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Alan Thompson

By email: fyi-request-13422-3b95f266@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Thompson

Information Request – Establishment of the Cavalli Brigade

I refer to your request for official information of 30 July 2020 asking for information about the building of new station for the Cavalli Brigade that was discussed by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon Tracey Martin, in a Question Time session in Parliament on 23 July 2020.

In accordance with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), I respond to each of your specific questions below:

1. *The current establishment of the Cavalli Brigade (presumably this is the Cavalli Rural Fire Force) including:*

Complement of Officers and Firefighters:

- 1 x Chief Fire Officer
- 1 x Deputy Chief Fire Officer
- 10 x Firefighters
- 1 x Brigade Support

Number of and configuration/purpose of their vehicles:

- 1 x 1988 Mercedes 917 4x4 double cab appliance.

2. *The number of turn outs attended by the Cavalli Brigade within their own designated turn out area (by incident type) for the years 2017/2018, 2018/2019, 2019/2020?*

(See overleaf).

Incidents	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
Structure Fire			2	2
Vegetation Fire	2	2	4	8
Other Fire	1	5	3	9
Medical	1		1	2
Special Service Calls		1		1
Assist Public		1		1
Vehicle Accident			2	2
False Alarm	1	2		3
Total	5	11	12	28

3. *The number of turn out of the Cavalli Brigade to incidents outside of their own designated area (by incident type) in the years 2017/2018, 2018/2019, 2019/2020.*

Incidents	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
Vegetation Fire	1	1	10	12
Other Fire			1	1
Total	1	1	11	13

To put the figures in the responses to questions 2 and 3 in context, the Cavalli Brigade was formerly a voluntary rural fire force established by the Far North District Council in its capacity as a rural fire authority. Following the creation of Fire and Emergency, the Brigade's role and capability has gradually been expanded.

The Brigade was originally regarded as a unit that specialised in wildfire responses. Other types of incidents in the locality were frequently responded to by other nearby brigades (albeit with longer response travel times). In February 2018, Fire and Emergency created a new first response area for the Brigade, comprising two emergency service zones: Cavalli Mainland and Cavalli Islands. The Brigade was subsequently added to predetermined response plans for structure fires (May 2018) and medical co-response incidents (April 2020) within the first response area.

The Brigade's capability and capacity is being appropriately sized to better reflect the risk profile of the community and to enable the appropriate delivery of designated services in accordance with Fire and Emergency's functions under sections 11 and 12 of the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017.

The Brigade is consequently now responsive to a broader range of emergency incidents affecting the local community and its activity is increasing. However, its operations are currently inhibited by the lack of appropriate station facilities and the need to store its appliance in a different location from the balance of its equipment.

4. *A copy of the Business Case (including the associated planning and risk analysis modelling) that was considered in determining the requirements for retaining the Cavalli Brigade and the building of a new station for them.*

Fire and Emergency does not hold a standalone document labelled as a 'business case' in relation to the retention of the Cavalli Brigade or the construction of a fire station for it. Technically, it is necessary to decline this aspect of your request under section 18(e) of the OIA, on the basis that the document you have requested does not specifically exist.

However – as your query suggests – Fire and Emergency's decision to invest in a new station for the Cavalli Brigade is based on analysis by Fire and Emergency's Planning and Performance Team in the Te Hiku Region, including consideration of the Brigade's capability in the context of the risks arising in the remote Cavalli community. A copy of the Planning and Performance Team's relevant report, dated 17 June 2020, is *attached*. Please note that the data presented in this report relates to periods from 1 June to 31 May, rather than the traditional financial year period of 1 July to 30 June. The figures consequently differ slightly from those set out in response to your second and third questions above, which relate to traditional financial years.

The Planning and Performance Team's analysis was considered in two subsequent internal memoranda that recommended the construction of the new fire station for the Cavalli Brigade. A copy of each memorandum is *attached*.

Regulatory consents for a new station were also obtained sometime previously: the Far North District Council (FNDC) issued a resource consent on 18 April 2019 and building consent on 1 October 2019. These consents were obtained to facilitate construction of the new station at some future time, if funding was to be approved. Copies of the Far North District Council decision documents for the resource and building consents are also *attached*.

Some information has been withheld from the *attached* documents under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of individuals.

5. *If not included in the Business Case, a breakdown of the budget for the building of a new station for the Cavalli Brigade.*

The contract for the construction of the new station will be awarded through a competitive tender process. Procurement of a main contractor for this project has yet to be completed. We anticipate that a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be posted on the Government Electronic Tendering Service (GETS) in September 2020.

Consequently, in order not to compromise the RFP process, any detail on the estimated construction cost and total project budget for this project is withheld in accordance with section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA, on the basis that doing so is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely to unreasonably prejudice Fire and Emergency's commercial position and that of participants in the tender process. However, as a more general indication, I confirm that the government has provided total project funding of up to \$1.7M as part of the Infrastructure Reference Group (IRG) bid process.

I trust this information is helpful to you.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman on the information refused and withheld. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Raewyn Bleakley
Deputy Chief Executive, Office of the Chief Executive

Encl.

