



4 February 2025

Tēnā koe

### **Official Information Act request**

Thank you for your email of 16 December 2024 in which you made a follow up request to the Ministry's response to you on 10 December 2024.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on each part of your request set out separately below.

*With regard to the second part of my question, to be clear, I did not ask you for 'charge out/back rates'. I asked for the costs associated with any legal services. In the case of 'in house' services, please therefore provide me with summaries of budget and expenditure for the years requested.*

I have interpreted this part of your request to be for the total budget allocated to the Ministry's Legal Department and the total costs of this department. Please note, I have not included what the department spends on external legal fees, as I understand you are interested in costs associated with running the department internally.

Please refer to Table 1 in **Appendix A** which provides a table showing the budget allocation for Ministry's Legal Department and the total costs associated with this department. The Budget may include expenditure for the following types of costs:

- Personnel- regular and periodic
- Leave
- Staff development and welfare
- Administration
- Travel
- Professional services
- Information systems
- Client costs

The budget allocation for 2020-2022 did not include the costs related to the Ministry's Historic Claims legal staff until December 2023, as they were included in the Historic Claims team's costs. As such, I have provided you with a separate table as Table 2 in **Appendix A** which provides the budget allocation and total costs associated with Historic Claims legal staff for the period 2020-2023. Table 1 provided in **Appendix A** includes Historic Claims legal staff cost for the year 2024.

*Also, as a follow-up from this response provided, please clarify what the top three (in terms of costs) legal providers are to the MoH and if this has not already been provided, please add this information in the format provided.*

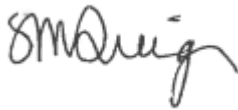
Please refer to the attached **Appendix B** below which provides a table showing the top three suppliers who have received payments from the Ministry for legal costs/legal fees for the years 2020-2024.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact [OIA\\_Requests@msd.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, 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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp. 

Anna Graham  
**General Manager**  
**Ministerial and Executive Services**

## Appendix A

**Table 1: Budget allocation for Ministry's Legal Department and the total costs associated with this department.**

Budget	Total Costs
<b>2020</b>	
\$6,077,802	\$4,902,843
<b>2021</b>	
\$8,168,674	\$5,720,084
<b>2022</b>	
\$9,696,523.38	\$6,583,177
<b>2023</b>	
\$10,425,358.87	\$6,708,886
<b>2024</b>	
\$11,245,171.93	\$7,236,325

**Table 2: Budget allocation for Ministry's Historic Claims legal staff and the total costs associated with this department.**

Budget	Total Costs
<b>2020</b>	
\$528,674	\$395,570
<b>2021</b>	
\$748,604	\$588,500
<b>2022</b>	
\$867,382	\$575,844
<b>2023</b>	
\$720,794	\$417,739

## Appendix B

**Top 3 suppliers who have received payments from the Ministry for legal costs/legal fees for the years 2020-2024.**

Supplier	Amount
<b>2020</b>	
Crown Law	\$1,870,802.09
Meredith Connell	\$738,650.16
Simpson Grierson Barristers & Solicitors	\$131,418.52
<b>2021</b>	
Meredith Connell	\$1,304,626.50
Crown Law	\$1,150,313.40
Simpson Grierson Barristers & Solicitors	\$356,419.93
<b>2022</b>	
Meredith Connell	\$1,367,719.80
Crown Law	\$656,309.53

Richard Best	\$110,217.13
<b>2023</b>	
Meredith Connell	\$1,386,019.72
Crown Law	\$738,767.71
Juno Legal Limited	\$433,625.08
<b>2024</b>	
Meredith Connell	\$2,204,724.82
Crown Law	\$977,475.19
Buddle Findlay Limited	\$675,445.04