

13 December 2022

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OIA 28420

Personal details removed for
proactive release

I refer to your email of 29 November 2022 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

- *The total budget for your department's Christmas party/parties for 2022 and 2021. Please separate costs for each year.*
- *The number of parties that were or will be held in each year.*
- *The number of staff who attended (or are expected to attend) each year's party/parties.*
- *The location of the venue/s for each year.*
- *A breakdown of the costs by expense type for each year's party/parties, including (where applicable) but not limited to the following:*
 - *Accommodation*
 - *Catering (e.g., beverages, crockery, food, glassware)*
 - *Consultation with relevant stakeholders*
 - *Decorations (e.g., Christmas tree, lights)*
 - *Entertainment (e.g., guest speaker/s, live music)*
 - *Planning*
 - *Travel to and from the venue (e.g., bus hire, flights)*
 - *Venue*

It is the practice of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) to support staff, acknowledge and celebrate their work and achievements by way of financial assistance towards a year end function. In Head Office this has traditionally been in the form of a single event but in recent years this has not been possible due to COVID restrictions. Instead, the Ministry has provided each Division with NZD\$20 per person for attending individual functions which can only be used towards an activity or food, but not alcohol. The total budget for 2021 was NZD\$7,600 and NZD\$12,000 for 2022. As the details of each individual function are unique and specific to each division or overseas post, the Ministry does not hold that information centrally, and in accordance with section 16(1) of the OIA, we have provided this summary.

The same arrangement as above applies for the Ministry's offices in its global network. The only difference is that the Ministry does not specifically budget for such contributions as the number of staff, and therefore the amount, is quite small and the cost is expected to be managed within existing budgets.

Please note that we may publish this letter (with your personal details redacted) on the Ministry's website.

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade