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Julie Nevin

By email: [fyi-request-10105-318f4a86@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-10105-318f4a86@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Julie

**Information Request - Tasman fires**

I refer to your official information request dated 13 April 2019 asking the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) for the following information:

*I'd like to know what it took to put out the fires around Pigeon Valley, Tasman, this summer.*

*Specifically:*

- 1. what the response cost civil defence (and other responding organisations, if possible)*
- 2. how much fresh and marine water was used*
- 3. how much fuel was used by helicopters and other vehicles*
- 4. how many hectares of forest were destroyed*
- 5. the expected compensation to landowners for damage caused by the response*

On 1 May 2019, questions 1-4 of your request were transferred to Fire and Emergency as the information you have requested is believed to be more closely connected with the functions of this organisation. I understand that DPMC will still be responding to your question 1 and 5.

Your request has been considered in accordance with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982. In response to questions 1-4 of:

- 1. what the response cost civil defence (and other responding organisations, if possible)?*

As at 10 May 2019, Fire and Emergency's response to the Tasman Fires totals \$ 11,826,445.

- 2. how much fresh and marine water was used?*

Fire and Emergency does not hold a full record of the amount of water either fresh or salt that was used in the response to the fires. However, we have estimated that at its peak we were averaging 1,800,000 litres of water a day until the final days of the operation where it dropped to about 300,000 litres per day

Our best total estimate of the use of tanker water is 35,700,000 litres – or about 14 Olympic swimming pools worth.

We used no marine water to fight the Pigeon Valley fire. However, helicopters did use sea-water to fight the Walters Bluff fire. Again we do not hold a full record of the amount of sea water used.

Our estimate is that one helicopter draws approximately 1,000 litres per load with a total of 20,000 to 30,000 litres of sea-water used in the first couple of hours.

*3. how much fuel was used by helicopters and other vehicles?*

We do not have a full record of the amount of fuel used. I can provide the following comment on the cost of fuel. The helicopter fuel cost is met by the helicopter companies and we have no breakdown of their specific fuel costs. The firefighting response included the use of 23 helicopters, 2 fixed wing planes and 3 drone teams.

The non-aviation fuel cost to Fire and Emergency is recorded as \$38,415 and includes the cost of fuel supplied on site and fuel purchased using Fire and Emergency fuel and purchase cards.

*4. how many hectares of forest were destroyed?*

Forestry owners have advised that 1687ha of forestry was burnt in this fire.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Note also that this response (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Fire and Emergency website.

Yours sincerely



Raewyn Bleakley  
Deputy Chief Executive, Office of the Chief Executive