

Office of Hon Nicola Willis

Minister of Finance
Minister for the Public Service
Minister for Social Investment
Associate Minister of Climate Change



11 NOV 2024

Jacob

fyi-request-28492-98545e8d@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Jacob

Official Information Request Reference MOIA 2024-0272

I refer to your official information request dated 23 September 2024 for:

Please provide all communications between yourself and your ministerial advisors and press secretaries from 16 September 2024 and 23 September 2024 (inclusive).

Please provide recollections of any meetings held between 16 September 2024 and 23 September 2024 (inclusive) that discuss public servants working from home.

Please provide any communications between yourself and your office staff and Treasury officials containing the phrase "working from home" or "WFH" between 16 September 2024 and 23 September 2024. If this part of the request proves difficult, I am happy for this to be refined to communications between the private secretaries in your office that hold the portfolio responsibility for Treasury & the PSC and their respective agencies containing those two phrases

Information does not exist

I am refusing part one of your request under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) on the grounds that the documents alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

Information being released

In regard to part two of your request, I discussed matters relating to hybrid working in the New Zealand Public Service with officials from the Public Service Commission (the Commission) at meetings held on the 18th and the 23rd of September 2024. Those who attended the meetings included the Acting Public Service Commissioner, the Deputy Public Service Commissioner and Deputy Chief Executives from the Commission and my Senior Ministerial Advisor and Public Service Private Secretary. My recollection of discussions at these meetings are outlined in the advice provided by the Commission mentioned later in my response.

I have decided to release the document listed in the table below, subject to information being withheld under section 9(2)(k) of the OIA in order to prevent the disclosure of information for improper gain or improper advantage. Direct dial phone numbers of officials have been redacted under section 9(2)(k) in order to reduce the possibility of staff being exposed to phishing, social engineering and other scams. This is because information released under the OIA may end up in the public domain, for example, on websites including Treasury's website.

Item	Date	Document Description	Decision
1	23 September 2024	Email: Reply to your request	Released in part

There are also additional documents within scope of part three of your request that I have decided to withhold in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the OIA.

Information publicly available

The following information is also covered by your request and is publicly available on the Commission's website at the link provided in the table below.

Item	Date	Document Description	Website Address
2	21 August 2024	REPORT - Hybrid working in the New Zealand Public Service	https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/assets/DirectoryFile/Report-Hybrid-Working-in-the-New-Zealand-Public-Service.pdf
3	17 September 2024	REPORT – Hybrid Working – Next Steps	https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/assets/DirectoryFile/Report-Hybrid-Working-Next-Steps.pdf

Accordingly, I have refused your request for the documents listed in the above table under section 18(d) of the OIA – the information requested is or will soon be publicly available. Some relevant information has been removed from documents listed in the above table and should continue to be withheld under the OIA, on the grounds described in the documents.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact Misty Mossman at Misty.Mossman@parliament.govt.nz

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Hon Nicola Willis
Minister of Finance
Minister for the Public Service

From: [Andrew Rutledge \[TSY\]](#)
To: [^Parliament: Simon McLoughlin](#)
Subject: reply to your request
Date: Monday, 23 September 2024 11:48:00 am
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

[IN-CONFIDENCE]

Hi Simon,

Further to your request, please see below some points for the Minister in case of questions

- The Treasury's flexible working policy is consistent with expectations in the Employment Relations Act 2000 and Public Service guidelines.
- We do not centrally collect information that allows us to confirm overall trends in working from home. Ad hoc arrangements can be approved by people leaders.
- Our guidelines are clear that with flexible arrangements staff must continue to demonstrate agreed performance and behavioural expectations.
- Before confirming a flexible working arrangement, managers and staff need to consider solutions that work for the individual, the team and the Treasury.
- On average, of the staff working in a given week approximately two thirds are working from the office.

All the best,
Andrew

Andrew Rutledge | Director, Strategy and Executive Services

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