



06 NOV 2017

Mr Bob Johnston

FYI

fyi-request-6660-30a974fd@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Johnston

Thank you for your email of 9 October 2017 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

"Please tell me how much alcohol the Ministry has purchased each month for the last 12 months up to and including August 2017. Please include alcohol purchased on account by the Ministry or by way of invoices issued to the Ministry and also any and all alcohol purchased on credit cards issued to Ministry staff. For purchases on credit cards please include for each credit card used to purchase alcohol, the position title and position level of the cardholder within the organisation i.e. CE, or the various tiers below the CE, who approved the purchase (position title and level). For all purchases please include details of the reason for the purchases and how this accords with any policy the Ministry has in the purchase of alcohol with Ministry funds."

Any expenditure on alcohol by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (the Ministry) must meet our Sensitive Expenditure Policy, and be approved by the appropriate delegation holder. The purchase of alcohol for functions must be pre-approved, where practical, by a Deputy Chief Executive or the Chief Executive. The relevant extract from the policy is attached for your information.

To provide a full and comprehensive list of all expenditure, we would need to examine every purchase invoice put against a variety of expense codes and then identify what amount, if any, was spent on alcohol. In light of this, I am refusing your request under section 18 (f) of the Act as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation and research.

While a full list is not available, the Ministry is able to provide you with examples of the types of events or functions held over the previous 12 months for which alcohol was part of the catering budget, these include:

- Business, community and stakeholder events
- Retirement functions
- Significant functional leadership advisory events

The cost of alcohol for these types of events has ranged from \$170 to \$1,300, the later relating to a large stakeholder function.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Meikle', with a long, sweeping underline.

Adrienne Meikle
Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate, Governance and Information
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Alcohol

The Ministry does not purchase alcohol, except in specific circumstances, which must directly support the Ministry's goals and purposes on occasions where the consumption of alcohol would be considered appropriate within our wider society.

The Ministry may provide alcohol in the following circumstances:

- an event for external stakeholders, building relationships or representing the organisation, where alcohol would customarily be served*
- a significant occasion such as a launch event, opening ceremony, conference, planning event, leaving function or long service celebration*
- travelling on Ministry business, a very limited amount of alcohol with a meal, such as a glass of wine or beer, may be appropriate.

Alcohol may also be purchased, but not necessarily consumed, in some situations. For example:

- as a gift for a guest speaker
- a performance reward
- a leaving gift
- or a prize.

Consumption of 'bring your own' or social club alcohol is permitted, provided that other policy guidelines and appropriate standards of probity and behaviour are adhered to.

Any alcohol consumption on Ministry premises should:

- be at an appropriate time and conclude prior to 8pm, unless approved by the Chief Executive
- give consideration to whether it is visible to customers or stakeholders and what they might think
- not disrupt staff who are working
- be moderate.

*The purchase of alcohol for functions must be pre-approved, where practical, by a Deputy Chief Executive or the Chief Executive. General delegation limits apply for all alcohol invoice approvals.

There may be occasions when the purchase or consumption of alcohol might support the Ministry's wider goals and purposes in a way not contemplated by this policy. Any such exceptions will require approval in advance from the Chief Executive.