

22 February 2023

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Requesters name redacted for proactive release

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proactive release
Tēnā koe

I refer to your email of 31 January 2023 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

- 1) *A list of gifts the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade gave to foreign countries' representatives in the 2022 calendar year? Can this please include a description of the gift, the estimated value, who it was given to, when, and if the gift was accepted.*
- 2) *A list of gifts Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade representatives received from foreign countries' representatives in the 2022 calendar year? Can this please include a description of the gift, the estimated value, who it was given to, when, and if the gift was accepted.*

Presentation items are a standard feature at formal diplomatic occasions and include such items as New Zealand crafts and books. Information relating to gifts is not held by calendar year. We have supplied the information you have requested by financial year, as this is the way we hold the information. In the 2021/22 financial year, \$304,456 was spent on 'presentation items'. This expenditure was incurred across all 60 of our posts, as well as our Wellington and Auckland offices. It is important to note however that this figure does not accurately represent the amount spent on gifts given in the 2021/22 financial year as posts carry a stock of presentation items rather than buying gifts specifically for each occasion.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) does not record a central list of gifts given to external organisations or individuals. Gathering this would require substantial collation and is therefore refused under section 18(f) of the OIA.

Annex 1 contains our response to your second question. The Ministry has a Code of Conduct, internal policy, and procedures in place for accepting, recording and processing gifts and hospitality. Gifts may be accepted where to decline would cause offence, but will only be retained by the individual in very limited circumstances, once proper process and approvals have been followed and obtained. Gifts accepted but not retained by the individual are displayed in the office, stored, used for charitable purposes, or shared with staff (e.g. if the gift is perishable). Staff must declare gifts (whether they are accepted or returned) if they are likely to be valued over NZ\$100, as per the Ministry's Sensitive Expenditure Policy.

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, appearing to be 'SC', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Annex 1.

A list of gifts valued at over \$100 received by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade representatives from foreign countries' representatives in the 2022 calendar year.

Recipient	Description of gift	Date received	Estimated value \$NZ	Accepted or not
New Zealand Consulate-General, Noumea, New Caledonia	Ornately carved ceremonial Kava bowl	23/03/2022	\$670	Yes
Permanent Delegate to UNESCO	Framed calligraphy in case	30/05/2022	Estimated at \$100+	Yes
Second Secretary (Pacific and Multilateral)	Kahoa made from 4 strings of Hihi shells	19/09/2022	\$120	Yes
First Secretary (NZ Mission to the European Union)	Business class return flights from Brussels to South Africa	27/09/2022	\$4,456	No
Divisional Manager Protocol	A silk Canali tie	7/11/2022	\$250	Yes
Pacific Polynesia and French Pacific Divisional Manager	A customary Kanak weapon	8/12/2022	\$750	Yes
Deputy Secretary, Trade and Economic Group	Christmas hamper of edible goods	20/12/2022	Estimated at \$100+	Yes
Divisional Manager, Protocol	Pack of 3 Cuban cigars	28/12/2022	\$192	Yes