts for most of our 148 fixed term staff will end, and more staff will leave through voluntary redundancies.

The FTE reductions between the 2024/25 year and the 2025/26 year will be managed through 128 delayed redundancy positions in the new structure, which will end on 30 June 2025. Prior to the restructure, the Ministry had approximately 200 roles funded in 2023/24, and has chosen not to fill these roles. This helped avoid our headcount reaching budgeted levels of 1230 FTE in 2023/24.

## 3. Breakdown of number of job cuts (or planned cuts if not complete) including voluntary redundancies, forced redundancies, vacancies, FTEs, contractors, fixed terms. Please also provide breakdown by gender, ethnicity and age (over 50 vs under 50).

Please note that, as the change process is not yet completed, we are unable to provide the data for all planned 'job-cuts' accurately in the requested format (i.e. broken down by

gender, ethnicity and age). For the number of planned job cuts, please refer to our answer to point 2 of your request.

That said, we are able to provide you the data on all voluntary redundancies as of 27 June 2024 and this has been broken down by the requested categories i.e. broken down by gender, ethnicity and age.

**Voluntary Redundancies as at 27 June 2024 by Gender:**

Male: 39  
Another Gender/Prefer not to say: 2  
Female: 86

**Voluntary Redundancies as at 27 June 2024 by Ethnicity:**

Unknown: 6  
European: 84  
Asian: 7  
Pacific Peoples: 2  
New Zealand Māori: 26  
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (MELAA): 2

**Voluntary Redundancies as at 27 June 2024 by Age:**

Over 50: 26  
Under/At 50: 101

**4. Regional breakdown of job cuts (or planned)**

Please note that, as the change process is not yet completed, we are unable to provide the data for all ‘job-cuts’, planned or otherwise, in the requested format i.e. location/region. For the number of planned job cuts, please refer to our answer to point 2 of your request.

That said, we are able to provide you the data on all voluntary redundancies as at 27 June 2024 and this has been broken down by region.

**Voluntary Redundancies as at 27 June 2024 by region:**

LOCATION	HEADCOUNT
Nelson-Tasman	4
Waikato	6
Southland	1
Taranaki	2
East Coast	4
Canterbury (South)	2
Auckland	15
Wellington-Wairarapa - Office	62
Canterbury	18

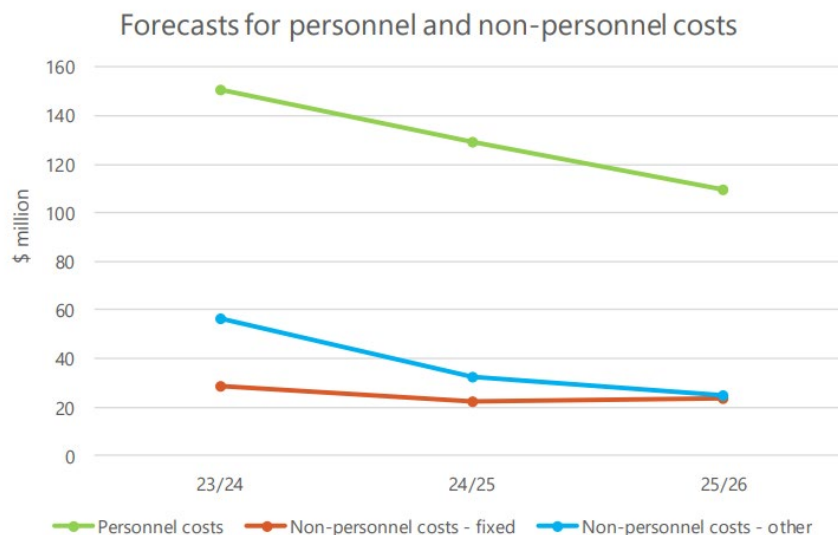
Manawatu-Whanganui	1
Otago	6
Hawke's Bay	1

**5. Percentage of workforce cut in restructure (or planned).**

**Answer:** The planned restructure represents an approximate 30% percent reduction in MfE FTE staff by July 2026.

**6. Amount of savings achieved/expected in restructure.**

**Answer:** Exact and accurate data for savings in numerical figures could not be produced as the change process is ongoing. However, the below forecast saving diagram indicates expected savings in personnel and non-personnel costs expenditure for the Ministry after the restructure.



**7. Did your recent restructure include contractors - ie were contractors also laid off?**

**Answer:** No contractors were affected by the change process, nor were they provided with related documents.

**8. Were permanent staff prioritised over contractors - ie if a position needed to be disestablished and there were permanent staff and contractors doing that work, would the permanent employee be kept and the contractor let go?**

**Answer:** As noted in our response to point 7 of your request, no contractors were impacted by the restructure. Though, we wish to note that permanent staff have been prioritised over existing fixed term staff throughout the change process.

**9. What was the total amount spent in redundancy payouts - for how many people? If the amounts have not been finalised yet please provide the expected/projected spend. Please provide a breakdown between voluntary and forced redundancy payouts.**

**Answer:** As the change/restructure process has not been completed yet, we are unable to produce accurate numeric value for the total amount the Ministry has spent on forced redundancy payouts. We are also unable to provide you with a projected spend, at present, as we continue to work through the restructure process.

However, the table below outlines the total amount spent on voluntary redundancy pay-outs from 27 November 2023 to present:

Number of Employees Paid	Sum of Value Paid
120	\$3,891,805.24

**10. Are there any further savings targets to be achieved? If so, please provide the amount that needs to be saved, and the number of job losses forecasted to achieve these.**

**Answer:** At present there are no further savings targets required beyond what is forecast in our response to point 6 of your request, nor are further job losses required beyond the information provided in in response to point 2 of your request.

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](http://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](mailto:ministerials@mfe.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

*Electronically approved by Tracey Kaio*

**Tracey Kaio**

General Manager – People and Capability  
Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao