



14 October 2020

John
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Tēnā koe John

Thank you for your request of 16 September 2020 to the Ministry of Education for the following information:

- *I request a copy of any training materials used by the Ministry of Education to deliver Machinery of Government training seminars.*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

The Ministry had offered a one-day face to face Machinery of Government training workshop delivered by an external provider for over five years. While the workshop is targeted at staff who are new to the Public Service and/or the Ministry of Education, existing staff are also encouraged to attend to ensure their knowledge in this area is sufficient and current.

A Request for Proposal to procure a provider to deliver this training was published late in 2019 when the contract for the incumbent provider expired.

A new provider has been procured and is about to commence delivery of a pilot workshop in October of this year. The course content for this workshop is relatively fixed and there is limited room for variation regardless of the provider. However, providers do make amendments to training material as required e.g. in the event of a change of government or legislation.

The course aims to bring participants up to speed with how the education sector works within government. It concentrates on the big picture of how governments are formed and how ministers make decisions. It works through how laws are passed and makes sense of processes and conventions including Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a key part of our constitutional arrangements. Participants have the chance to understand how they, as public servants, should act and how the sector is structured. This includes accountability mechanisms and responsibilities of all public servants in their daily role.

Dates for approximately ten proposed workshops are agreed upon with the provider at the beginning of the calendar year. However, the workshop is only run when a minimum number of participants enrol on each workshop. The majority of these workshops have predominantly been held in our National Office in Wellington and an increased effort will now also be made to run regional workshops more frequently or as required for larger groups. As the recent RFP process was still active during the Covid-19 lockdown, this provided an opportunity to prepare for a similar situation in the future and the preferred respondents were asked to include a virtual (or contactless) offering. While it is not planned to use this option at the present time, we are now able to revert to a virtual offering with ease should the need arise.

After considering your request we are withholding the detailed training material under section 9(2)(k) of the Act as release of the training provider's intellectual property could be used for improper gain or improper advantage.

In addition to the training that is contracted to an external provider, a Ministry staff member runs short in-house workshops of one to two hours in National Office to provide an overview for specific aspects of the government process when requested by a team or business unit. This material covers: New Zealand's Westminster system; Te Tiriti o Waitangi; the process by which legislation is passed; the methods by which Ministers and public sector agencies are held to account – including correspondence, Official Information Act requests, parliamentary questions and the Estimates and Annual Review processes; and the mechanisms available to public sector agencies to communicate with Ministers.

From time to time other Ministry staff with expertise in specific aspects of the machinery of government will facilitate one off, bespoke presentations for other staff on a range of matters including: the annual Budget process; General Election guidance; responding to Official Information Act requests; and select committee processes.

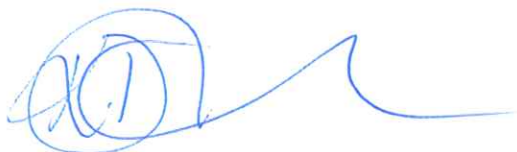
The Ministry also provides a standalone 30-minute online eLearning module which gives staff an overview of New Zealand's parliamentary system, an understanding of the Ministry's role in the public sector and how their role within the Ministry fits into the picture. This module has content that includes videos, readings, opportunity for reflection and quiz questions to test knowledge.

This module is recommended to staff who enquire about attending an external workshop. It is also a useful review resource for staff who wish to refresh their knowledge, noting that some of the material is due to be updated following recent changes to guidelines issued by the State Services Commission, and has been provided to you in as **Appendix A**.

The names and images of former Ministry staff members have been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act for their own personal privacy.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'K' followed by a long horizontal stroke that curves upwards at the end.

Karen Dawson
General Manager Business Improvement and Support
Business Enablement and Support