



16 OCT 2017

Mr Bob Jones
fyi-request-6658-c0cb8467@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Jones

On 9 October 2017, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *How much alcohol the Ministry has purchased each month for the last 12 months up to and including August 2017.*
 - *Please include alcohol purchased on account by the Ministry or by way of invoices issued to the Ministry and also any and all alcohol purchased on credit cards issued to Ministry staff.*
 - *For purchases on credit cards please include for each credit card used to purchase alcohol, the position title and position level of the cardholder within the organisation ie CE, or the various tiers below the CE, who approved the purchase (position title and level).*
 - *For all purchases please include details of the reason for the purchases and how this accords with any policy the Ministry has in the purchase of alcohol with Ministry funds.*

The Ministry has mandatory financial policies which detail how all expenditure, including expense claims and credit card purchases made by staff, must be appropriate to the occasion, moderate and take into consideration the use of public funds. Generally speaking, expenditure on alcohol is regarded as a personal expense and not paid for by the Ministry. Exceptions for entertainment and events must be approved at a management level.

No payment has been made directly to an alcohol supplier in the twelve months to 31 August 2017. In order to determine whether alcohol was purchased on credit cards, or staff were reimbursed for the purchase of alcohol, Ministry staff would have to manually review in excess of 12,000 files. As such I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

Yours sincerely

David Dundon-Smith
General Manager, Ministerial and Executive Services