

21 December 2022



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 29 November 2022 in which you asked for:

- *The total budget for your department's Christmas party/parties for 2022 and 2021. Please separate costs for each year.*
- *The number of parties that were or will be held in each year.*
- *The number of staff who attended (or are expected to attend) each year's party/parties.*
- *The location of the venue/s for each year.*
- *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*

**Your questions and our answers are outlined below:**

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

We budget up to \$20 per staff member for Christmas functions.

Due to the large number of office locations across the country, and work roster considerations, each region and team organises their own Christmas function. The \$20 budget limit is to cover food and beverage (excluding alcohol) and is only

available for the number of staff attending. The Christmas function budget of \$20 per staff member remained the same for the 2021 and 2022 calendar year.

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

We do not actively track, seek, or maintain data on how many Christmas functions are held each year.

As previously noted, each team and region organise their own Christmas function depending on circumstance and availability. In this respect the number of Christmas functions held is fluid and changes year on year due to a variety of factors.

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

Staff attendance at end of year work Christmas functions fluctuates due to a several factors (sickness, work priorities, annual leave) and if held outside of work hours attendance is often a personal choice. In this respect we are unable to provide an accurate number of staff who attended (or are expected to attend) Christmas functions.

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

We do not actively track, seek or maintain data on where end of year Christmas functions occur by location or year.

As an organisation we do however acknowledge that given the modest amount of budgeted expenditure (\$20 per person), Christmas functions tend to be held at a local eatery or food purchased and prepared on site e.g. a BBQ.

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

We do not hold data which provides a breakdown by type of expense for each year's Christmas function.

Regarding total spend, we have searched our finance system and can identify the following expenditure in relation to DOC wide Christmas functions:

- 2020 (\$26,800)
- 2021 (\$28,900)

Expenditure for 2022 is not available as the Christmas season has not yet concluded.

In line with our messaging above, aspects of questions 2-5 are refused under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act as the information requested does not exist.



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



Nāku noa, nā



Kevin Martin  
Chief Financial Officer  
Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*