

20 October 2014

Mr Ross Browne  
[Fyi-request-1931-3412ebd1@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:Fyi-request-1931-3412ebd1@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Mr Browne

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 20 August 2014. You requested the following information:

**1. Police Air Support Unit "Eagle"**

*1.1 How many sworn and non-sworn staff have been assigned to the Police Air Support Unit for each of the last financial years?*

The Auckland Air Support Unit consist of 8 sworn staff (Constabulary staff.)

*1.2 For each of the last three financial years what were the staff costs of the Air Support Unit?*

In relation to individual breakdown of costs relating to the Air Support unit this information is both operationally and commercially sensitive. Therefore the information requested is refused pursuant to Section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act 1982.

However, the total operational costing for the last three years can be provided.

The total expenditure for the Eagle for the last three financial years, including fuel, maintenance, personnel and lease) is as follows:

2010/2011	\$3,056,882
2011/2012	\$3,342,512
2012/2013	\$3,211,789

*1.3 For each of the last three financial years what were the non staff costs of the Air Support Unit.*

I refer you to the answer to question 1.2.

*1.4 For each of the last three financial years how many flight hours were flown by the Air Support Unit for operational purposes.*

The Eagle fiscal year-end hours from 1 July to 30 June are shown below:

2010/2011	1779.3 hours
2011/2012	1801.3 hours
2012/2013	1800.7 hours

*1.5 For each of the last three financial years how many flight hours were flown by the Air Support Unit for training purposes.*

Less than three hours on average per annum for the last three financial years.

## **2. Contracted helicopter support for Districts**

*2.1 Listed by district, how many non-military helicopter flight hours were contracted for each of the last 3 financial years, for the purpose of search and rescue?*

The number of hours for the Auckland Districts for the last three financial years were:

2010/2011	34.4 hours
2011/2012	51.4 hours
2012/2013	39.7 hours

The other Police districts do not record this information in an easily retrievable manner. Therefore this information is withheld pursuant to Section 18(f) of the Official Information Act 1982 as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

*2.2 Listed by district, what was the cost of non-military helicopter flight hours were contracted for each of the last 3 financial years, for the purpose of search and rescue?*

Metro Districts for last three financial years were:

2010/2011	\$103,310
2011/2012	\$154,290
2012/2013	\$119,100

The other Police districts do not record this information in an easily retrievable manner. Therefore this information is withheld pursuant to Section 18(f) of the Official Information Act 1982 as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

*2.3 Listed by district, how many non-military helicopter flight hours were contracted for each of the last 3 financial years, for the purpose of supporting Armed Offender Squads?*

The Metro District function is carried out by Eagle as business as usual and is not recorded. The other Police districts do not record this information in an easily retrievable manner. Therefore this information is withheld pursuant to Section 18(f) of the Official Information Act 1982 as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

*2.4 Listed by district, what were the cost of non-military helicopter flight hours contracted for each of the last 3 financial years, for the purpose of supporting Armed Offender Squads.*

The Metro District function is carried out by Eagle as business as usual and is not recorded. The other Police districts do not record this information in an easily retrievable manner. Therefore this information is withheld pursuant to Section 18(f) of the Official Information Act 1982 as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

*2.5 Listed by district, how many non-military helicopter flights were contracted for each of the last 3 financial years, for purposes other than search and rescue and Armed Offender Squads?*

The information requested is refused pursuant to section 6(c) of the Official Information Act 1982 as the making available of the information is likely to prejudice the maintenance of the law including the prevention, investigation and detection of offences and the right to a fair trial.

*2.6 Listed by district, what were the cost of non-military helicopter flight hours contracted for each of the last 3 financial years, for the purposed other than search and rescue and Armed Offender Squads?*

This information is withheld pursuant to Section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act 1982 as the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is subject of the information.

### **3. Helicopter support studies**

*3.1 What studies have been undertaken to explore Police's future air support needs in the last 5 years?*

None.

*3.2 What submissions have Police made to other government agencies on air support Police may request from them in the last 5 years?*

None.

## **Eagle's uses**

The primary use of the aircraft is as an airborne observation platform. From their vantage point in the sky the crew are able to readily coordinate the operations of ground units. This is particularly valuable where persons of interest are still present at an incident, either on foot or in vehicles. Once the aircrew have visual contact with these people, or targets, they are able to manoeuvre the ground units into position to best deal with the incident, or make an arrest.

A crew of three allows the pilot to concentrate solely on flight safety, flying the aircraft while maintaining separation from other air traffic, while the observers concentrate on the action below.

You have the right to complain to the Ombudsman in writing to seek an investigation and review of my decision if you are not satisfied with the way I have responded to your request.

Yours sincerely



Mike Rusbatch  
Assistant Commissioner Response and Operations