

22 November 2024

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-31631

Tony Randle

By email: fyi-request-28640-afdf5549@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Tony

Request for information 2024-257

I refer to your request for information dated 3 October 2024, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 3 October 2024. You have requested the following:

“Looking back at previous requests, I have found there is still some missing PTOM information for the Years 2018/19 and 2019/20.

Can I please have the following PTOM information:

- 1) Monthly Patronage by PTOM Unit (including rail and ferry) for the financial years 2018/19 and 2019/20.*
- 2) Monthly Ferry Fare Revenue by PTOM Unit for each financial year for the financial years 2018/19 to 2022/23 inclusive.*
- 3) Monthly Supergold Revenue by PTOM Unit (including rail and ferry) for the financial years 2018/19 and 2019/20.*
- 4) Monthly Expenditure by PTOM Unit (including rail and ferry) for the financial years 2018/19 and 2019/20.*
- 5) Monthly Expenditure at 51% FAR by PTOM Unit (including rail and ferry) as outlined in Table 5 for the financial years 2018/19 and 2019/20.*

I would also ask for the following PT patronage information:

- 6) Can I please have a copy of the monthly the total number of passenger boardings by rail line from October 2020?*

7) *Can I please have a copy of the monthly the total number of passenger boardings which began during Peak Times by rail route from October 2020?*

8) *Can I please have a copy of the monthly the total number of trips passenger boardings began during Off Peak Times by rail route from October 2020?*

9) *Can I please have a copy of the monthly the total number of passenger boardings by bus route from October 2020?*

10) *Can I please have a copy of the monthly the total number of passenger boardings which began during Peak Times by bus route from October 2020?*

11) *Can I please have a copy of the monthly the total number of passenger boardings which began during Off Peak Times by bus route from October 2020?*

12) *Can I please have a copy of the monthly the total passenger kilometres by rail route from October 2020?*

13) *Can I please have a copy of the monthly the total passenger kilometres in respect of Peak Times trips by rail route from October 2020?*

14) *Can I please have a copy of the monthly the total passenger kilometres in respect of Off Peak trips by rail route from October 2020?*

15) *Can I please have a copy of the monthly the total passenger kilometres by bus route from October 2020?*

16) *Can I please have a copy of the monthly the total passenger kilometres in respect of Peak Times trips by bus route from October 2020?*

17) *Can I please have a copy of the monthly the total passenger kilometres in respect of Off Peak trips by bus route from October 2020?"*

Greater Wellington's response follows:

On 1 November 2024, Greater Wellington notified you that the due date for response was extended by 15 working days under section 14 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act).

Please find attached (**Attachment 1**) an Excel spreadsheet containing the following information in response to parts 1 and 6 to 17 of your request:

- Part 1 is answered in the Monthly Patronage PTOM sheet

- Parts 6 to 8 are answered in the Rail boardings sheet
- Parts 9 to 11 are answered in the Bus boardings sheet
- Parts 12 to 14 are answered in the Rail kms sheet
- Parts 15 to 17 are answered in the Bus kms sheet.

For Part 2, please note that the harbour ferry services in the Region are operated under a net cost contract which is different to other public transport contracts Greater Wellington has in place. Greater Wellington does not receive the fare revenue collected by the operator of the harbour ferry services.

The financial information related to the harbour ferry contract that Greater Wellington holds (including any breakdown of fare revenue) is subject to an obligation of confidence under the current contract. Releasing the monthly break down of the harbour ferry fare revenue is likely to adversely impact the financial position of the operator in the market and undermine Greater Wellington's ability to collect similar information from the incumbent (and any future) operator.

The release of the requested information is also likely to undermine Greater Wellington's ability to carry out commercial and contractual negotiations with the incumbent and prospective operators as the existing contract for harbour ferry services comes towards the end of its current term.

Therefore, the information you have requested in relation to the breakdown of monthly ferry fare revenue for the financial years 2018/2019 to 2022/2023, is withheld under the following sections of the Act:

- Section 7(2)(b)(ii) – to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information
- Section 7(2)(c)(i) – to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied
- Section 7(2)(i) – to enable any local authority holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).

We have considered whether the public interest in the requested information outweighs Greater Wellington's need to withhold it. As a result, we do not consider that the public interest outweighs Greater Wellington's reasons for withholding it.

In a recent official information response (2024-211) you were provided with the monthly breakdown of ferry fare revenue for the financial year 2023/24. Please note this information was released in error and this was discovered in the preparation of this response. It should also be noted that the ferry fare revenue information released in our previous response was not representative of the operator's actual revenue and should not be used to express as such. This is because Greater Wellington has been using a methodology agreed with the NZ Transport Agency – Waka Kotahi under the Government's Community Connect scheme, to enable Greater Wellington to recover the revenue difference. This methodology has been the basis of the estimated fare revenue numbers for ferry since the start of scheme in July 2023.

For parts 3, 4 and 5, Greater Wellington cannot provide the information in the form requested. Providing the monthly SuperGold revenue by Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM) unit and the monthly expenditure by PTOM unit has the potential to significantly undermine Greater Wellington's ability to carry out commercial and contractual negotiations with prospective operators as the existing public transport contracts come up for renewal.

The release of this information into the public domain may prejudice price responses or diminish innovative and competitive price responses. As such, Greater Wellington does not believe it is in the public interest to release such information.

Therefore, the requested information for parts 3, 4 and 5 is withheld under section 7(2)(i) of the Act, to enable any local authority holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).

Greater Wellington considered the need to withhold the requested information against the public interest in releasing it. With respect to section 7 of the LGOIMA, it is considered the public interest does not outweigh the need to withhold the information.

I appreciate the approach taken for financial data in this LGOIMA response is a departure from the detailed information released to you in recent years for similar requests for official information. I have asked Senior Manager Strategy and Investments Tim Shackleton to contact you to discuss the matters raised in this response.

Greater Wellington is however providing aggregated totals in the excel sheet 'Expenditure Revenue,' to partially address parts 3, 4 and 5.

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Act.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where appropriate. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Samantha Gain'.

Samantha Gain

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Waka-ā-atea | Group Manager Metlink