

17 February 2021

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OIA 27235

Tēnā koe Katie

I refer to your email of 19 January 2021 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

"I would like to request the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), in relation to staff resourcing dedicated to the response of OIA requests, ministerials, and Parliamentary Questions (PQs).

OIAs

1. What is the total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff in your agency tasked with responding to OIA requests?

To clarify, I mean the figure relating to staff where one of their core responsibilities is to respond to, coordinate, administrate, review, assess, advise upon, manage and/or in any way handle OIA requests. This figure should include team leaders or managers. I do not mean every subject matter expert in an agency who may provide the substantive information used in an OIA response.

2. Could you please break down the figure requested in Question 1 according to role title and number of FTE staff under each role title?

Suggested template:

Number of Staff Dedicated to OIA Responses
ROLE A ROLE B ROLE C ROLE ETC FTE Staff

3. If not already outlined in your answer to Question 2, could you please confirm whether your agency has a staff member devoted to administering OIA requests (separate from responding/collating/reviewing information)?

4. Could you please confirm the name of the information/workflow management system in place to help coordinate and allocate OIA requests to staff for response, if one is used?

Ministerials

5. What is the total number of FTE staff in your agency tasked with responding to ministerials?

To clarify, I mean the figure relating to staff where one of their core responsibilities is to respond to, coordinate, administrate, review, assess, advise upon, manage and/or in any way handle ministerials. This should include team leaders or managers. I do not mean every subject matter expert in an agency who may provide the substantive information used in a ministerial response.

6. Could you please break down the figure requested in Question 5 according to role title and number of FTE staff under each role title?

Suggested template:

Number of Staff Dedicated to Ministerials
ROLE A ROLE B ROLE C ROLE ETC FTE Staff

7. If not already outlined in your answer to Question 6, could you please confirm whether your agency has a staff member devoted to administering ministerials (separate from responding/collating/reviewing information)?

8. Could you please confirm the name of the information/workflow management system in place to help coordinate and allocate ministerial cases to staff for response, if one is used?

PQs

9. The total number of FTE staff in your agency tasked with responding to PQs?

To clarify, I mean the figure relating to staff where one of their core responsibilities is to respond to, coordinate, administrate, review, assess, advise upon, manage and/or in any way handle PQs. This should include team leaders or managers. I do not mean every subject matter expert in an agency who may provide the substantive information used in a PQ response.

10. Could you please break down the figure requested in Question 9 according to role title and number of FTE staff under each role title?

Suggested template:

Number of Staff Dedicated to PQs
ROLE A ROLE B ROLE C ROLE ETC FTE Staff

11. If not already outlined in your answer to Question 10, could you please confirm whether your agency has a staff member devoted to administering PQs (separate from responding/collating/reviewing information)?

12. Could you please confirm the name of the information/workflow management system in place to help coordinate and allocate PQs to staff for response, if one is used?

By 'administering' in Questions 3, 7 and 11, this could include logging, recording, saving, assigning cases, etc.

Please note, I understand that there will likely be some overlap in the figures for each of the three data points sought (OIAs vs ministerials vs PQs). Any contextual comments are therefore welcome."

Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), the Ministerial Services team in the Executive Services Division (ESD) is responsible for recording, coordinating and providing expert advice and support to the subject matter experts within the wider organisation. The team manages OIA requests, Ministerial correspondence, and Parliamentary Questions. The team's other responsibilities include the proactive release of Cabinet information, managing investigations by the Office of the Ombudsman, supporting Minister's offices, and engaging with select committees.

The Ministerial Services team consists of 1 Unit Manager, 5 Advisers (4 Senior Advisers, 1 Adviser), and 2 Ministerial Coordinators. All roles are full-time employees. The team reports to the ESD Divisional Manager.

The Ministerial Services team uses a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to manage workflows for OIA requests and Ombudsman Act investigations. A SharePoint database is used to track Ministerial correspondence and Parliamentary Questions.

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

You have the right under section 28(3) of the OIA to seek a review of this response by the Ombudsman.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Julie-Anne Lee', with a horizontal line underneath.

Julie-Anne Lee
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade