



OIA24-0234

22 August 2024

Allan Walker
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Dear Allan Walker

Thank you for your email of 9 April 2024, requesting information relating to Tier 3 roles within the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

MPI has changed significantly in recent years to better support the primary sector's significant growth, with export revenue increasing about 50 percent since 2016 to \$57.4 billion. The sector continues to contribute significantly to New Zealand's economy as our largest export earner.

In 2018 and 2019 MPI established focused business units, each offering specialised services and requiring strengthened leadership and expertise. These business units are sector and customer facing with a focus on providing help for complex challenges. Those five core business units are:

- Biosecurity New Zealand
- New Zealand Food Safety
- Fisheries New Zealand
- Te Uru Rākau - New Zealand Forest Service
- Agriculture and Investment Service.

These changes have also enabled MPI to help the sector overcome a number of significant challenges such as large-scale biosecurity responses (*Mycoplasma bovis/fruit flies*) and adverse events (Cyclone Gabrielle and COVID-19).

We have also supported the sector on a number of significant work programmes to increase the sector's success such as:

- increasing environmental sustainability (supporting catchment groups and different farming practices)
- helping establish new trade deals (EU and UK)
- improving fisheries management (greater protections and the introduction of cameras on commercial fishing boats)
- adapting to climate change (developing new tools and practices to reduce emissions).

All of this work requires co-ordination with the many leaders and experts from across the primary sector, such as sector groups, New Zealand's biggest companies, community organisations, non-government organisations, overseas counterparts, and Māori agribusinesses, who expect a high degree of knowledge and experience.

As of 1 July 2019, there were 42 Tier three roles, compared to 60 roles as of 1 July 2024. As part of MPI's recent efficiency programme, the number of directors has reduced from 76 in 2023 to 60 as at 1 July 2024, which is a 21 percent decrease.

You requested:

1: Can you please specify the number of Tier 3 roles within the Ministry as at 1 July 2019 and compare this to the number on 1 July 2023.

As part of the Budget 2024/25 programme, MPI was asked by the Government to find savings of 7.5 percent per annum starting from the financial year starting 1 July 2024.

The total number of disestablished positions across MPI is slightly higher than the original proposal at 391 compared with 384 in March.

Importantly, MPI has not made any reductions to frontline services and statutory roles, such as veterinarians, animal welfare, fishery and food compliance officers, or biosecurity teams at the border. MPI has reduced the impact on affected staff through holding vacancies, offering early redundancy, and retaining additional roles in some business units.

As noted above, there were 42 Tier three roles as of 1 July 2019, 76 Tier three roles as of 1 July 2023 and 60 as of 1 July 2024. The number of directors has reduced from 76 in 2023, to 60 in 2024, which is a 21 percent decrease.

2: Can you please outline the job title of any Tier 3 roles with less than 30 staff reporting to them or less than 30 in their span of control. Alongside these roles can you please specify if the position was established after 1 July 2019.

Please find attached as Appendix One the information requested, which provides you with the number tier three roles at 1 July 2019, 1 July 2023 and 1 July 2024, with job title, and whether the role was established after 2019.

Please note that all Directors have less than 30 direct reports. For the purposes of this response a direct report is an individual who reports directly to a person in a leadership role. We note that it would be inappropriate for a Tier three role to have more than 30 direct reports. This would impact the ability for individuals to receive required direction and support while also compromising the leader's ability to fulfil their own responsibilities and everyday functions.

Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with the Ministry for Primary Industries at Official.InformationAct@mpi.govt.nz. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143 or at info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely



Kaye Ryan
Director, People and Capability