



John Luke

fyi-request-12764-e561ae11@requests.fyi.org.nz

2 JUN 2020

Dear John Luke

On 2 May 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *I would like to know the current Benefits Review Committee (BRC) member's name for Auckland and Wellington. Also, their bio and term of appointment. How many meetings they have conducted in the last actual year (been 1 Jan 2019- 1 Jan 2020) for each member and how much salary they have claimed for each member.*

BRC Community representatives are Ministerial appointees who provide a community perspective in the decision-making process of the BRC. The BRC considers reviews against decisions made by the Ministry in relation to benefit entitlements.

BRC Community representatives are appointed for a fixed term of five years and can apply for re-appointment after the end of their tenure.

Table One enclosed, provides the list of BRC community representatives for the Auckland and Wellington Regions, their term of appointment and the number of hearings each member has been a panel member for the time period between 1 January 2019 to 1 January 2020.

Please note that the biographies of BRC community representatives' is private and is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

The BRC Community Representatives' fees are set by Cabinet. The fees structure below is payable based on the duration of a BRC hearing. The Ministry is responsible for making these payments. The payment rate (gross) is as follows:

- \$122.51 for 0 to 3 hours (including 3 hours)
- \$245.02 for more than 3 hours

Reimbursement of motor vehicle expenses (e.g. mileage allowances), is based on the standard IRD rate of 79 cents per kilometre and is subject to withholding tax as there would be no supporting invoices or receipts. Time spent travelling cannot be claimed unless travel time exceeds more than three hours in a single day.

In regard to fees paid to the BRC Community Representatives in the Auckland and Wellington Regions, for the time period between 1 January 2019 to 1 January 2020; please refer to **Table Two** and **Table Three** overleaf.

Table Two: Fees paid to BRC Community Representatives in the Auckland Region for the time period between 1 January 2019 to 1 January 2020.

Name	Fees Paid
Aspinall M A	\$8,461
Aston R	\$1,385
Haldane J A	\$11,633
Jones R	\$4,645
Peat C M	\$1,885
Riddell J G	\$6,029
Steele B M	\$493
Woods J G	\$666
TOTAL	\$35,196

Table Three: Fees paid to BRC Community Representatives in the Wellington Region for the time period between 1 January 2019 to 1 January 2020.

Name	Fees Paid
Blackford M	\$10,472.91
Dodd M	\$3,148.59
Osborne S	Nil
Gill S	\$4,422.41
McKinley K	Nil
Mitaera J	Nil
Sugden G	\$1,803.25
TOTAL	\$19,847.16

Notes for Table Two and Table Three:

- Reported are the amounts paid to BRC community representatives for the time period between 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019.
- Fees paid include fees for attending the BRC meetings, reimbursement of travel/other expenses.
- The BRC community representatives with nil amounts, refer to those whose tenure had ceased on 30 June 2019, but have not claimed for fees and a new BRC community representative who has not yet claimed for fees.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding the BRC community representatives in the Auckland and Wellington Regions, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Diane Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Diane Anderson

Manager, Complaints Management Insights and Improvement

Table One: BRC Community Representatives for the Auckland and Wellington Regions, their term of appointment and the number of hearings each member has been a panel member for the time period between 1 January 2019 to 1 January 2020.

Region	First Name	Surname	Tenure [New appointees]	Tenure [Existing Community Reps who have been Re-appointed]	Tenure [Ended]	Hearing total
Auckland	Jimmy (Sjimmy)	Fransen	08/08/2017 - 07/08/2022			1
Auckland	Judy	Haldane		08/08/2017 - 07/08/2022		115
Auckland	Margaret	Aspinall	18/07/2018 - 17/07/2023			85
Auckland	Carolyn	Peat	18/07/2018 - 17/07/2023			15
Auckland	Brenda	Steel	07/08/2019 - 06/08/2024			NIL
Auckland	John	Woods	07/08/2019 - 06/08/2024			10
Auckland	Ronald	Jones		07/08/2019 - 06/08/2024		50
Auckland	John	Riddell		07/08/2019 - 06/08/2024		70
Wellington	Marian	Blackford	18/07/2018 - 17/07/2023			110
Wellington	Materoa	Dodd	18/07/2018 - 17/07/2023			33
Wellington	Steve	Osborne	07/10/2019 - 06/10/2024			NIL
Wellington	Sandra	Gill		30/06/2019 - 29/06/2024		45
Wellington	Kitty	McKinley			20/10/2012 - 30/06/2019	7
Wellington	Jean	Mitaera			20/10/2012 - 30/06/2019	12
Wellington	Graeme	Sudgen			20/10/2012 - 30/06/2019	14

Notes for Table One:

- The 'hearing total' figures have been extracted from the Here Is Your Answer (HIYA) database maintained for all Review of Decision applications.
- The 'hearing total' figures show the number of BRC Hearings in respect of Review of Decision applications received during the time period between 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019.