



29/11/19

Ref: DOIA 1920-0563

Mr Jeremy Puger  
fyi-request-11366-61dbc1e1@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Jeremy Puger

Thank you for your email of 8 October 2019 to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

*I am seeking information for the last five years about government activity that relates to climate change. I am wanting to find out for each year:*

*Air Travel*

*(please do domestic and international air travel separately)*

*A). How many of your staff has travelled by air (obviously with all of these I mean where the agency has paid for it) and how many the total flights were and how much it cost all up.*

*B). What was the purpose and benefit to the taxpayer of each trip*

*C). For each trip why was a remote alternative not used? Like for conferences a lot of them have remote viewing dial ins so you don't have to travel to attend. Meetings can usually be done by conference call or skype. Things like that. So there are very few situations where staff would actually have to travel by air. So in cases where you have could you explain if there was no remote alternative available? And if there was why was it not used?*

*D). When staff are travelling there are extra expenses too. How much has been spent on accommodation and for how many people and nights in these times too?*

*E). As per D but how much on other expenses like meals and allowances?*

*F). Do staff of different jobs/ranks/levels get different types or levels of accommodation. If so can you explain why?*

*G). Going into the future do you have plans to reduce air travel? If you do could you explain these plans and if you have set any targets for it and things*

*Packaging and Recycling*

*A). Do you have recycling facilities in all of your premises? If you do not please explain why*

*B). Do you actively encourage or make your staff recycle? If you do please explain how*

*C). Do you have rules aimed at encouraging other staff environmentally friendly behaviour such as banning staff from bringing disposable cups onto the premises?*

*D). If you have cafes or similar things in your premises do you require them to use environmentally healthy options such as re usable cutlery and recyclable packaging?*

*Encouraging Good Behaviour and Attunement with the natural world*

*A. Do all of your offices have plants? If so, what is the ratio of plants to workers? Do you ensure that providers that look after the plants use sustainable and environmentally friendly options in their practices (for example pesticide choices)?*

*B. Do you have programmes for encouraging your staff to make more environmentally friendly choices outside of work?*

*C. Do you encourage your staff to be more interconnected with the natural world by hosting or promoting practices such as mindfulness, meditation, earthing or Tai Chi?*

*E. Do you take any steps to increase staff knowledge and awareness of environmental issues in general?*

**Air Travel**

***A. How many of your staff has travelled by air (obviously with all of these I mean where the agency has paid for it) and how many the total flights were and how much it cost all up.***

***B. When staff are travelling there are extra expenses too. How much has been spent on accommodation and for how many people and nights in these times too?***

***E. As per D but how much on other expenses like meals and allowances?***

**International travel**

MBIE publishes international travel costs (flight cost, reason for travel, destination, accommodation cost, other expenses such as meals and allowances) annually in the MBIE Annual Review. Therefore I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(d) of the Act. I have provided links to the last four years of MBIE published Annual Reviews in Annex One.

**Domestic Travel**

MBIE publishes information on domestic travel costs (staff who travelled most frequently across the year, their position and the total cost of travel per person) annually in the MBIE Annual Review. As such, this part of your request is refused under 18(d) of the Act. I can also provide the following context in response to the additional information relating to MBIE's domestic travel.

Specific details of each domestic trip taken are not held in a centralised database and to provide the information, MBIE would be required to manually collate and evaluate hundreds of transactions attached to individual travel claims. Your request for the total number of flights/cost of domestic travel, the total cost/number of nights spent in accommodation and total cost of expenses such as meals and allowances on domestic trips is therefore refused under section 18(f) of the Act, due to the substantial collation and research required.

I can advise that MBIE meets the cost of three reasonable meals a day for each full day of travel requiring an overnight stay, or two meals a day for each full day of travel that does not require an overnight stay.

MBIE also meets the cost of reasonable and practical accommodation in-between each full day of work required at an alternative location. All receipts are required for expense reimbursement and all claims are made in accordance with MBIE's Sensitive Expenditure Policy.

#### International and domestic travel - 2018/2019

The total cost of international travel for 2018/19 was \$5.116m and the total spent on domestic travel was \$9.762m. The breakdown of international travel costs and the data around the total spend of MBIE's frequent domestic travellers is currently being prepared for publication in the Annual Review 2018/19. As this information is soon to be made publicly available, I am refusing this part of your request under 18(d) of the Act.

***B. What was the purpose and benefit to the taxpayer of each trip?***

***C. For each trip why was a remote alternative not used?***

MBIE is a large and diverse organisation where domestic and international travel can be required for a range of reasons. Domestic travel proposals are discussed between an approving manager and the travelling staff member, which also includes exploring the suitability of remote alternatives. International travel proposals are also evaluated and approved via a Deputy Chief Executive. Approval for travel is given if travel policy requirements have been followed in full and MBIE is satisfied that travel is required for the purpose of conducting MBIE business effectively.

As stated above, the purpose of each domestic trip taken and the reason why remote alternatives were not used for each international or domestic trip taken is not information MBIE stores centrally. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation and research. You may find the purpose of each international trip listed in the MBIE Annual Review via the links in Annex One.

MBIE does not keep record of a benefit to the taxpayer for each domestic or international trip taken. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information requested is not held.

***F. Do staff of different jobs/ranks/levels get different types or levels of accommodation? If so can you explain why?***

MBIE's travel policy applies to all staff. There is no differentiation to accommodation entitlements according to job title.

***G. Going into the future do you have plans to reduce air travel? If you do could you explain these plans and if you have set any targets for it and things***

MBIE is committed to achieving the broader outcomes set out in the new edition of the Government Procurement Rules. Of these broader outcomes, the Government has identified four priority outcomes for agencies to start focusing on, one being 'reducing emissions and waste'. The principle commits agencies to achieving positive environmental outcomes through sustainable procurement by buying low emissions and low waste goods, services and works. As per Rule 20 of the Government Procurement Rules, MBIE will be taking action to ensure adherence to these rules. For more information on the broader procurement outcomes, please refer to the links provided in Annex Two.

MBIE has also invested in technologies to provide staff with options to use teleconferencing software to communicate and conduct business electronically. Where practical, MBIE staff have the ability to work remotely and are provided with portable devices, which promotes a reduction in land travel emissions generated from commuting.

### **Packaging and Recycling**

#### ***A. Do you have recycling facilities in all of your premises? If you do not please explain why***

Approximately 90 percent of current New Zealand MBIE staff are based across 14 premises located in Auckland, Christchurch, Hamilton, Napier, Nelson, Palmerston North and Wellington, where recycling facilities are available for use.

A small number of MBIE staff also work at a number of locations across New Zealand, which may be co-leased or sub-leased alongside others within the building. Recycling facilities are available to staff where MBIE has the responsibility for providing facility management services.

#### ***B. Do you actively encourage or make your staff recycle? If you do please explain how***

MBIE encourages staff to recycle by providing separate organic, paper, glass and generic landfill waste bins and provides guidance through posters and information sheets. Desk waste bins have been removed where practicable, encouraging staff to sort all waste into centralised recycling bins.

MBIE is pleased to support staff-led initiatives to improve recycling efforts and recently introduced a new facility where Wellington staff can now recycle lithium batteries.

#### ***C. Do you have rules aimed at encouraging other staff environmentally friendly behaviour such as banning staff from bringing disposable cups onto the premises?***

While MBIE does not enforce specific rules, staff have access to an array of communal plates, bowls, cutlery, mugs and glasses. This availability encourages the preparation of food and drinks without the need to use disposable cups and utensils.

#### ***D. If you have cafes or similar things in your premises do you require them to use environmentally healthy options such a re-usable cutlery and recyclable packaging?***

The agreements between MBIE and the commercial entities do not include a requirement to use environmentally healthy options. Some cafes promote environmentally friendly options, such as the cafe located on the ground floor of the Stout Street, Wellington office. The café offers a 50 cent discount on hot drinks when using a reusable cup or personal mug. They soon intend to offer a reusable cup library, allowing customers to borrow if they do not have anything suitable available at time of purchase. The food packaging used in this location is also plant based and they use local suppliers wherever possible.

### **Encouraging Good Behaviour and Attunement with the natural world**

#### ***A. Do all of your offices have plants? If so, what is the ratio of plants to workers? Do you ensure that providers that look after the plants use sustainable and environmentally friendly options in their practices (for example pesticide choices)?***

MBIE does not meet the cost of providing plants at our largest premises. Plant availability varies across buildings where MBIE is a tenant along with other organisations, and where building facilities are not managed centrally. I can advise that MBIE's largest office at Stout Street, Wellington, does not contain plants.

***B. Do you have programmes for encouraging your staff to make more environmentally friendly choices outside of work?***

MBIE does not manage a centralised programme to encourage environmentally friendly choices out of work. However, we hope that the behaviours encouraged around recycling in the workplace would transfer to staff attitudes outside of work.

