



23 APR 2026

Peter Campbell

fyi-request-34019-4fe9b6a7@requests.fyi.org.nz

Your Official Information Act 1982 request (OIA339)

Dear Peter,

Thank you for your email of 10 March 2026 requesting information relating to staff morale and public relations spending under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). As advised on 2 April, the time to respond to your request was extended under section 15A(b) of the OIA, because the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request were such that a proper response could not reasonably be made within the original time limit.

I have responded to each of your questions below.

Response to your request

- 1. Are you aware of any ongoing organisational staff morale issues with FENZ within the past 12 months, if so please provide a summary or any documents regarding this.*
- 2. Have you discussed with FENZ any staff morale or staff turnover rates within FENZ within the past 12 months, if so please provide documents or communications regarding this.*

I am releasing documents and relevant excerpts from Internal Affairs weekly and quarterly monitoring reports on Fire and Emergency (documents 1–6 in Appendix A). Some information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA to protect the privacy of natural persons. An appendix to document 3 and an appendix to document 6 have been refused under section 18(d), as the information is publicly available; links to this information are provided in the table of documents released below. Some further information has been withheld where it is out of scope of your request.

In relation to staff turnover rates, on 19 December 2025 I responded to a Written Parliamentary Question with information on the number of professional firefighters that have left and joined Fire and Emergency by month, since January 2023.

- WPQ 56517 (2025) – number of professional firefighters that have left or joined Fire and Emergency New Zealand, by month, since January 2023 [56517 \(2025\)](#).
[Lemauga Lydia Sosene to the Minister of Internal Affairs](#)

For this reason, I am partially refusing this aspect of your request under section 18(d) of the OIA, as the information requested is publicly available.

As Minister, it is not appropriate for me to become involved with or attempt to influence how these issues are managed. I have however, made it clear to Fire and Emergency's leadership that I expect them to engage respectfully, constructively, and in good faith with their workforce.

3. *Are you aware of the amount Fire and Emergency New Zealand has spent on public media communications within the past 12 months, particularly in relation to strike action or industrial relations matters,*

Following advice provided by Fire and Emergency regarding their media public safety campaign spend, I recently published answers to two Written Parliamentary Questions. This information, containing the advice, is publicly available here:

- WPQ 8046 (2026) – monthly spend on online advertising relating to professional firefighter strikes in 2025 [8046 \(2026\)](#). [Lemauga Lydia Sosene to the Minister of Internal Affairs](#)
- WPQ 8083 (2026) – monthly spend on online advertising relating to professional firefighter strikes in 2026 [8083 \(2026\)](#). [Lemauga Lydia Sosene to the Minister of Internal Affairs](#)

For this reason, I am partially refusing this aspect of your request under section 18(d) of the OIA, as the information requested is publicly available.

Please also find attached, as document 7 in Appendix A, an email from Fire and Emergency to my office, providing a list of amounts spent and budgeted monthly from 17 October 2025 to 13 March 2026. Some information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA, to protect the privacy of natural persons.

4. *and have you raised this expenditure with FENZ in terms of budget savings or spending priorities? If so, please provide any relevant correspondence, briefings, or documents.*

I have provided Fire and Emergency instructions on cost savings in general; however, I have not raised their media public safety campaign spend specifically in relation to budget savings or spending priorities, within the last 12 months. My office has however requested and received information outlining spend in this area, to answer Written Parliamentary Questions as noted in response to question three above. My office has also asked for confirmation of what was spent recently, in relation to media commentary about Fire and Emergency's spend on its public media safety campaign, ahead of and during strike periods. As I have not specifically discussed this expenditure with Fire and Emergency in relation to budget savings or spending priorities, this portion of your request is being refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information requested is not held by my office.

5. *What steps, if any, have you or your office taken within the past 12 months to seek assurance that workforce morale issues, staff turnover, and staffing levels within FENZ are being addressed, that fire appliances and stations remain staffed and operational, and that the Chief Executive is being held accountable for managing these risks? Please provide any relevant correspondence, advice, or documents.*

The employment relationship between employees and their unions or association representatives is the responsibility of Fire and Emergency, not the Minister. This includes identifying and dealing with staff morale matters. As Minister I have taken a range of actions to ensure Fire and Emergency is held accountable for appropriate and prudent use of funding. Through reporting requirements, reviews, and meetings, I have maintained active oversight of Fire and Emergency's financial management and spending discipline.

I also want to assure you that prudent use of taxpayer and levy payer money is important to me. In setting the Fire and Emergency levy for 2026 - 2029, I have asked the organisation to identify \$60 million in savings by 2029 to help meet future cost pressures. I am assured that Fire and Emergency is taking the necessary steps to manage and invest in its fleet responsibly, ensuring it can continue delivering essential services while supporting the Government's priorities for fiscal sustainability and reduced public expenditure.

I appreciate the concerns you have raised about appliance reliability. I have taken a close interest in the longstanding issues relating to fleet replacement and procurement, particularly for urban appliances. Fire and Emergency has assured me that addressing these pressures remains a priority, and I have asked officials for continued reporting on progress, timelines, and delivery of new appliances to ensure improvement continues.

In relation to this portion of your request, I am releasing in full, documents 8 and 9 in Appendix A.

Public interest considerations

As per section 9(1) of the OIA, I do not consider that, in the circumstances of this case, the withholding of the information referred to above is outweighed by other considerations which render it desirable in the public interest to make the information available.

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.

Thank you again for writing.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'BvV', is positioned above the typed name of the Minister of Internal Affairs.

Hon Brooke van Velden
Minister of Internal Affairs