



17 OCT 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

On 23 July 2018, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, information regarding the training the Ministry provides to its managers with respect to crisis situations.

On 27 August 2018, you refined your request for the number of Tier 1 to Tier 4 managers to include general managers and staff above the level of general manager. You also defined 'crisis' as an emergency situation to which a manager responds, that ranges from civil defence emergencies to the death of a team member.

For clarity, your questions are addressed in turn.

- *How many general managers and staff above the level of general manager are employed by your agency as at 30 June 2018?*

As at 30 June 2018, the Ministry employed in total 68 general manager equivalent roles or higher in both permanent and fixed-term roles. Of these 68 staff, those with positions above the level of general manager include roles such as Deputy Chief Executives, Associate Deputy Chief Executives, Chief Officers, Chief Advisors, Directors, Group General Managers, Heads and Regional Commissioners.

- *Does your Ministry complete any learning and/or development programmes for your general managers and staff above the level of general manager that includes how to lead through a crisis situation (or of similar type)?*
- *If so, what are the names of those training programmes, and*
- *How many of your general managers and staff above the level of general manager have completed these training programmes in the period 1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018?*

The Ministry provides a variety of learning programmes, including a programme for senior staff on leading through a crisis. Workshops currently in the Learning and Development work programme include Mental Health 101 and training for the deployment of the Ministry's new security and incident management system.

Chief for a Day programme

The most significant training programme that focuses on 'crisis management' for the requested group is the 'Chief for a Day' programme. This programme is run as needed to help staff and managers prepare for and manage in a crisis. The Ministry did not hold the 'Chief for a Day' training with general manager equivalent roles or higher between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2018.

We thought it was helpful to tell you a little more about what the Chief for a Day programme entails. Over the course of a day, staff are exposed to a series of simulated events that range from a media crisis, (with an associated television interview to front), complex staff issues, oral parliamentary questions and briefing a Minister on an issue. These simulated events often overlap and have demanding time pressures to reflect how some issues escalate throughout the day.

Participants write up their response to the situation and are scored by a panel of experts, and throughout the course of the day become increasingly adept at managing crises. In the time period between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2018, the Ministry did not have a need for 'Chief for a Day' training for staff with general manager equivalent roles or higher.

Health, Safety and Security

For health, safety and security events, the Ministry has developed a regime of safety drills and practice exercises to embed into business as usual. These simulations use existing physical security arrangements, such as alarms and CCTV.

Drills are regularly run at all client facing and non-client facing sites across the Ministry and are an excellent way of ensuring that staff know what to do when an incident occurs, whether or not a manager is present. As drills allow the opportunity to review and refine site practices, they help prepare staff for real life situations better than other forms of training.

A number of drills using a scenario-based approach to practice and debrief findings have been completed across the Ministry. Scenarios have included zero tolerance to escalating client behaviour, bomb threat/suspicious package drill and lockdown of a site following a client presenting a weapon. For example, in a drill where an incendiary device has been set off in the office entrance, managers must decide their response and then the team debrief the scenario and discuss model answers.

In a typical year 60-70 new managers will participate in this, with approximately 10 staff with manager equivalent roles or higher included. Site Safety Drills are generally Ministry-wide exercises unless otherwise specified and all teams are expected to participate. Consequently, the Ministry does not hold the information to identify the specific roles and whether staff in those roles participated in a particular drill. As such, I am unable to provide you with the number of staff with general manager equivalent roles or higher who completed Site Safety Drills between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2018. This information is refused in accordance with section 18(g) of the Official Information Act, as it is not held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

One of the biggest advantages to embedding drills as part of the Ministry's normal business practice is that sites can automatically revert to what has been practiced even when the site manager is absent. Leadership during a crisis is very different to leading in normal conditions. If a manager responds well in a situation by demonstrating confidence and good judgement, their team is more likely to feel confident. Most people imagine they will act well in a crisis, but studies show that they can act in unpredictable ways.

The best way to ensure that people will lead well during an incident is to practise and create the neural pathways to fall back on when things become uncertain and stressful. Practising drills helps managers and staff members make intuitive and quick decisions when time is essential and they are not sure what to do.

Furthermore, there are five people defined as 'incident controllers' in the Ministry. The Ministry considers each staff member's skills and experience to assess their training needs. As at 30 June 2018, the Ministry has provided two one-hour sessions to these staff at a group level to hone their skills.

- *Have any general managers and staff above the level of general manager received external training in areas of development or training for leading through crisis situations that has been paid for by your Ministry during the period 1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018?*

No. Crisis management may be covered in a variety of leadership training. During this time period two staff members who report directly to general managers attended Ministry-funded external development for leading through crisis situations. This opportunity involved attending international conferences on business continuity and emergency management with the aim of bringing back best practice to incorporate into Ministry approaches.

- *The name and contact details of a person in the Learning and Development area (or equivalent) I can contact if I have any further questions in regards to the information provided.*

For further questions regarding the information provided in this response, you can contact the Ministry's Leadership Development Manager, David Belesky, on 0296500040 or David.Belesky001@msd.govt.nz.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

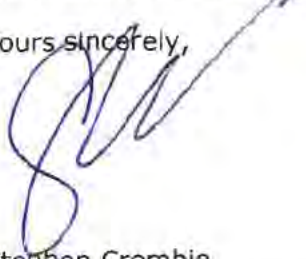
- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public shortly. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry of Social Development's website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding training the Ministry provides its managers with respect to crisis situations, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. Crombie', written over a horizontal line.

Stephen Crombie
Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Solutions