

15 October 2019

Michael Brown

By email: fyi-request-11316-d2752f33@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Michael

Official information request for information on cloud data storage and carbon offsets

I refer to your requests for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) dated 1 August 2019.

Each of your requests, and the University's response, is set out below.

“Does Victoria University monitor and measure its use of cloud data services? If it does, please supply figures for the total size of VUW cloud data storage for the last five years, the particular cloud services which have been used, and any further relevant information that is available. If it doesn't, I would appreciate it if you give an estimate for current cloud use and what services are mainly involved.”

The University's Information Technology Services (ITS) have monitored some cloud data usage for approximately one year, but not across all suppliers. The University can provide the following estimate for the size of cloud data services for Microsoft.

Microsoft Azure - Office365 Email Staff	27.5TB
Microsoft Azure - Office365 OneDrive Staff	19.7TB
Microsoft Azure - Office365 Email Student	7.6TB
Microsoft Azure - Office365 OneDrive Student	26.1TB

The majority of the approximately 80TB of data stored by the University at Microsoft data centres is in carbon-neutral Microsoft data centres. We estimate the University's data storage outside Microsoft to be around 40TB. The University uses the following fully certified cloud suppliers: Microsoft, Oracle, Panopto.

The University is unable to provide further information without imposing a charge. In order to provide accurate figures for our other suppliers, our ITS team would need to undergo 22.5 hours of dedicated work. Using the Ombudsman's charging guidelines, this would amount to a maximum charge will be \$1,634.00. Any unused component of the maximum charge will be refunded to you.

Before we proceed further with your request, please confirm your agreement to the charge and pay the full amount. The payment can be deposited in to the following account with reference 'Michael Brown OIA request':

ANZ Bank New Zealand Limited
Account number: 06-0606-0100241-00
Victoria University of Wellington

Please note that if you pay the charge an email must be sent to oiarequests@vuw.ac.nz confirming the time and date on which the payment was made. We will send you the information within 40 working days of your payment.

“Secondly, does VUW offset its carbon emissions resulting from cloud data storage? Or does it have any plans to offset these in future?”

The bulk of data stored in the cloud for VUW is in Microsoft data centres – which have been 100% carbon neutral since 2012: <https://blogs.microsoft.com/on-the-issues/2016/05/19/greener-datacenters-brighter-future-microsofts-commitment-renewable-energy/>.

Our rough assessment of the carbon emissions impact of IT services and data storage estimated that the emissions from data storage (including the Microsoft storage mentioned above) would generate less than 2% of our total emissions. As stated above, the data stored in Microsoft data centres is already 100% carbon neutral. In relation to the remaining cloud storage, the University decided not to include this in the scope of our carbon footprint, and instead focus our efforts on areas where we can make a greater impact. As such, the University is not offsetting the emissions from off-site data storage, nor do we plan to do so. However, the University does intend to use carbon neutral data centres in the future wherever possible.

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.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact me at oiarequests@vuw.ac.nz.

Yours sincerely



Georgia Tawharu
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