



23 July 2014

c67196

Elliot Crawford  
[fyi-request-1755-0bee31a1@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-1755-0bee31a1@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Elliot

Thank you for your email of 22 June 2014, requesting information about staff members who have been convicted of drink driving. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

The Department demands a high standard of conduct from all employees, and staff are expected to role model positive law-abiding behaviour. A significant emphasis is placed on these aspects throughout the recruitment and selection processes. A new pre-employment screening procedure has been introduced to support the high standards of conduct and integrity we expect from our staff.

Additionally, we provide extensive training and development for our frontline staff, to ensure they are able to meet the demands placed on them. We have recently implemented a number of measures to strengthen integrity and ensure that it is embedded in the culture of our workplace. This series of initiatives is set out below:

- Increased pre-employment checks, including integrity questions and conflict of interest questionnaires.
- Credit checking for staff, who in their roles will have significant financial responsibility.
- Establishment of an Integrity Committee and the inclusion of an integrity focus into all Department risk management frameworks.
- Revision of the employee Code of Conduct.
- Resources for management teams to consider integrity examples and issues on a regular basis.
- Launching the 0800 Integrity Line for staff to get confidential advice, support or report concerns of wrongdoing.
- Drug testing for staff from 1 July 2013

The overwhelming majority of our staff fulfill their duties with integrity and commitment, in what is often a pressured and challenging environment. Any large organisation may encounter a few staff who cannot maintain the high standards set by the majority, and when staff don't meet the standards required of them we take the appropriate action regarding the employee involved.

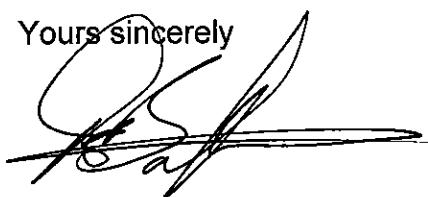
Our Code of Conduct states that all staff must comply with the law at all times, and advise their manager of any criminal charge laid against them under any law, statute or regulation. When we become aware that a staff member has been convicted of drink driving we may initiate an employment investigation; if the staff member is found to have breached the Code of Conduct they can receive a warning, suspension or they may be dismissed.

You have requested the number of staff who were allowed to keep their jobs after being convicted of drink driving over the past ten years. These details are not held on our centrally collated electronic records, and we would be required to initiate a project to extract the data from all staff files that have been created over the last decade. Therefore, this part of your request is declined under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information requested is not held by the Department. Please note that the Ombudsman recently ruled that information is not considered to be held by an agency in instances where a request necessitates research or analysis of source data in order to generate fresh information in a form different from that in which the base data is held.

Staff wellbeing is of paramount importance to the Department. As a result, we provide services to support staff when they are struggling with personal issues such as alcohol addiction. We engage an Employee Assistance Programme provider to deliver impartial counselling. These sessions provide practical assistance to help staff manage any personal or work-related issues that may impact on their ability to perform well at work, or affect their overall wellbeing. Staff can engage in sessions at their own discretion, and we strongly promote the use of this service.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. As you may be aware, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review this response. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Buffery', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Terry Buffery  
Deputy Chief Executive (Acting)  
Corporate Services