Ref: DOIA 2021-1438

19 March 2021

Andrew Chen
14603-70544722@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Andrew Chen

Thank you for your email of 4 February 2021 to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

> *"a list of vendors that have provided data science services to MBIE in the last three years."*

On 19 February you responded to MBIE's request for clarification around what you meant by data science services with the following:

> *"Without being too prescriptive, I am referring to vendors that are conducting data cleaning, analysing data held by MBIE, building mathematical models, and/or developing algorithms for analytical or operational use, including through the use of statistical methods or machine learning. However, I would not want this to narrow the scope too much and vendors of associated services should be included. I'm not looking to create a lot more work for you and your team, so any finance codes that relate to consulting or contracting that has to do with data would be appropriate."*

On 4 March 2021, MBIE informed you of an extension to your request of 20 working days in line with section 15A(1)(b) of the Act.

The response to your request is below.

A list of vendors that have provided data science services to MBIE in the last three years.

None of the codes used to organise our finance systems directly relate to data science; neither do any relate to contracting or consulting that has to do with data. Therefore, I am refusing your request under section 18(f) of the OIA, as a comprehensive list of data science vendors MBIE has employed in the last three years cannot be provided without substantial collation and research.

However, below is a list of providers you might find helpful. Please note, the list should not be considered an exhaustive list of data science providers, as it is based on a manual keyword search in MBIE's Contract Management System (CMS). The search only picks up providers whose name or contract description included one of the following key words or key word phrases: data science, data cleaning, data cleansing, data analysis, modelling, mathematical modelling, statistical modelling, and machine learning.

Some providers were removed from the list after MBIE consulted with them, and they confirmed that they do not provide anything approaching data science services. That said, there may still be providers included in the list who you would not consider data science vendors.

Providers:
- Beca Ltd
- Dragonfly Limited
- KPMG
- LeoLabs
- Nicholson Consulting
- University of Canterbury.

Please note, the list above only applies to contracts from the current financial year (1 July 2020 – 3 March 2021), pulled on 3 March 2021. If you find this list helpful, please let me know, and we can carry out similar manual searches through our CMS for the previous two financial years.

You have the right to seek investigation and review of my decision by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely

Stewart McRobie
CFO Finance and Performance
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment