

**From:** [Ministerials](#)  
**To:** s 9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** Response to your Official Information Act request  
**Date:** Thursday, 15 November 2018 1:18:25 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)

---

Kia ora s 9(2)  
( )

Thank you for request of 26 September 2018 under the Official Information Act 1982.

As previously noted, your request was incorrectly caught in our spam filter. We apologise for the delay in responding to you.

Please find the answers to your questions below:

*a. Does your organisation have legal responsibilities under the Treaty of Waitangi?*

The Waitangi Tribunal and the Courts have found that active protection of the Maori language is a Government responsibility under the Treaty of Waitangi.

The Tribunal found that te reo Maori is a taonga (valued possession) protected by Article II of the Treaty of Waitangi.

*b. Does your organisation have legal responsibilities to engage with te reo Maori in some way or another? Does your organisation have a duty (such as in its charter, or its empowering legislation) to reflect New Zealand's cultural identity?*

The government is committed to improve results for Maori and to meet its obligations as a Treaty partner. To do this, the Crown/Maori relationship must be strong and the Crown, Maori and all New Zealanders must agree on what should be done to achieve this.

A healthy Crown/Maori relationship will assist the Crown and Maori to:

- Improve outcomes for Maori and the nation generally; and
- help ensure the two parties meet their respective Treaty obligations

Understanding iwi perspectives and issues at the front end of our policy and programme development will ensure the Ministry for the Environment delivers products that are effective and fit for purpose.

The Ministry needs to engage with iwi because both the Crown and iwi have a strong stake in the development and management of natural resources. For iwi, natural resources are; central to iwi identity (land, rivers, mountains and the foreshore are key reference points for the identity of each iwi), central to iwi economic development and at the heart of Treaty claims.

*c. Does your organisation have a formal policy, strategy, or commitment, relating to te reo Maori ability and proficiency for staff? (If so, can you please provide a copy of it)?*

We incorporate strategies to increase te reo Maori ability and proficiency wherever possible and are committed to this. We offer beginner and advanced Te Reo classes for

staff and work has started on a review of our Te Reo Maori Strategy which will include revisiting our Te Reo capability needs.

*d. Does your organisation have a policy on diversity and inclusion? (If so, can you please provide a copy of it)? –*

Not at present. We recognise the need to value, reflect and understand the communities we serve, and working along-side the wider State Sector we are part of the Diversity and Inclusion Network. Work is underway within our Sustainability Strategy to develop a strategy for diversity and inclusion within the Ministry.

*e. How many staff in your organisation are recorded as being fluent in te reo Maori?*

One staff member is currently certified for their Te Reo Maori by the Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo Maori and receiving a level 3 Te Reo Allowance.

*f. Has your organisation provided any te reo Maori lessons or education to staff in the past 12 months? (If so, how many staff has it provided those to, and what was the format of the lessons?) –*

Yes. We provide four courses a year (two in beginners in Te Reo and two for advanced beginners). These consist of 10x 1 hour classes each course 34 people participated.

*g. Does your organisation have any te reo Maori lessons or education scheduled to be provided to staff in upcoming 12 months? (If so, how many staff does it intend to provide those to?)*

Currently we have one beginners and one advanced scheduled in the first half of 2019. We expect this to be extended to another one of each before the end of 2019. Once all four have run we expect around 30 people will have participated from January to December 2019.

*h How many personnel does your organisation currently engage? (Please include full-time staff, part-time, employees, and volunteers)*

Headcount as at 31 October 2018 is 475

Full-time-equivalent (FTE) as at 31 October 2018 is 368.8 (Permanent/Fixed/Intern/staff seconded out only)

*i. Does your organisation have any personnel who manage the relationships between your organisation and Maori communities? (If so, how many personnel are engaged for that purpose?)*

Engagement and relationship management with Iwi/ Maori is supported across the Ministry. The Directorate that supports projects associated with Treaty of Waitangi negotiation, Treaty settlement implementation and Iwi/ Maori relationships has a current budget of 15.4 FTE.

We hope this information is helpful.

Naku noa, na,

## **Sam Dawson**

Lead Business Partner, People and Culture  
Ministry for the Environment – Manatu Mo Te Taiao

Website: [www.mfe.govt.nz](http://www.mfe.govt.nz)

23 Kate Sheppard Place, PO Box 10362, Wellington 6143

cid:image006.jpg@01D2BAAB.D5B55350



Released under the provision of  
the Official Information Act 1982