



15 June 2023

Our reference 2223-2733

Erika Whittome

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Tēnā koe Erika

Thank you for writing to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) on 23 May 2023, to request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA):

- *What number of staff did you terminate or place on any form of " extended leave" due to your vaccination mandates around nov/Dec 2021 and Jan 2022? Please also share the total headcount as of 15 Nov 2021 and today (when you answer this OIA)*

Our key concern during the pandemic was the health and wellbeing of our staff. MBIE provided a large amount of guidance to our people to ensure they were able to make decisions to keep themselves and the people around them safe from COVID-19.

### **Staff vaccination policy**

I can advise you that no staff had their employment terminated by MBIE due to provisions in our vaccination policy, two of our staff chose to go on leave without pay, instead of working from home.

At the time our COVID-19 Vaccination Policy was in place, there was provision for staff to be dismissed if they were not able to meet the requirements outlined in the policy.

However, this was always intended to be a last resort. We considered multiple options for staff who did not choose to be vaccinated. These included:

- the preparation of a flexible working plan
- the possibility of alternative work or being redeployed into other roles
- taking special of long-term leave

I can advise you that no staff had their employment terminated by MBIE due to provisions in our vaccination policy, two of our staff chose to go on leave without pay, instead of working from home.

The headcount of MBIE at the times cited in your request are:

- November 2021: 5,662
- May 2023: 6,369

This figure includes permanent and fixed term onshore employees. It excludes contractors, casual staff, and employees on extended unpaid leave and parental leave.



Thank you again for writing to MBIE. Under section 28(3) of the OIA, you have the right to refer our response to an Ombudsman for review. You can find more about how to do this by calling 0800 802 602 or by emailing [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Diane Knowles', written in a cursive style.

Diane Knowles  
**General Manager, Workplace Transformation and Change**  
**Ngā Pou o te Taumaru**