***C. Do you encourage your staff to be more interconnected with the natural world by hosting or promoting practices such as mindfulness, meditation, earthing or Tai Chi?***

Wellbeing is a priority and MBIE is committed to supporting positive mental health for all people. A range of resources are available, such as centralised workshops and advice and articles available via the wellbeing hub Te Puna Ora (the spring of wellbeing). MBIE supports staff-driven groups that create time and space for staff to experience mindfulness and its benefits, and micropause software is also available to promote a healthy balance of breaks across the day.

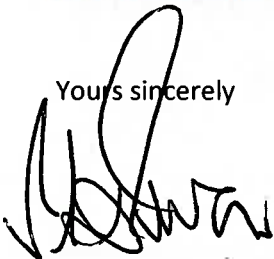
Some MBIE premises include changing and shower facilities, encouraging staff to partake in personal exercise activities either during breaks or prior/after work. Staff are also encouraged to participate in the many sports team operating across MBIE, such as a social netball team, running clubs and soccer teams.

***E. Do you take any steps to increase staff knowledge and awareness of environmental issues in general?***

MBIE does not manage a specific programme to increase staff knowledge and awareness of environmental issues in general. However, staff are engaged with our purpose to grow New Zealand for all and have access to information on the current government targets around emissions and increasing the country's climate resilience. As referenced in our answer to recycling and packaging (questions B and C), MBIE staff show an awareness and appreciation of environmental issues through making use of the environmentally friendly facilities available at office premises.

I trust you find the information helpful. 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.

Yours sincerely



Ray Di Leva  
General Manager, Property and Procurement  
Finance and Performance

## **Annex One**

---

### Commerce Committee Annual Review of MBIE 2014-15

- [www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/51SCCO\\_EVI\\_00DBSCH\\_ANR\\_66181\\_1\\_A460307/3316161535406a4f66124227b6fe6ab295e0dfad](http://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/51SCCO_EVI_00DBSCH_ANR_66181_1_A460307/3316161535406a4f66124227b6fe6ab295e0dfad) (Q97 and 98)
- [www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/51SCCO\\_EVI\\_00DBSCH\\_ANR\\_66181\\_1\\_A459950/0cdfbeb9930907a4a96ec6445b922290a0c369f9](http://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/51SCCO_EVI_00DBSCH_ANR_66181_1_A459950/0cdfbeb9930907a4a96ec6445b922290a0c369f9) (appendix 7)

### Commerce Committee Annual Review of MBIE 2015-16

- [www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/51SCCO\\_EVI\\_00DBSCH\\_ANR\\_71544\\_1\\_A541619/4363d32323aafdcc99777e84a5566d139bea6fcc](http://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/51SCCO_EVI_00DBSCH_ANR_71544_1_A541619/4363d32323aafdcc99777e84a5566d139bea6fcc) (Q92 and 93)
- [www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/51SCCO\\_EVI\\_00DBSCH\\_ANR\\_71544\\_1\\_A541620/50d8423b58a068a9179858f284e038715fa3206f](http://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/51SCCO_EVI_00DBSCH_ANR_71544_1_A541620/50d8423b58a068a9179858f284e038715fa3206f) (appendix 16)

### Commerce Committee Annual Review of MBIE 2016-17

- [www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/52SCED\\_EVI\\_75460\\_904/86defb805619553df42566207c802d65efa8b320](http://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/52SCED_EVI_75460_904/86defb805619553df42566207c802d65efa8b320) (Q92 and appendix 16)

### Commerce Committee Annual Review of MBIE 2017-18

- [www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/submissions-and-advice/document/52SCED\\_EVI\\_82455\\_1941/ministry-of-business-innovation-and-employment-responses](http://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/submissions-and-advice/document/52SCED_EVI_82455_1941/ministry-of-business-innovation-and-employment-responses) (Q96 - Q98)
- [www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/submissions-and-advice/document/52SCED\\_EVI\\_82455\\_1942/ministry-of-business-innovation-and-employment-responses](http://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/submissions-and-advice/document/52SCED_EVI_82455_1942/ministry-of-business-innovation-and-employment-responses) (appendix 19)

## **Annex Two**

---

- [www.procurement.govt.nz/procurement/principles-and-rules/government-procurement-rules/](http://www.procurement.govt.nz/procurement/principles-and-rules/government-procurement-rules/)
- [www.procurement.govt.nz/assets/procurement-property/documents/broader-outcomes/environmentally-sustainable-procurement.pdf](http://www.procurement.govt.nz/assets/procurement-property/documents/broader-outcomes/environmentally-sustainable-procurement.pdf)