



5 September 2019

Tabitha Lorck
tabitha@taxpayers.org.nz

Dear Ms Lorck

Official Information Request
Our Ref: SSCOIA 2019-0065

I refer to your official information request received on 24 May 2019 for:

"Information regarding remuneration of Chief Executive Officers in the State sector.

1. *I am requesting the precise salary of your CEO for the 2017/ 18 financial year.*
 - a. *I have the salary band as it is publicly available at http://www.ssc.govt.nz/sites/all/files/Senior%20Pay%20Report%202018_0.pdf.*
 - b. *Given the salary band is X amount between the difference of \$9,999, we believe the privacy involved to the CEO is low and therefore request the exact figure.*
2. *I am requesting the precise salary of your CEO for the current (2018/ 19) financial year.*
 - a. *While this financial year is not yet finished, instead of sending two separate OIA requests I am seeking this information now".*

As noted in our response to you on 15 July 2019, the Ombudsman was investigating matters relating to what level of detail in respect of chief executive remuneration should be disclosed. During his investigations, the Ombudsman consulted with the Privacy Commissioner, before reaching his final opinion.

As a general rule, information about an individual's employment, such as remuneration and salary information, is considered to be information private to that individual. There is an expectation that such information will not generally be disclosed (without prior agreement) in order to protect that person's privacy.

However, when this type of information is sought in relation to a Public Service chief executive, it is generally accepted that the public interest in accountability for public expenditure is high. Consequently, this public interest may need to be recognised by the release of sufficient information to satisfy that public interest consideration.

The Ombudsman in his final opinion has stated that there is a low privacy interest in disclosing the Public Service chief executives' actual total remuneration amount, including because in this context there is little difference than reporting it in \$10,000 bands, as currently disclosed in the annual Senior Pay Report. The State Services Commissioner's view on this matter coincides with the Ombudsman opinion.

Therefore, in response to your request, please find attached the total remuneration figures for chief executives for the 2017/18 financial year.

Total remuneration figures for the financial year 2018/19 are currently being collected, collated and checked for publication in the Annual Senior Pay Report. We will provide you with the link to the report once this has been released.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact Ministerial.Services@ssc.govt.nz.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that we intend to publish this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents on the State Services Commission's website.

Yours sincerely



Nicky Dirks
Managing Principal – Ministerial Services
State Services Commission