



26 May 2023

Ref 2223-2474

Shane Gibson

fyi-request-22629-2f097c4b@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Shane

Thank you for writing to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) on 28 April 2023, to request the following, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA):

an extract of the annual amount spent with all suppliers for the 2021/2022 financial year.

I would like this data in an open format, csv or json formats would be suitable.

I would like the following details provided:

- Supplier Name
- Suppliers NZBN number (if available)
- Total Amount Spent

On 9 May 2023, you wrote to MBIE again, and asked for the information to be provided to you in GST exclusive amounts.

Regrettably, I am refusing your request under section 18(f) of the OIA, due to the substantial collation required to provide a response. For your reference, we have defined 'collation' as being **the cumulative body of work required to retrieve specified records and incorporate them into a finalised document form whereby release decisions can then be made**. In short, 'collation' is bringing a response package together.

Our decision to refuse is based on the following reasons:

- MBIE is a very large organisation, and for the time period of your request, we paid over 40,000 invoices to around 3,500 payees. Using a definition of 'supplier' to mean 'companies and organisations MBIE receives goods and services from', we would need to check records to confirm which payees and invoices meet this definition and can thereby be treated as in scope of your request. Some payees on our system would not be in scope, as they relate to MBIE staffing or reimbursements for board members.
- It is probable that some of the records will be duplicates, including credit notes received after payment and these would also need to be manually removed.
- The task of checking these records can only be undertaken manually and would need to be completed by our Finance team as this task requires specific professional knowledge and expertise. On the assumption each supplier record takes five minutes to check, this manual check would still take a single staff member dedicated to only this task just over **seven weeks** to complete¹.
- On top of this figure, we would need to corroborate information with the MBIE business units which undertook the original purchases, to confirm specific details in the source records in our finance system.
- For context, finance system is TechnologyOne – CiAnywhere. In May 2022, MBIE migrated from TechnologyOne – Ci environment to TechnologyOne – CiAnywhere. This adds to the complexity and effort that would be required to respond to your request.

¹ 3,500 suppliers/ 12 checked per hour = 291 hours; 291 hours /40 hours per week = 7.26 weeks. This figure does not account for personal leave or statutory holidays.

Separate from the considerations of the use of s18(f) of the OIA, we would also need to undertake a number of consultations to ensure the correct application of the grounds in sections 6 and 9(2) of the OIA, to ensure that the release of this information does not prejudice:

- the commercial interests of certain suppliers, where the release of their name and a total spend is specific enough to prejudice their commercial interests;
- MBIE's ability to carry out market tenders for some products and services, where the release of spending figures would thwart our ability to achieve the best market price; and
- MBIE's ability to carry out any of its regulatory or enforcement functions.

For these reasons, I do not believe that the remedies in section 18A of the OIA, namely charging for this information, or extending the time frame for a response would allow your response to be granted, due to the overall size of the data set and the time it would take to process it for release.

I am sorry that we are unable to respond to your request in this instance. You may wish to lodge a new request with MBIE, which you can do by emailing OIA@mbie.govt.nz. If you do, we recommend that you:

- identify a specific supplier, service, or a likely cost category; and
- consider a shorter time span that your request covers.

Thank you again for writing to MBIE. Under section 28(3) of the OIA, you have the right to refer our response to an Ombudsman for review. You can find more information about how to do this by emailing info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'Paul Helm', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Paul Helm
Chief Financial Officer
Finance and Performance