

9 February 2023

s 9(2)(a)

[REDACTED]

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REF: OIA-11593

Dear s 9(2)(a)

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 29 November 2022 requesting information regarding Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency's Christmas parties costs under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). I will address each of your concern in turn as follows:

- 1. The total budget for your department's Christmas party/parties for 2022 and 2021. Please separate costs for each year.**

In creating a positive working environment at Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, most of our offices have a formal social club that is tasked with organising various events throughout the year, including Christmas parties.

Every Transport Agency employee in an office with a social club is automatically a member. Membership fees are at the discretion of each social club. While the clubs are mostly free, smaller clubs might need a little extra funding to keep them going. If a member of staff does not want to be a member of the social club, they are not obliged to participate.

Generally, each Social Club is provided with \$50 per permanent staff member to spend annually, along with any remaining balance from the previous financial year. Some clubs might need to top this up with some fundraising activities. This would normally happen if the office has a smaller number of staff and it would likely cost too much to hold a function at an external venue.

There is no budget set aside for Christmas parties specifically. Usually, prior to holding a Christmas party, each social club will gauge interest from the staff in their respective office to identify the number of attendees. Subsequently, the Social Club Committee decides whether the party can be fully subsidised, or whether the attendees are required to pay for tickets. For instance, in 2022, Wellington Christmas party attendees were required to pay \$20 per person and any plus ones were required to pay \$45. Also in 2022, Auckland Christmas party attendees were not required to pay additional fees but their plus one was required to pay \$80 per person.

2. The number of parties that were or will be held in each year.

In the 2021 Calendar year, the Wellington (Chews Lane and the Majestic Centre), Auckland/ Northland, Palmerston North did not hold a Christmas Party due to the COVID-19 alert level restrictions that were in place at the time.

For the Wellington Social Club, there was a \$20 subsidy per employee to contribute towards an end-of-year event which was organised by each team. The Auckland Social Club held morning teas on their offices during business hours. Meanwhile, Palmerston North Social Club organised a roast lunch at the Waka Kotahi offices (Rangitikei branch office and main Palmerston North Office).

Social club committee	Number of parties held	
	2021	2022
Auckland/ Northland	N/A	1
Hamilton	1	1
Tauranga	1	1
Wellington	N/A	1
Palmerston North	N/A	1
Christchurch	1	1
Napier	1	1
Dunedin	1	1
Total	5	8

3. The number of staff who attended (or are expected to attend) each year's party/parties.

Social club committee	Number of staff attended (people)	
	2021	2022
Auckland/ Northland	N/A	90*
Hamilton	61	64
Tauranga	23	24
Wellington	N/A	300
Palmerston North	N/A	230**
Christchurch	64	50
Napier	27	30
Dunedin	33	43
Total	208	831

*23 people were plus one. Plus one is required to pay an extra charge.

**52 people are plus one. Plus one is required to pay an extra charge.

4. The location of the venue/s for each year.

Social club committee	Venues	
	2021	2022
Auckland/ Northland	N/A	Archie Brothers, Newmarket
Hamilton	Hamilton Office	Okoroire Hotel*
Tauranga	The Bowls at the Citizens Club Mt Maunganui	Okoroire Hotel*
Wellington	N/A	Sky Stadium
Palmerston North	N/A	Silk Lounge Awapuni Racecourse
Christchurch	The Borough, Richmond Club	Quality Hotel Elms
Napier	Shed 2	3 Wise Birds
Dunedin	La Porchetta	Ironic

*Hamilton and Tauranga Office had a joint Christmas party

5. A breakdown of the costs by expense type for each year's party/parties, including (where applicable) but not limited to the following:

- Accommodation
- Catering (e.g., beverages, crockery, food, glassware)
- Consultation with relevant stakeholders
- Decorations (e.g., Christmas tree, lights)
- Entertainment (e.g., guest speaker/s, live music)
- Planning
- Travel to and from the venue (e.g., bus hire, flights)
- Venue

We have provided you with the indicative cost for all Waka Kotahi end of year Christmas parties in 2021 and 2022. Some of the expenses for 2022 are not yet finalised as we are still waiting for final invoices from vendors.

A breakdown the staff Christmas parties for 2021 and 2022 for each Social Club Committees is detailed in Appendix 1.

In line with Waka Kotahi policy, this response will soon be published on our website, with personal information removed.

If you would like to discuss this reply with Waka Kotahi, please contact Ministerial Services, by email at official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz

Yours sincerely



John Coulter

Senior Manager, Operational Policy, Planning and Performance

Appendix 1

2021

	Auckland/ Northland	Hamilton	Tauranga	Wellington	Palmerston North	Napier	Christchurch	Dunedin
Venue	N/A	N/A	\$40	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$200	N/A
Accommodation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Catering	N/A	\$3,337.32	\$1,043	N/A	N/A	\$1,191.96	\$4,622.50	\$1,047
Consultation with relevant stakeholders	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Decorations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Entertainment	N/A	N/A	\$460	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Planning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Travel to and from the venue	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	N/A	\$3,337.32	\$1,543	N/A	N/A	\$1,191.96	\$4,822.50	\$1,047

2022

	Auckland/ Northland	Hamilton	Tauranga	Wellington	Palmerston North	Napier	Christchurch	Dunedin
Venue	\$7,033.50*	N/A	N/A	\$4,405	\$900	N/A	N/A	N/A
Accommodation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Catering		\$2,947.50	\$1,050.50	\$13,289	\$20,000	\$1,563	\$3,848.50	\$2,110
Consultation with relevant stakeholders	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Decorations	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$200	\$513.30	N/A	N/A	N/A
Entertainment	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$2,776	\$3,129.99	N/A	N/A	N/A
Planning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Travel to and from the venue	N/A	N/A	\$725	N/A	\$250	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total cost	\$7,033.50	\$2,947.50	\$1,775.50	\$20,670	\$24,793.29	\$1,563	\$3,848.50	\$2,110

*the venue already covers catering.