

17 September 2012

46 Waring Taylor Street, PO Box 805
Wellington 6140, New Zealand
Phone +64 495 7200
Fax +64 4 495 7222
Website www.dia.govt.nz

Joshua Grainger
Email: fyi-request-529-14c54143@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Grainger

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST – RE GAMING MACHINES IN CHRISTCHURCH

I refer to your request under the Official Information Act 1982, received by the Department on 30 August 2012, requesting:

“the amount each licensed gaming machine in Christchurch took in 2011. If this information cannot be provided per machine, per venue would also work. I am interested in both class 4 licensed machines and machines inside the Christchurch Casino.”

We have decided to withhold the individual machine and venue level information you request, under section 6(d) of the Official Information Act. In terms of those provisions, we consider that releasing the information would be likely to endanger the safety of persons.

You will appreciate that Class 4 gambling is, at the venue level, a cash business. There are significant numbers of thefts and burglaries at venues throughout New Zealand every year. The Department does not release information in such a manner that it would enable the identification of individual venues in this context. It is considered that placing information in the public domain about the likelihood of large amounts of cash being held on a premise represents a real risk of increasing or encouraging criminal behaviour. The safety of venue staff could be put at risk. Please note that concerns of this nature do not need to be balanced against the countervailing public interest in releasing the information requested.

However, the Department has a policy of releasing aggregated, consolidated totals for verified financial data. Gaming machine statistics can be viewed or downloaded from the Department website http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Resource-material-Information-We-Provide-Gaming-Statistics?OpenDocument. This information is posted at quarterly intervals. It shows the numbers and types of societies licensed to operate approved gaming machines at approved venues on that day. It does not include any gaming machines, societies or venues that were, or, may become the subject of an amendment or new application to operate gaming machines and were therefore unlicensed on the date shown.



The information most closely linked to your request is contained in the set entitled "Gaming Machine Profits (GMP) Data. You will be able to calculate the yearly total from the information provided on the website. Please remember that it is a snapshot in time only, as it does not include any subsequent adjustments that might have been made.

The Department considers that the public interest in the release of this information can be largely satisfied with the information already publicly available.

With regard to gaming machines inside the Christchurch Casino, we are refusing your request under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act. The information you request is not held by the Department and we have no grounds for believing that the information is either—

- (i) held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation, or by a local authority; or
- (ii) connected more closely with the functions of another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation or of a local authority.

Such information is likely to be held by the Christchurch Casino.

You have the right by way of complaint under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act 1982 to an Ombudsman, to seek an investigation and review of our decisions.

Yours sincerely



Heather McShane

Manager, Operational Policy
Regulatory and Compliance Operations
Department of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua