

29 October 2021

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OIA 27740

Tēnā koe R S Bicknell

I refer to your email of 9 October 2021 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

The total amount spent on private club memberships in 2019 and 2020 for MFAT staff.

Heads of Mission/Post overseas may join a representational organisation, e.g. club or association, at official expense where it can be demonstrated that joining:

- Contributes to post operational objectives,
- Assists in promoting New Zealand and advancing its foreign policy and trade interests,
- Facilitates effective access to influential politicians, business people, government officials and other diplomats in order to promote New Zealand's interests, and/or
- Facilitates official representational duties in the performance of responsibilities on behalf of the Government and New Zealand.

The Ministry's annual Budget exercise constitutes the main vehicle by which proposals for club membership are considered for approval.

The Ministry requires Heads of Mission/Post to maintain records of any approved club memberships, including the cost, whether membership is transferable to a successor at no additional cost, the nature of the club and facilities available, and how membership satisfied the criteria for joining.

As requested, set out below is information on expenditure on club memberships for the two previous two financial years (1 July-30 June). Please note that these figures are inclusive of country specific GST/VAT-type taxes:

Financial year	Expenditure NZ\$
2019/20	\$20,968
2020/21	\$19,095

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Julie-Anne Lee', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Julie-Anne Lee
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade