

Jasper Brownley
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10 October 2024

Dear Jasper,

OIA 24-25-16: Wellington Office Renovation Costs

Thank you for your email of 21 August 2024 to New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE), making a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). You requested the following information:

According to recent select committee answers NZTE has decreased its tax-payer funded property costs in the WLG office.

Please provide clarity on this cost-saving:

Lease Costs

- 1a. Prior to moving from 3 floors to 2 floors of the Majestic Center, what was the annual lease costs per floor?*
- 1b. What were the annual contributions from Walking NZ and Callaghan and any other agencies that might have shared the space?*
- 1c. What is the current annual lease cost after reducing floors from three to two?*

Renovation Costs

- 2a. When you moved from 3 floors to 2, what were the total renovation costs as a result of that move (including design and engineering costs, redecorating, furniture, equipment, tradespeople etc)? Please ensure any new office furniture and all consultation costs associated with architects/designers are clearly stated.*
- 2b. Were Wellington based employees consulted during the renovation process? Provide documented internal consultation feedback i.e., positive/negative comments about the suggested renovations including changes as a result of this feedback.*
- 2c. Provide the business case for the renovation.*
- 2d. Provide the board paper if required for any financial signing authority.*
- 2e. Please provide the office floor plans both before and after the renovations.*

Occupancy

- 3a. How many FTE staff are permanently based in the Wellington office?*
- 3b. How many desks do you have to accommodate these FTEs in the Wellington office?*
- 3c. What is the current requirement for employee days for working from the office vs working from home each week?*

Renovations in General

- 4a. Are there any other NZTE offices and/or event spaces in NZ or globally - currently being considered for renovation?*

Answers to your questions are as follows

1a. Annual lease costs per floor in 2022 (prior to moving NZTE Wellington office to two floors) were \$467,791 (total lease cost divided by three).

1b. Callaghan Innovation and Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa's contributions for 2023 were \$485,893.

1c. The current annual lease cost is \$1,511,279 (as taken from NZTE Estimates Answers 2024/25). This is the total cost for all three floors. NZTE has co-location agreements with Callaghan Innovation and Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa under which these organisations pay rent on one floor. Subtracting their contributions NZTE's current annual lease cost is \$1,009,059.

2a. Total renovation costs were \$1,400,671. Please see attached as Appendix One a breakdown of these costs.

2b. Yes, a cross-functional team was established during the design phase to ensure that NZTE employees' feedback was inputted into the design and consultation was undertaken. Please see attached as Appendix Two the Wellington Office Refit Feedback- December 2022 summary pack. This pack is released subject to information being withheld under section 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of NZTE employees, and section 6(d), to protect the safety of NZTE employees, of the Official Information Act 1982.

Following the conclusion of the refit project, Wellington based employees completed a survey which noted the following:

- 42% of employees in the Wellington office responded to the survey
- When asked "*How good a job did we do of the consultation and communications pre and during the fit out*" the average rating was 9.39 out of 10
- When asked "*How does the office meet your needs*" the average rating was 9.05 out of 10.
- When asked what most people enjoyed about the office renovation, responses were grouped into three categories: range/variety of spaces, meeting rooms and zones.
- Areas for ongoing improvement were grouped into the following categories: space, technology, people, zones, and team specific issues.
- In response to this feedback, the following actions were implemented: More personalisation in the office fitout (less clinical), improved lighting, creating a larger communal space and improved kitchen safety. Zone flexibility was also acknowledged, and some zones were merged. Demand for quiet desks were not as high as originally anticipated and so the number of these were reduced.

2c. Please refer to the Board Paper referenced in question 2(d) which includes a business case.

2d. Please see the Board Paper for the Wellington Office Renovation attached as Appendix Three subject to information being withheld under section 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of NZTE employees, and section 6(d), to protect the safety of NZTE employees, of the Official Information Act 1982.

2e. NZTE is withholding this information under section 6(d) of the Official Information Act 1982, as the use of this information may endanger the safety of NZTE employees.

3a. There are 91.13 FTEs in the Wellington office.

3b. There are 96 workstations.

3c. NZTE supports flexible working. Flexibility must work for NZTE and our customers, work for the team, and work for the employee. Our approach requires people to be in the office or with customers or key external stakeholders at least three days a week. This will be reviewed as guidance from government is updated.

4a. There are renovation projects underway at New Zealand Central¹ and the Vancouver office. There are proposed projects being considered for the Los Angeles and Auckland offices.

¹ New Zealand Central operates under the New Zealand Consulate General in Shanghai. It is a professional business and events centre for New Zealand companies doing business in China.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at: www.ombudsman.parliament.govt.nz or freephone: 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Melissa Trochon', written in a cursive style.

Melissa Trochon
Director – Board & Ministerial