



7 April 2021

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cc: GovernmentServices@doc.govt.nz

Tēnā koe Louis

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 request to the Department of Conservation/*Te Papa Atawhai*, received on 8 March 2021. You asked two questions on the costs incurred by the department associated with the recovery, transportation and burial of a leatherback turtle. The department will respond to each question as outlined in your email.

Before I answer the first question, some context to this situation may assist your understanding. The recovery of a leatherback turtle of this size (350kg) and in this condition is an unusual event in New Zealand. Once recovered the recently deceased turtle was offered to Te Papa - the national museum of New Zealand, and the turtle was quickly transported to Wellington before it decomposed. It then became increasingly clear local iwi also viewed the arrival of this turtle as a very significant event. The rūnanga then worked with Te Papa to arrange for the repatriation of the leatherback turtle. The rūnanga completed the arrangements, organised logistics and hosted the event mostly in their own time, and at their own cost.

1. *Did any DOC staff attend this powhiri? If so, how many? What costs were incurred by DOC in relation to the event?*

Seven department staff attended the pōwhiri with Te Rūnanga o Koukourārata to facilitate the transportation and burial of the turtle. Three of the seven staff are salaried staff so no additional costs were incurred for their time. The cost for the other four staff attending is calculated at four staff, for six hours each at \$25 per hour, giving a total of \$600. The department also provided a \$200 koha to offset costs to the rūnanga for hosting staff for the ceremony. Vehicle mileage for the day was 90km for the round trip. At 0.72 cents per kilometre, (based on DOC vehicle recovery rates) across two vehicles, equates to \$130. Further costs related to the safe transportation of the 350kg turtle to Horomaka Island incurred on the same day as the pōwhiri are included in the response to your second question below.

2. What costs were incurred by DOC in relation to the turtle's movements? Please include the cost of any preservation/chilling/freezing/wrapping of the turtle.

The following table outlines the cost of recovering the leatherback turtle, transporting it from Te Papa back to Port Levy and preparing for its burial.

Item	Unit	Cost
Original recovery of the leatherback turtle	8 hrs x 1 ranger	\$200
Transportation to Te Papa	No cost to DOC	
Transportation from Wellington to Port Levy		
Refrigerated truck	3 days	\$940
Ferry crossings for one staff member and truck	2	\$448
Accommodation & food	No cost to DOC	\$0
One staff (accompanied by rūnanga member)	2.5 days @ \$25 per hour	\$500
Helicopter to transport 350kg turtle to the burial site on Horomaka Island	One trip, less than 1 hrs flying time	\$1600
Staff costs to prepare burial site		
Archaeological survey (staff time)	2 x staff @ 6hrs each	\$300
Digging (other diggers were from the Rūnanga)	3 staff @ 8 hrs each	\$600

Please note the cost of transporting the turtle to Te Papa was not undertaken by the department. Te Papa stored the turtle in a frozen state in their own facilities, so the department does not have these costs. As far as we are aware the turtle was not wrapped, however, a wooden crate was built by staff at Te Papa for the turtle's transportation back to Port Levy.

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

Thank you for your email, if you have any further questions, please call Andy Thompson (Operations Manager, Mahaanui) on 027 539 8800.

Nāku noa, nā



Nicola Toki
Director, Operations (Eastern South Island)
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai