



27 June 2017



Dear [REDACTED]

Official information request for information about the chief executive retreats

Our ref: 2017/0066

I refer to your official information request that was transferred to the State Services Commission (SSC) on 6 June 2017 for:

- Has the Chief Executive (CE) of Statistics New Zealand (Statistics) attended any meetings or conferences at Brackenridge Estate, in the current calendar year? If so,
 - What was the purpose of the meeting/conference(s)
 - Who attended from Statistics
 - Who were the other attendees
 - What other government agencies were represented at the meeting/conference
 - What was the speaker list, and nature of presentations made
 - What were the costs of attendance (including, but not limited to, activities, entertainment, fees, accommodation and travel)?

Attendance of CE of Statistics at CE meeting and purpose of meetings

The CE of Statistics, Ms Liz MacPherson, attended the CE meeting that was held in Brackenridge from 17 to 18 May 2017. No one else attended this meeting from Statistics.

Since 2014, CEs have been meeting together as a group twice a year. These working sessions are an important part of how the leaders of the Public Service work together to drive the Better Public Services agenda faster to make a bigger difference, and to make sure that New Zealanders are getting the best outcomes from their public services.

CEs highly value the time together, and want to be able to increase the pace of how they are driving and leading change. Planning and collective decision-making occurs at these meetings and it is important to ensure that changes takes place in a timely way. As a result, in 2017 the CEs agreed to increase the number of CE meetings, from two to four per year (2 overnight meetings, and 2 one day meetings in Wellington).

Cost of CE meetings and cost for non-attendees

The CE meetings are organised and convened by the State Services Commissioner. The State Services Commission (SSC) works hard to ensure that the costs for the meetings are kept as low as possible. Competitive rates for accommodation and transport are negotiated where possible, and some CEs share rooms and carpool to reduce costs. Since October 2016, the State Services Commissioner personally pays for all alcoholic beverages.

Please find attached as Appendix 1 a table that covers the total amount spent by SSC on the May 2017 CE meeting, with the cost broken down by:

- venue
- catering
- accommodation
- speakers' fees.

Note that all costs are GST exclusive. The table also lists each CE attendee and the agency that they represent, and the CEs who did not attend. There was no expenditure specifically on either activities, entertainment, travel, or other costs (e.g. internet usage, technical support, printing, stationery, and photocopying) for this meeting.

The total cost of the meeting includes any cost incurred by the other SSC staff who attended in support.

SSC did not recover costs from CEs for this meeting, which means that we are unable to break down the cost of the meeting per CE.

Speakers and presentations

You are also interested in the speaker list for the May 2017 CE meeting, and the nature of presentations made. The external speakers at this meeting were Mr Matthew Hooton and Mr Stephen Mills, who had an hour long session covering "the political landscape". CEs hosted other sessions during the meeting on a range of topics, including the state of the Public Service and its foundational pillars, and how the CEs can take their work forward as a team.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact Ministerial.Services@ssc.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 SSC's website.

Yours sincerely



Peter Hughes
State Services Commissioner

Appendix 1: CE Meeting Cost

Brackenridge, Martinborough 17-18 May 2017	
Total Cost	\$16,163.11
Venue Cost (included in total cost)	\$1,240.00
Catering Cost (included in total cost)	\$6,111.45
Accommodation Cost (included in total cost)	\$4,120.00
Speaker Cost (included in total cost)	\$4,691.66
Attendees	Attendance
Peter Hughes (State Services Commission)	Both days
Una Jagose (Crown Law Office)	Both days
Rebecca Kitteridge (New Zealand Security Intelligence Service)	Both days
Peter Mersi (Ministry of Transport)	Both days
Andrew Crisp (Land Information New Zealand)	Both days
Gabriel Makhoul (Treasury)	Both days
Peter Chrisp (New Zealand Trade and Enterprise)	Both days
Colin MacDonald (Department of Internal Affairs)	Both days
Nick Pole (Education Review Office)	Both days
Andrew Hampton (Government Security Communications Bureau)	Both days
Paul James (Ministry for Culture and Heritage)	Both days
Andrew McKenzie (Housing New Zealand Corporation)	Both days
David Smol (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment)	Both days
Vicky Robertson (Ministry for the Environment)	Both days
Carolyn Tremain (New Zealand Customs Service)	Both days
Naomi Ferguson (Inland Revenue)	Both days
Iona Holsted (Ministry of Education)	Both days
Chai Chuah (Ministry of Health)	Both days

Lou Sanson (Department of Conservation)	Both days
Gráinne Moss (Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki)	Both days
Julie Read (Serious Fraud Office)	Both days
Pauline Winter (Ministry for Pacific Peoples)	Both days
Margaret Retter (Ministry for Women)	Both days
Dorothy Adams (Social Investment Agency)	Both days
Liz MacPherson (Statistics New Zealand)	Both days
Brendan Boyle (Ministry of Social Development)	Both days
Martyn Dunne (Ministry for Primary Industries)	Both days
Helene Quilter (Ministry of Defence)	Both days
Brook Barrington (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade)	Both days
Andrew Kibblewhite (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet)	Both days
Ray Smith (Department of Corrections)	Both days
Andrew Bridgman (Ministry of Justice)	Day 1
Michelle Hippolite (Te Puni Kokiri)	Day 2
Mike Bush (New Zealand Police)	Day 1
Did Not Attend	
Scott Pickering (ACC)	No
Lt Gen Tim Keating (New Zealand Defence Force)	No
Fergus Gammie (New Zealand Transport Agency)	No