



19 April 2023

Lance Watson

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Tēnā koe Lance Watson

On 20 February 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

*Could the following information please be provided for the last calendar year, from January to December 2022.*

- 1. How many permanent staff does the Ministry have?*
- 2. How many staff does the Ministry have on temporary contracts?*
- 3. How many staff does the Ministry have, that are on an internal secondment within the Ministry? For clarity this is excluding staff on secondments to other Ministries.*
- 4. How many staff receive a regular travel allowance? This does not include staff covering costs of irregular related work travel.*
- 5. How many staff receive a public transport allowance? This does not include staff covering costs of irregular related work travel.*
- 6. How many staff receive an accommodation allowance?*
- 7. How many staff have use of an apartment or accommodation provided by the Ministry? This is accommodation provided by the Ministry directly, not through an allowance to staff.*
- 8. How many staff receive a higher duties allowance?*
- 9. How many staff have been in receipt of a higher duties allowance for more than 18 months?*
- 10. How many jobs or roles were advertised internally only within the Ministry in the last calendar year?*

On 20 March 2023, the Ministry contacted you to advise more time was required to respond to your request. The reason for the extension was such that the consultations necessary to make a decision on your response could not be completed within the original timeframe.

For the sake of clarity, I will response to each of your requests in turn.

- 1. How many permanent staff does the Ministry have?*

As at 31 December 2022, the Ministry had 8,494.6 full time equivalent (FTE) permanent staff.

2. *How many staff does the Ministry have on temporary contracts?*

The Ministry has interpreted temporary contracts as staff on fixed-term employment agreements. As at 31 December 2022, the Ministry had 592.2 FTE fixed-term staff.

3. *How many staff does the Ministry have, that are on an internal secondment within the Ministry? For clarity this is excluding staff on secondments to other Ministries.*

As at 31 December 2022, the Ministry had 908.0 FTE staff in internal secondment positions.

This number shows only internal secondments recorded in our system. It does not include loan arrangements to cover a short-term gap. For example, covering unexpected arrangements required at short notice due to illness, injury or bereavement.

4. *How many staff receive a regular travel allowance? This does not include staff covering costs of irregular related work travel.*

Long-term secondments or relieving in excess of eight weeks duration may include travel home on a fortnightly basis, and local travel cost assistance if accommodation is outside the secondment or relieving location, so that the individual is not advantaged or disadvantaged financially. The agreement negotiated will reflect actual costs/expenses incurred.

A travel allowance does not include travel booked by the Ministry, travel paid for by an employee and reimbursed by the Ministry, or motor vehicle reimbursement whereby mutual agreement an employee uses their own vehicle for work purposes.

As at 31 December 2022, two Ministry staff were in receipt of a regular travel allowance.

5. *How many staff receive a public transport allowance? This does not include staff covering costs of irregular related work travel.*

The Ministry does not have a specific public transport allowance policy. Your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as this information does not exist, or despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

However, in some situations and under some employment agreements, a reassigned staff member (whereby the employee's new position is in the

same local area but involves additional travel costs) may receive the extra travel costs based on public transport rates for a period of one year.

6. *How many staff receive an accommodation allowance?*

The Ministry does not have a specific accommodation allowance policy for staff. Your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as this information does not exist, or despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

Generally, if a staff member is required to travel for work purposes, they will be reimbursed by the Ministry for any actual and reasonable accommodation costs incurred.

Alternatively, if a staff member opts to stay 'privately' (e.g., with friends or family), they may be provided an allowance for accommodation, meals, and incidentals up to the rate of \$63 per each 24-hour period and \$35 for each period less than 24 hours. This must not exceed 14 consecutive days

Temporary accommodation costs may be covered by the Ministry for staff relocating to a new location, when relocating due to a promotion, to meet the needs of the Ministry, or to assist in career development. The assistance provided is determined on a case-by-case basis, as agreed between the staff member and their manager.

7. *How many staff have use of an apartment or accommodation provided by the Ministry? This is accommodation provided by the Ministry directly, not through an allowance to staff.*

We have interpreted this request to be for any properties owned by the Ministry, used for the purposes of providing accommodation for staff.

The Ministry does not own any properties that are provided to staff for accommodation reasons. Your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as this information does not exist, or despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

8. *How many staff receive a higher duties allowance?*

9. *How many staff have been in receipt of a higher duties allowance for more than 18 months?*

Higher duties allowance (HDA) applies to staff who temporarily undertake the duties and responsibilities of a role in a higher pay band.

As at 31 December 2022, 607 Ministry staff were in receipt of an HDA.

Further to this, no Ministry staff who were in receipt of an HDA as at 31 December 2022, had been receiving the HDA for 18 months or longer (period starting on or before 1 July 2021).

*10. How many jobs or roles were advertised internally only within the Ministry in the last calendar year?*

During the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022, 35 roles at the Ministry were advertised internally only.

This number shows only roles listed in our system. Jobs or roles advertised outside of the system, e.g., Expressions of Interest via email or 'acting' arrangements which do not need to be advertised, are not included.

Under the Public Service Act 2020, 'acting' roles do not need to be advertised, as the role is not a vacancy and the employee 'acting' is not appointed to the role.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry's website. Your personal details will be deleted, and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact [OIA\\_Requests@msd.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding staff at the Ministry, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui



Cain McLeod  
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People**