



Te Kawa Mataaho

Public Service Commission

29 June 2021

9(2)(a) privacy

Dear 9(2)(a) privacy

Official Information Request Our Ref: OIA 2021-0067

I refer to your official information request received on 31 May 2021 for:

“This OIA is re Covid recovery/response measures, and the use of contractors by your agency/dept for that

Please consider any reference to 'covid recovery' to include any work programme or similar that largely or primarily is aimed to respond to the pandemic or its impacts

Pls consider any reference to ‘contractors’ to mean contractors whose engagement with your dept or agency is primarily or largely related to any aspect of Covid recovery (NOT contractors in general)

For timeframes, where applicable pls provide figures per quarter. Starting point is sent by response to Covid. Pls note where it is known of any end points in use of contractors

RNZ requests release to it, in full and in fully searchable format, the following information and/or documents, in relation to your agency/dept:

- 1. detail of how covid recovery is being primarily undertaken, including:*
- 2. the name of any units/teams/similar leading it, or involved in it*
- 3. if these are new or repurposed units/teams/similar, the date when they began covid work*
- 4. number of permanent and/or fixed term staff (not contractors) working (primarily) in any aspect of Covid recovery*
- 5. number of contractors working*
- 6. if available, budgeted spending on contractors of Covid recovery*
- 7. Actual hourly or daily (or other) rates of contractors at whatever level (similar to what is provided in your Annual Reviews to select committee)*
- 8. range of hourly or daily (or other) rates of contractors at whatever level*
- 9. Separately, the same for consultants (if available)*
- 10. if a contractor is in charge, or second in charge, of a Covid recovery units/teams/similar and/or work programme, pls detail all such roles*
 - what that position is*
 - how long they have been engaged in that role*

11. *if a covid recovery units/teams/similar worker numbers are more than 50% contractors, pls state and describe*
12. *pls detail the variation of that % over time eg up or down*
13. *pls detail why over 50% of such staff are contractors*
14. *pls detail any cases where unplanned/unexpected employee attrition or turnover has had an impact on number of contractors having to be engaged, and/or length of that engagement, and/or the seniority of position having to be filled by a contractor*
15. *provide a timeline in terms of when contracts wind up, or are forecast to, or when units/teams/similar/work programme winds up or is forecast to*
16. *any complaints received from employees, unions, contractors or the public about use of contractors or consultants in covid recovery*
17. *pls detail if any audit or review or similar has been or will be, or might be, undertaken re use of contractors or consultants in covid recovery”*

On 11 June 2021, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment advised they had clarified details of your request with you and that you were happy for them to pass on that clarification to us.

We understand you confirmed the time period for your request is from 20 March 2020 to present date and you removed questions 4, 11, 12 and 13. Our response below is in response to your clarified request.

Information being released

Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission (the Commission) has a role to lead the Public Service and ensure that it is able to deliver the outcomes, results and services New Zealand needed. In the early phases of the response to COVID-19, we were focused on our role as set out in the Influenza pandemic plan. That included:

- Supporting agencies to meet critical workforce needs by facilitating redeployment opportunities between agencies and matching workforces impacted by the pandemic to other areas where they could assist in the response
- Providing assurance monitoring and reporting based on impacts to the workforce resulting from the pandemic response
- Developing workforce guidance to respond to emerging issues, including guidance for agencies at each Alert Level.

In addition, the Commission supported the system through policy and machinery of government advice that:

- Provided leadership in the system to support end-to-end management of the border, with jointly accountable CE's
- Strengthened strategic leadership and central coordination by setting up the COVID-19 response unit
- Supported the Government's objectives in relation to public sector remuneration. This included changes to the Remuneration Authority Act and managing changes to Public Service chief executives' pay following them taking a voluntary reduction for six-months.

These functions were delivered through our business-as-usual groups, though staff managing these tasks in some cases needed to reprioritise work to focus on the immediate needs created by the COVID-19 response.

As part of the longer-term focus of the COVID-19 response and recovery, the Commission established the Border Executive Board under the Public Service Act, which is the first interdepartmental executive board and will make the group of Public Service chief executives of the border agencies jointly accountable for functions and objectives that require coordinated actions to achieve system change.

The Commission was also asked to provide some practical tools to assist agencies experiencing significant change. Following consultation with HR Heads, we implemented a manual workforce deployment approach to match available resources with emerging opportunities.

In December 2020, the Commission assumed responsibility for critical COVID workforce resourcing, previously run by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. A small Workforce Mobility Hub team was established, combining cross system critical COVID workforce resourcing and the manual Workforce Deployment approach.

The Workforce Mobility Hub has three key areas of focus:

- Supporting COVID critical workforce resourcing (primarily but not exclusively for Ministry of Health)
- Supporting transitioning workforces including cross system (re)employment of people impacted by redundancy in their home agency and developing models for supporting surge workforce support
- Design and build of a Digital Workforce Mobility system; leveraging the existing system wide jobs.govt.nz recruitment platform to create a public service internal deployment opportunities and jobs board.

Resourcing of the Workforce Mobility Hub is a mix of Te Kawa Mataaho staff and 1.5 FTE seconded from other Public Service agencies.

In May 2021, in support of the direction set by the Public Service Leadership Team to support New Zealand's long-term response and recovery from COVID-19, the Commission created a single point of leadership. A Deputy Commissioner, COVID-19 Response and Recovery was established and will be in place until 2022. This role increases the Commission's support of the Public Service's COVID-19 leadership.

In the immediate response, our role across the system was to advise agencies on pandemic related issues, which included:

- Guidance that relates to attendance in the workplace
- Leave arrangements and salary payments during a pandemic
- Coordinating staff to provide wider support during a pandemic to help maintain essential services, by undertaking alternative duties
- Approaches to take if the medical officer of health closes the workplace
- A role in monitoring staff absences across the state sector

The Commission has not received any complaints regarding resourcing of either the Covid-19 Response and Recovery team or the Workforce Mobility Hub.

There are no contractors or consultants employed to work across any of the work streams or business groups outlined above. We are therefore refusing the remainder of your request under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act 1982 on the grounds that the information requested does not exist.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact Ministerial.Services@publicservice.govt.nz.

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.

Please note that we intend to publish this letter (with your personal details removed) on the Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission's website.

Yours sincerely



Nicky Dirks
Manager – Ministerial and Executive Services
Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission