



7 September 2023

Tēnā koe

On 10 August 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *A list of all events the ministry has held or had some responsibility for hosting that cost in excess of \$10,000 over the past year? Can the total cost for each of these events please be provided, along with a breakdown of what contributed to the costs? It would be helpful to also know the business purpose or justification for each event as well.*

As part of the Annual Review process, the Ministry routinely answers a question on how much "was spent on internal conferences and seminars, staff retreats, offsite training, or planning and teambuilding exercises, including travel costs, and what is the purpose of each"? The Ministry has interpreted your request as being for the same information that the Annual Review question asks. If we have misunderstood your request, please let me know.

The Ministry routinely engages at a regional level with senior managers, staff, and stakeholders, through Regional Forums. These Forums connect the Leadership Team with staff and stakeholders located across New Zealand. It is a priority for the Ministry's Leadership Team to engage with its staff and with stakeholders. The forums enable the Leadership Team to meet with around 1,500 staff and around 700 local stakeholders, such as employers, business leaders, iwi partners, community providers, and local government agencies.

The Ministry reports annually in the Annual Review on these events and their associated costs. This information is published and is publicly available. The latest published Annual Review is for the 2021/22 financial year and is found on the Parliamentary website. Please see question 101 on page 84: [2021-22 Annual Review - MSD responses to written questions 1-332.docx \(www.parliament.nz\)](#). You may also be interested in question 95 which covers [how much the Ministry spent on catering by financial year](#).

Information on the last financial year (1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023) has not yet been published, however, the Ministry can confirm there have been 28 engagement events in the past financial year, at a combined total cost of \$162,720. The events included one Leadership Summit, Leaders' Forums, National Office Staff Engagement Forums, and Regional Forums.

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. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry'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, 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.

Ngā mihi nui



Shalleen Hern
General Manager
Communications and Engagement