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8 April 2022

Allan Halse  
Director  
CultureSafe NZ Ltd

Email: [fyi-request-18860-dd4e9e1f@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-18860-dd4e9e1f@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Allan

### **Official Information request – Personal Grievance and Bullying**

I refer to your request for official information dated 14 March 2022 where you requested information on the University's total cost of external lawyers in personal grievance/bullying cases for the past five years.

In accordance with the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) the University of Waikato (**University**) has given due consideration to your request and responds as follows:

Retrieval of this data set is administratively challenging for the University. For the University to address this request it would require a substantial amount of coordination and data collation within the University. There may also be some information which does not exist.

The University believes that to collate and research this information it would require the University's HR function to allocate specific resource to peruse every HR file to identify any instances of personal grievance or bullying. Given the sensitive nature of personal grievance and bullying cases it would probably not be appropriate for a junior member of the HR team to have access to this level of information so would require a senior member of the HR team to undertake this part of the exercise, thereby diverting them away from their day to day responsibilities. Arguably this could have an impact on the HR function's ability to carry out its operations. Resource from the Finance department would then need to be allocated (with input from HR) to identify whether external costs were incurred by the University and to identify the amount of the costs for each personal grievance or bullying case. This exercise would need to be undertaken for all HR files over the five-year period.

As the coordination and collation of this data set over a five-year period is an administrative challenge for the University, the University has given due consideration whether to consult with you and if it should grant an extension of the timeframe in which it is required to respond to this request.

The University has also given due consideration to whether charging for the costs of data collation and research would enable the request to be met. Due to the impact on the

University's HR function and to a lesser extent the Finance function to retrieve this information, the University considers it reasonable to charge you for the costs of the collation and research of this information. The University estimates that the number of hours it would take dedicated resource to retrieve this data would be 120 and as the University is able to charge \$76 per hour the cost to you would be circa \$9000.00. Before we proceed further with your request, please confirm your agreement to the charge. You will be required to pay the full amount up front and the University will provide details on how that payment can be made at that time.

We would also like to highlight that the University considers that some of the information requested may not exist or is not able to be ascertained in some circumstances. Please bear in mind that even if you pay the collation costs the University is only required to provide what information can be identified. Information that requires the University to apply complex skill, judgement or interpretation would not be provided as the University has no obligation to create new information.

Therefore, the University has decided to grant your request (to the extent the information exists), subject to you paying the full amount up front of the University's collation and research costs.

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



Jim Mercer  
**Chief Operating Officer**