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Fire and Emergency New Zealand
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26 June 2026 Ref: 21896

Alan Thompson
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Tēnā koe Alan

Thank you for your request of 25 May 2026 to Fire and Emergency New Zealand requesting further information relating to Tongariro fire costs. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) and our response is provided below.

- *In response to an earlier OIA (Your Ref 20484) you provided a breakdown of the costs of the 8 Nov 2025 Tongariro Fire as at 26 Jan 2026. These included $43,377 Employee Payments of $43,377, Volunteer payment of $67,577 and Travel, Accom and Meal costs of $12.217.*

1. *You further advised that Employee payments may include payments for overtime and travel reimbursements. Under the provisions of the Official Information Act can you further advise:*

    a. *The breakdown between the overtime and travel re-imbursements made to paid staff.*

Please refer to the table below for the requested information:

Cost type	Cost amount
Overtime	$8,560.77
Deployment Allowance	$34,816.10
Total	**$43,376.87**

b. *The number of paid staff who received overtime payments for this incident.*

We can advise that six staff members received overtime payments.

c. *The assigned duties of these staff at the incident.*

The assigned duties of these staff were:

- Providing equipment and logistics support, including delivery and refilling of Class A foam
- Conducting maintenance and servicing of portable pumps and other operational equipment
- Delivering, staging, and later packing down equipment
- Undertaking specialist wildfire investigation work to determine the origin and cause of the fire
- Working within the Logistics function or directly with the Incident Controller and Operations Manager to support operational needs and facilitate the investigation

d. The total hours of Overtime paid out to these staff.

We can advise that 75 hours of overtime were paid to those staff.

e. The policy for paid staff relating to a deployment to a long duration event and what hours of attendance at the incident qualify for an overtime payment.

Please find attached, as the **Appendix** to this response, the following policies for paid staff relating to a deployment to a long duration event.

- Long duration events allowance and honorarium policy

- The interim policy for long duration events allowance and honorarium

- Information pertaining to the Incident Capability and Payments Alignment (ICPA) project that aims to review and realign the way our organisation responds to complex and long-duration incidents

- Long duration events payments schedule

2. *You further advised that Volunteer payments may include reimbursements for mileage, parking, petrol, travel costs or meals. Under the provisions of the Official Information Act can you further:*

a. Advise the breakdown of the costs that resulted in $67,000 in mileage, parking, petrol, travel and meals for this incident.

Please note that since our response to you of 29 January 2026 (Ref 20484), the total volunteer payment figure has been updated to $68,151.86 (previously $67,577).

The volunteer payment figure of $68,151.86 does not comprise separately recorded amounts for mileage, parking, petrol, travel or meals. The figure reflects volunteer payments made under Fire and Emergency's volunteer payment arrangements. While those arrangements may recognise associated expenses incurred by volunteers, the payments are made as flat-rate entitlements and Fire and Emergency does not hold information showing how much of the total figure relates to any particular expense type such as mileage, parking, petrol, travel or meals. Accordingly, no breakdown of those costs exists. For this reason, this portion of your request is being refused under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the documents alleged to contain the information requested do not exist.

b. Confirm that no payments were made to Volunteers in the form of a daily or hourly rate for their services.

We can confirm that volunteer time/honoraria reimbursements/entitlements were paid to volunteers.

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.

We trust that the information being provided is of assistance. If you require further information, please email officialinformationrequests@fireandemergency.nz

Please note that because of the identified public interest in the information that you have requested, we intend to publish this response (with your personal details removed) on our website.

Nāku noa, nā

Aidan Saunders
Manager, Information Requests