

OC220619

16/08/2022

s 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

I refer to your email dated 19 July 2022, requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982, seeking information “*in relation to The Congestion Question (TCQ)*”. We request the following information:

1. *The total cost of all work undertaken by the Ministry of Transport on TCQ since 2017.*
2. *Please explain the role of MRCagney in the TCQ Steering Group.*
3. *How much money has MRCagney received from Ministry of Transport for work on TCQ since 2017?*
4. *Correspondence in relation to the preparation of a detailed business case.*
5. *What is the dollar amount of Ministry of Transport staff time allocated to work on the detailed business case?*
6. *How much money does Ministry of Transport intend to spend on professional services for the detailed business case?*

Each point is addressed below.

1. *The total cost of all work undertaken by the Ministry of Transport on TCQ since 2017.*

Te Manatū Waka Ministry of Transport’s (the Ministry) total spend on all the work undertaken for the Congestion Question (TCQ) project since financial year 2017/18 is \$391,513 (excl GST).

2. *Please explain the role of MRCagney in the TCQ Steering Group.*

MRCagney did not have a role in the TCQ steering group. The TCQ Steering Group consisted of nominees from the Ministry, Auckland Council, the Treasury, Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency and Auckland Transport.

3. *How much money has MRCagney received from Ministry of Transport for work on TCQ since 2017?*

Between 2017-2020, MRCagney was hired as a subcontractor through the primary contracting firm Covec for TCQ work. In 2017, Peter Nunns was a researcher at MRCagney when TCQ project commissioned a social evaluation report. Hon Julie Anne Genter (partner to Peter Nunns) was Associate Minister of Transport at the time. To manage this

potential conflict, Covec led the project to ensure independence in project management and overall approach. Additionally, Covec and MRCagney maintained confidentiality throughout the process with respect to data, draft rules and options under assessment. Covec, who subcontracted MRCagney, received \$24,741.60 (excl GST).

In 2022, MRCagney received \$23,000 (excl GST) from the Ministry to produce work for TCQ.

Requests referring to a detailed business case (points 4, 5, and 6)

We are refusing these three requests under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act 1982. This is because the information you have requested does not exist. Preparing a detailed business case on a congestion charging scheme is not in the remit of the Ministry. As a result:

- there has been no correspondence in relation to the preparation of a detailed business case
- Ministry staff have not been allocated to work on a detailed business case
- the Ministry has no financial figures detailing future spend on professional services for a detailed business case.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of this response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website www.ombudsman.parliament.nz

The Ministry publishes our Official Information Act responses and the information contained in our reply to you will be published on the Ministry website. Before publishing we will remove any personal or identifiable information.

Nāku noa, nā



Marian Willberg

Manager, Demand Management and Revenue
Ministry of Transport