



11 March 2022

By email: [REDACTED]

Ref: OIA-2021/22-0998

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act request relating to numbers of communications and engagement staff

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 17 February 2022. You requested:

*“please provide a tally of the communications and engagement staff you employ, including but not restricted to those working in roles tied to media and social media, public affairs, stakeholder relations, and external affairs.
Please include, and identify in the tally, the number of such staff seconded to DPMC, and working on contract to DPMC.
I also request a list of contractors providing communications and engagement services to DPMC. The request includes but is not restricted to work tied to media, social media, public affairs, stakeholder relations and external affairs.
Please identify the total number of communications and engagement staff working for each of DPMC’s business Units (these totals should include seconded staff and those on contract).
For comparison, please provide a tally for the number of communications and engagement staff (including but not restricted to those working in roles tied to media and social media, public affairs, stakeholder relations, and external affairs) employed at DPMC in January, 2017. Please include in this tally staff who were seconded or working on contract, but identify these groups as subtotals within the tally.”*

In response to the first part of your request, please refer to the below table, which outlines the number of internal communications and engagement staff employed by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) as at 28 February 2022, broken down by business unit and employment type.

This response includes information relevant to both DPMC and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), collectively referred to as the Department.

You will note that the number of permanent staff in DPMC and NEMA combined is 15. The majority of staff in the table overleaf are seconded or fixed term, largely in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Note that although secondees are included in the table as requested, they are not employed by the Department, but by other public sector agencies.

BUSINESS UNIT	EMPLOYEES		SECONDEES	TOTAL
	Fixed Term	Permanent		
COVID-19 Response Group	31	-	10	41
Government House	-	3	-	3
Health and Disability System Review Transition Unit	-	-	1	1
Strategy, Governance and Engagement Group (includes staff supporting National Security Group and the Child Wellbeing and Poverty Reduction Group)	1	4	-	5
TOTAL DPMC	32	7	11	50
TOTAL National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)	-	8	1	9

In response to your request for a list of external contractors providing services to DPMC, as at 28 February 2022 there were seven external contractors providing communications services to the Department. They were all in the Health and Disability Transition Unit. For specific details of contractors and consultants, I refer you to published information provided to the Governance and Administration Select Committee which occurs twice a year: the DPMC and NEMA Annual Reviews, and the Committee's examination of the Estimates for Vote Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Information published by the Committee includes data relating to external contractors and consultants used by DPMC and NEMA, such as cost for communications, media or public relations advice or services. The most recent data is contained within Appendix 6 of DPMC's 2020/2021 Annual Review which is available on the Parliament website:

https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/53SCGA_EVI_116496_GA20955/51290689bb65a988b8c21f8dc7901696dae9f0c1

For comparison, you have also requested the number of communications and engagement staff employed by DPMC in January 2017. Information for the period ending 31 March 2017 is also publicly available and can be found within Question 60 of the Government Administration Select Committee's Examination of the Estimates for Vote Prime Minister and Cabinet Questions for financial year 2017/18, which is also available through the Parliament website:

https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/51SCFE_EVI_00DBSCH_EST_74201_1_A559296/98276eb6199cc89784f9ef8adfb01327ca367a07

Accordingly, I am refusing these parts of your request under 18(d) of the Act, as the information requested is publicly available.

You will note from the data there has been a significant increase in the number of staff employed by DPMC in recent years. This is due to a number of factors, including the establishment of the COVID-19 Response Group and the National Emergency Management Agency.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Clare Ward
Executive Director
Strategy, Governance and Engagement