



20 July 2021

Lional Jones  
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Dear Lional Jones

**Official Information Act request (OIA 2021-0720)**

I refer to your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request transferred to the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department) on 11 June 2021. Your request sought the following information:

*From the start of October 2017 to today's date, how many separate investigations were carried out involving staff either employed in Minister's offices or supporting Minister's offices, and break down into:*

*A) Complaints made against Ministers versus complaints made against either staff in Minister's offices, or supporting Minister's offices*

*B) Number of staff that resigned during or after an investigation involving them*

*C) Number of staff that were otherwise dismissed or left employment or were redeployed during or after an investigation involving them*

*D) Number of complaints that resulted in a payment at the conclusion (regardless of outcome) of an investigation*

*E) As at today's date, the number of open or ongoing investigations involving staff either employed in Minister's offices or supporting Minister's offices*

*For the purpose of this OIA "staff supporting Minister's offices" shall be defined as staff employed by Parliamentary or Ministerial Services.*

**Background**

There are three types of staff who work in Ministers' offices:

- DIA-employed staff who are assigned to work in a particular Minister's office. These include: Chiefs of Staff, Senior Private Secretaries, Senior / Press Secretaries, Senior / Ministerial Advisors, and Private Secretaries - Executive Support / Administration.
- Roving staff, also employed by DIA, although not assigned to a particular Minister's office. They provide backfill cover for positions and additional resource where there are fluctuating needs.
- Portfolio Private Secretaries who are seconded to Ministers' offices by government agencies to facilitate the management of Ministers' portfolio responsibilities.

The information held by the Department relates to staff employed by Ministerial Services only. The Department is not responsible for staff employed by the Parliamentary Service. Staff who are in ministerial offices on secondment from various government agencies are not included in the information, as they remain employed by their home agency.

### **Response to your request**

Since 1 October 2017, there has been one investigation carried out involving staff employed in Ministers' offices.

As there has been a single investigation since 1 October 2017, I am refusing the breakdown of the data in parts a, b, c and d of your request under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of individuals.

As at 11 June 2021 (being the date that the request was transferred to the Department) there are no open or ongoing investigations involving employees either employed in Minister's offices or supporting Minister's offices.

At any time, the Department may be working with offices and staff (and/or unions) to collaboratively manage any issues that staff may have raised. Staff in the Department's Ministerial Services group hold regular meetings with staff from all Ministerial offices and are available to support and advise Ministerial staff on request. Part of this group's role is to provide confidential pastoral care and advice, and Ministerial staff often specifically request conversations in confidence.

If you have any concerns with the information in this response, you have a right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. Information on how to do this is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802.

Yours sincerely



**Briget Ridden**  
Acting General Manager  
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