

1 December 2022

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation, received on 19 October 2022 in which you asked for:

*With respect, covering from January 1 this year to today's date, can DOC please provide briefings at a DDG level or above about visitor infrastructure. These briefings, which would be of a national nature, should cover, but not be limited to, the state of visitor infrastructure, safety issues, costs of fixing huts, tracks and structures, a priority list, potentially, and the financial implications of maintaining and replacing all infrastructure.*

On 17 November 2022 we extended your request as it necessitated a search through a large quantity of information.

The Department administers New Zealand's largest recreation network including more than 14,000km of tracks, 326 campsites, over 900 backcountry huts and 50 heritage icon sites across one third of the country. As well enabling people to access and benefit from conservation areas, the network is a big part of New Zealand's identity and heritage.

DOC's Heritage & Visitor Strategy helps to set the direction for investment across the recreation network. DOC is in the process of updating and developing internal systems for prioritising where to focus resources across the network. We need to ensure DOC tracks and facilities are fit-for-purpose, can be delivered within the department's resource limits and meet the evolving needs of New Zealanders.

This work is designed to address changes in use, significant challenges and cost pressures including:

- the accelerating impacts of climate change;
- depreciation and steeply rising maintenance and operational costs;
- an upward trend in visitor numbers across the network; and
- reduced revenue from campsite and hut fees and from the International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy due to border restrictions over the last two years.

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed in the Schedule of Documents table below. Some information has been withheld which does not fit the scope of your request. Some of the information in the documents are subject to information being withheld under the following sections of the Official Information Act:



- personal contact details of officials, under section 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people
- maintain the effective conduct of public affairs under section 9(2)(g)(i).

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Official Information Act and determined there are no public interests which outweigh the grounds for withholding.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā



Darryl Lew  
Director, Planning and Services  
Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

**Table 1 - Schedule of documents**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Document description</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1	20 January 2022	DDG memo: Impacts of managing recreation asset cost pressure within baseline	Released in part – some information withheld under s9(2)(g)(i)
2	27 January 2022	DG memo: Recreation asset; cost pressure and deferred work	Released in part – some information withheld under s9(2)(g)(i)
3	23 March 2022	DDG: Enterprise Asset Management Governance Group – Overview of the current state of asset management	Released in part – out of scope information redacted
4	March 22	DDG: Heritage, Visitor & Biodiversity Asset Management – Current state & Challenges power point	Item 5: Released in part – out of scope information redacted and some information withheld under s9(2)(g)(i)
5	April 2022	DDG: HV Governance Group Package	Item 6: Released in part – out of scope information redacted and some information withheld under s9(2)(g)(i)
6	9 May 2022	DDG: Enterprise Asset Management Governance Group – Direction of travel for DOC's Asset Management	Released in part – out of scope information redacted
7	June 2022	DDG: HV Governance Group Package June	Released in part – out of scope information redacted some information withheld under s9(2)(g)(i)
8	5 October 2022	DDG: Enterprise Asset Management Governance Group – Cable Structure Safety	Released in full
9	January 2022	DDG: Monthly DDG Ops Report – Recreation, Historic Biodiversity	Released in part – out of scope information redacted
10	February 2022	DDG: Monthly DDG Ops Report – Recreation, Historic Biodiversity	Released in part – out of scope information redacted
11	March 2022	DDG: Monthly DDG Ops Report – Recreation, Historic Biodiversity	Released in part – out of scope information redacted



12	April 2022	DDG: Monthly DDG Ops Report – Recreation, Historic Biodiversity	Released in part – out of scope information redacted
13	May 2022	DDG: Monthly DDG Ops Report – Recreation, Historic Biodiversity	Released in part – out of scope information redacted
14	June 2022	DDG: Monthly DDG Ops Report – Recreation, Historic Biodiversity	Released in part – out of scope information redacted
15	July 2022	DDG: Monthly DDG Ops Report – Recreation, Historic Biodiversity	Released in part – out of scope information redacted
16	August 2022	DDG: Monthly DDG Ops Report – Recreation, Historic Biodiversity	Released in part – out of scope information redacted
17	September 2022	DDG: Monthly DDG Ops Report – Recreation, Historic Biodiversity	Released in part – out of scope information redacted