

18 June 2024

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REF: OIA-15584

Dear ██████████

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 6 June 2024 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). I will respond to parts of your request in turn as follows:

Hi, I am interest in the expenditure NZTA expends on pothole repairs and those repaired how long they last [...]

We cannot give an exact figure on current expenditure for pothole repairs. This activity is part of a lump sum for maintenance which includes activities such as road surface maintenance and renewals, litter control, vegetation control and signage replacement.

We also cannot give an accurate answer on the life spans of repaired potholes as these vary due to each region's unique geology and climate, the location of the repair within the traffic lane and the volume of traffic on the road, as well as unforeseen events such as flooding caused by adverse weather and earthquakes.

I am therefore required to refuse this part of your request under section 18(g)(i) of the Act as the information requested is not held by NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) and there are no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department or organisation.

Further information about the current 2021-24 National Land Transport Programme (NLTP), which includes funding for specific activities in each region, is available on our website at:
<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/planning-and-investment/national-land-transport-programme/2021-24-nltp/>

You may be interested to know that on 6 June 2024 the Minister of Transport announced that the government will establish dedicated funding for pothole repairs. During the 2024-27 NLTP period NZTA will deliver \$2.07 billion for State Highway Pothole Prevention and \$1.9 billion for Local Road Pothole Prevention. The announcement is available at:
www.beehive.govt.nz/release/government-delivers-funding-boost-fix-potholes

1. How are contractors paid to repair a pothole i.e., is it sized based, or volume of hot mix used or undertaken on hourly rate repair time. If repairs fall within a wider contract please supply that contract together with the associated repair cost.

2. What cost is paid to repair a pothole based on answer to above, does the cost include traffic management, and if not, how is that charged, and at what rate

The cost of repairing potholes is part of a larger lump sum item for cyclic repairs and is not paid individually. In terms of payment methods, our contractors are employed by NZTA via our prequalification process which is outlined on our website at the below link:

www.nzta.govt.nz/about-us/information-for-suppliers/contractor-prequalification/

NZTA uses a contracting model known as Network Outcomes Contract (NOC) delivery. This means we have a number of contractors who are paid to undertake a range of services, which include pothole repairs, for a set contract value. You can find out more about NOCs and the state highway maintenance proforma manual (SM032), including the contract materials, at the following link: www.nzta.govt.nz/roads-and-rail/highways-information-portal/technical-disciplines/procurement/maintenance.

As a result, we cannot answer questions 1 and 2 of your request as this would involve a significant amount of time and staff resources consulting with all of our contractors and sub-contractors to isolate every product in order to determine each contractor's repair costs, which may or may not include temporary traffic management (TTM).

I am therefore refusing this request under section 18(f) of the Act as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

In refusing your request, we have considered whether consulting with you, charging for the information, or extending the timeframe for responding to your request would help as required by sections 18A and 18B of the Act. However, as your request is specific in nature, this would not assist us in providing a response to your request as the substantial staff time required to collate the information would not be reduced.

3. What record is kept of repair (where and when) and what system/record is kept whether same pothole is again repaired, and if so when.

Records of pothole repairs and other maintenance work on state highways are stored in our RAMM database. These records can be used to isolate areas where sites have been revisited, but this is more difficult for repairs to potholes due to the small area of repair.

4. Does NZTA impose a quality assurance/performance clause for the work undertaken and if so copy please.

Under NZTA contract conditions, our contractors are required to undertake permanent pavement repairs which involves shaping the pothole with straight sides and of a sufficient size to remove any unsuitable material and compact fresh granular fill to the right density. The hole is then sprayed with an emulsion tack coat and the surface is either sealed or filled with asphalt or other proprietary product.

While each of our contractors will have their own mix of materials, for pothole repairs and other maintenance issues NZTA sets quality standards through a Maintenance Management Plan. Contractors report on these each quarter and they are audited by NZTA.

Our maintenance specifications for potholes are available on our website at:
<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/maint-specs-potholes/docs/maint-specs-potholes.pdf>

Further information can also be accessed at the following third-party web pages:

- <https://www.ezstreetasphalt.co.nz/>
- <https://www.highway1.co.nz/product/bitumend-coldmix-500kg-1000kg-bags>.

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to refuse parts of this request. The contact details for the Ombudsman can be located at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

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

If you would like to discuss this reply with NZTA, please contact us by email to official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Vanessa Browne
National Manager, Programme and Standards