

From: [Kate Whitwell](#)
To: [Louise Burston](#); [James Coombes](#)
Cc: [Sarah Deblock](#)
Subject: RE: OIAD-662: Consultant spend on ETS-related projects
Date: Tuesday, 23 May 2023 12:31:00 pm

Thanks Louise. That is clearer. I think we can assume ETS only on that basis and NOT emissions pricing.

The \$38million figure relates to a budget bid awarded for the market governance work programme, but in fact her request is much wider in scope than that.

Kate

From: Louise Burston <xxxxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxxx.xx>
Sent: Tuesday, May 23, 2023 12:00 PM
To: Kate Whitwell <xxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxxx.xx>; James Coombes <xxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxxx.xx>
Cc: Sarah Deblock <xxxxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxxx.xx>
Subject: RE: OIAD-662: Consultant spend on ETS-related projects

No problem – the requester’s original email is at the end of this chain.

“Consultant spend on ETS-related projects” was the title of her request, but beyond her mention of \$38m of funding for the Emissions Trading Scheme she doesn’t really provide more detail.

Would it be helpful to clarify with her whether the request relates solely to ETS work, or includes emissions pricing work more generally? Otherwise we can interpret the request as not including emissions pricing – we’ll just need to make that clear in our response.

From: Kate Whitwell <xxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxxx.xx>
Sent: Tuesday, May 23, 2023 11:32 AM
To: Louise Burston <xxxxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxxx.xx>; James Coombes <xxxxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxxx.xx>
Cc: Sarah Deblock <xxxxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxxx.xx>
Subject: RE: OIAD-662: Consultant spend on ETS-related projects

Thanks Louise,

James and I will have a chat about this and get back to you. I’ve looped in Sarah Deblock because some of her projects will be captured in this OIA too (ETS market governance).

To help us identify scope a bit better, can you please clarify the wording of the ‘ETS-related work’ that we should include? You’ve given the questions we need to answer in the email below, but I’d be interested to know the exact wording the requestor used to identify the area of policy reform they want this to focus on.

For example, we’ll need to consider whether projects that are related to emissions pricing more generally are in scope or not. I’d expect not given the wording below, but if they refer to

'emissions pricing' rather than 'ETS' then we may need to consider including the HWEN team as well.

Thanks

Kate

From: Louise Burston <xxxxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx>
Sent: Tuesday, May 23, 2023 10:38 AM
To: Kate Whitwell <xxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx>; James Coombes <xxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx>
Subject: RE: OIAD-662: Consultant spend on ETS-related projects

Morning Kate

We can absolutely extend the deadline for this, since it sounds like a lot of consultation will be needed. As this information covers two years of work, then I'd be inclined to extend by 40 days. The OIA deadline is currently 16 June, and an extra 40 days would bring this to **Monday 14 August**.

I want to minimise the amount of impact this request has on both your teams. If you can please provide me with a list of ETS-related projects that involved contractors/consultants then I can work with Procurement and Finance on Questions 2-5. I'm also happy to work with other teams in Climate for any ETS projects not covered by your teams – could you please let me know who I should reach out to?

Once all the information is in scope then I'll likely need your teams and procurement to help confirm whether any content needs to be withheld. I'll then coordinate consultation with the consultants and contractors.

Nga mihi
Louise

From: Kate Whitwell <xxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx>
Sent: Monday, May 22, 2023 6:04 PM
To: Louise Burston <xxxxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx>; James Coombes <xxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx>
Subject: RE: OIAD-662: Consultant spend on ETS-related projects

Hi Louise,

Perhaps this is just the straw that is breaking the camel for me today, but the short answer is that No I don't have an SME to take this on, and I suspect that James won't either. Not that we don't want to be transparent, because we do, but this one is big. It will require input not only from our teams (to answer the 'who/what' question), but also from procurement (to get contract dates/COI records etc) and finance (for the spend).

So I'm inclined to say can we ask for an extension right now please because we'll probably need

it. Just in my area for the past six months I can think of approximately three or four procurements that might be captured, and that's not even across all ETS-related work. We're probably talking 10-20 or more over that time? Some small, some large.

We're going to need significant help from central teams – including yours, but also more specifically within the wider Climate Group.

James – any thoughts? Do we need to discuss with Megan H and her team?

Kate

From: Louise Burston <xxxxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx>
Sent: Monday, May 22, 2023 2:52 PM
To: Kate Whitwell <xxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx>; James Coombes <xxxx.xxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx>
Subject: OIAD-662: Consultant spend on ETS-related projects

Hi both

MfE has received an OIA for information on consultant/contractor spending for ETS-related work during the past two years:

- 1. Please provide the titles of all projects relating to policy reform in the past 2 financial years (i.e. FY21/22 and 22/23) that have had an expert or policy consultant or contractor (i.e. not IT or marketing but involved in core analysis etc).*
- 2. For each project, please list the firm (or trading name) and names of the individual consultants or contractors hired for each project.*
- 3. Please provide a monthly breakdown for the period in question 1 of the spend on those consultants/contractors per individual (if held) or per firm.*
- 4. Please provide a copy of all conflict of interest (actual or perceived) disclosures made by the firm and individuals (whether upon initial hire or made during the term of the contract(s)).*
- 5. Please provide a copy of all information that sets out any conflict of interest mitigations or management plans or protocols used for any conflicts of interests disclosed.*

Could you please advise whether your teams might be able to provide SME input on this request?

Nga mihi
Louise

-----Original Message-----

From: Debbie Leota <xx@xxxxxxxx.xxx.xxx.xx>
Sent: Thursday, May 18, 2023 9:16 PM

To: OIA xxx@xxx.xxxx.xx

Subject: Official Information request - Consultant spend on ETS-related projects

MFE CYBER SECURITY WARNING

This email originated from outside our organisation. Please take extra care when clicking on any links or opening any attachments.

Dear Ministry for the Environment,

You may have seen the news in Australia - revelations that PwC Australia used confidential government information purposefully in its consulting arms to help its clients avoid future tax changes.

And today, the NZ government said it had obtained millions for various climate-related projects, including \$38 million for the Emissions Trading Scheme.

So, I'm asking a few government departments to provide information about the consultants and contractors that it hires in its work, how much it spends on them, how long they've been hired, and how conflicts of interest are disclosed and managed.

I'd like to ask for the following information (whether contained in documents, emails, reports, or a summary or extract):

1. Please provide the titles of all projects relating to policy reform in the past 2 financial years (i.e. FY21/22 and 22/23) that have had an expert or policy consultant or contractor (i.e. not IT or marketing but involved in core analysis etc).
2. For each project, please list the firm (or trading name) and names of the individual consultants or contractors hired for each project.
3. Please provide a monthly breakdown for the period in question 1 of the spend on those consultants/contractors per individual (if held) or per firm.
4. Please provide a copy of all conflict of interest (actual or perceived) disclosures made by the firm and individuals (whether upon initial hire or made during the term of the contract(s)).
5. Please provide a copy of all information that sets out any conflict of interest mitigations or management plans or protocols used for any conflicts of interests disclosed.

Thank you,

Debbie Leota