



OIA19-0661

14 NOV 2019

Jeremy Puger  
fyi-request-11370-906fefa0@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Jeremy Puger

### OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your official information request on 3 October 2019 relating to “*information for the last five years about government activity that relates to climate change*”.

Please find the answers to your request below. The following information is released to you under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

#### 1. *Air travel:*

- a. *How many of your staff have travelled by air (where paid for by MPI), how many flights were taken, and how much did this cost?*
- b. *What was the purpose and benefit to the taxpayer for each trip?*
- c. *For each trip, why was a remote alternative not used? E.g. Remote viewing dial ins, conference calls or Skype. Was there no remote alternative available, and if there was a remote alternative available, why wasn't it used?*
- d. *How much has been spent on accommodation and for how many people and nights during these trips too?*
- e. *How much was spent on other expenses such as meals and allowances?*

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) emailed you on 9 October 2019 and requested that you narrow the scope of your request, as MPI would not be able to locate the information due to it not being held in a centralised database. To date, we have not received a response. We are therefore refusing your request for parts a, b, c, d and e of question 1 under section 18(f) of the OIA as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

**Finance, Property and Procurement  
Corporate Services**

Charles Fergusson Building, 34-38 Bowen Street  
Wellington 6140, New Zealand

- f. *Do staff of different jobs/ranks/levels get different types or levels of accommodation? If so, why?*

MPI's travel policy sets out the accommodation entitlements for all staff.

- g. *Going into the future, do you have plans to reduce air travel? If you do, could you explain these plans and if there have been any targets set?"*

No targets have been set in relation to travel levels, however MPI's travel policy requires all other options to be explored (e.g. use of video-conferencing, Skype for Business) before a decision is made to travel for business purposes.

## **2. Packaging and recycling:**

- a. *Do you have recycling facilities in all of your premises? If not, why not?*

MPI provides recycling bins at all our premises catering for plastic/glass, cardboard and organic materials.

- b. *Do you actively encourage or make your staff recycle? If you do, please explain how.*

MPI encourages its staff to recycle by providing bins and guidance on recycling (such as signage and posters) throughout its buildings.

- c. *Do you have rules aimed at encouraging other staff environmentally friendly behaviour, such as banning staff from bringing disposable cups onto the premises?*

MPI staff have been provided with reusable keep cups at a number of our premises. No disposable cups are provided in our complexes.

- d. *If you have cafes or similar, do you require them to use environmentally healthy options, such as reusable cutlery and recyclable packaging?"*

MPI provides reusable cutlery and crockery at all our premises.

## **3. Encouraging good behaviour and attunement with the natural world:**

- a. *Do all of your offices have plants? If so, what is the ratio of plants to workers? Do you ensure that providers look after these plants and use sustainable and environmentally friendly options in their practices e.g. pesticide choices?*

The ratio of plants to people vary in each building, where the Auckland office has 0.23 plants per person, the Charles Fergusson Building in Wellington has 0.34 plants per person, 1 The Terrace in Wellington has 0.46 plants per person and the Christchurch office has 0.84 plants per person.

- b. *Do you have programmes for encouraging staff to make more environmentally friendly choices outside of work?*

MPI does not have any centralised programmes for encouraging staff to make more environmentally friendly choices outside of work, though these may be encouraged at an individual team level.

- c. *Do you encourage your staff to be more interconnected with the natural world by hosting or promoting practices such as mindfulness, meditation, earthing or Tai Chi?*

We encourage and support the Mental Health Foundation "Five Ways to Wellbeing" which includes aspects of mindfulness and meditation. Different regions may offer staff led yoga and mindfulness sessions. MPI also offers resilience training which includes training on mindfulness techniques.

- d. *Do you take any steps to increase staff knowledge and awareness of environmental issues in general?"*

MPI does not take any centralised proactive steps to increase staff knowledge and awareness of environmental issues in general. However we do hold monthly science seminars that focus on areas of relevance to MPI, which include our environment (as the primary industries rely on the environment and New Zealand's natural resources). MPI also promotes seminars, science events and science publications from other organisations to its staff members via an email distribution list for staff interested in science. Records of MPI science seminars only go back four years. Some examples of seminars with an environmental focus are:

- Restoration ecology and pest management
- Antarctic marine food webs and ecology
- Climate change
- Irrigation
- Sustainable development goals

You have the right under section 28(3) of the OIA to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of our decision.

Yours sincerely



Tina Cornelius  
**Chief Financial Officer**