

10 MAY 2017

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request to the Ministry Media Team of 17 March 2017, requesting the following information:

1. *How many full time-equivalent communications staff did you have in the 2015/16 financial year (including positions that were temporarily vacant)?*
2. *What was the total communications department cost (including wages and spending) for 2015/16 financial year?*
 - a. *If recorded, please provide the cost of solely external communications for that period.*
3. *How much was spent on external Public Relations (ie firms/advice/services/contractors/communications) in the 2015/16 year?*
4. *How many full time-equivalent communications staff did you have in the 2010/11 financial year (including positions that were temporarily vacant)?*
5. *What was the total communications department cost (including wages and spending) for the 2010/2011 financial year?*
 - a. *If recorded, please provide the cost of solely external communications for that period.*
6. *How much was spent on external Public Relations (ie firms/advice/services/contractors/communications) in the 2010/11 year?*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

By communicating effectively with parents, educators, journalists and other stakeholders we give people the opportunity to make informed choices about education, and to better hold us to account for our decision making, policies, standards and spending. Communications staff are also vital in times of emergency – in the last year, we provided necessary, up-to-the-minute information following the 2016 Seddon earthquakes, the recent Port Hills fires and flooding in the Bay of Plenty. External communications staff can be assigned to a specific project or programme, such as Communities of Learning | Kāhui Ako, or school property.

For the purposes of our reporting, we use the same Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) classifications as the State Services Commission (SSC) to identify communications staff in public sector organisations. The number of external communications FTEs, and salaries paid to these staff in the two financial years in scope of your request, is as follows:

Financial Year	FTEs	Salaries
2015/16	11.64	\$1,132,146
2010/11	10.03	\$991,318

For your reference, information about the State Services Commission coding requirements can be found on their website at <https://www.ssc.govt.nz/hrc-survey-materials>.

The non-salary costs associated with communications staff are recorded as part of a wider cost centre and I am unable to break this spending down to the level of specificity in your request. I am therefore declining this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information does not exist in the form you have requested.

External public relations

The majority of our public relations campaign cost is the promotion of TeachNZ, which addresses teacher shortages, promotes teaching as a profession and lifts the status of the profession. In 2010/11, this cost was \$1,200,000 and was the only public relations exercise undertaken that year.

Our breakdown of spending in 2015/16 is as follows:

Advertising/PR Campaign	Type of Product/ Service Provided	cost
Advertising and communications under the TeachNZ brand	Design and production of advertising and publication (print and online) for promotion of scholarships and study and education awards, and recruitment targeting Māori and Pasifika students.	\$760,952 (excluding GST)
Supporting a range of public consultation and engagement processes for closing and merging schools and delivering a range of publications (including an AV series) directed to the sector and wider community outlining progress and highlighting successes of Greater Christchurch Education Renewal Plan (GCERP)	Communications support to GCERP	\$31,336
ECE Better Information for Parents promotes the value, benefits and understanding of early learning, and encourages enrolment with an early learning service	Publication and advertising	\$101,800
Total		\$894,088

I hope this information has been useful for you. If you have any further questions about this response, you can contact the Ministry's Media Team in the first instance, by emailing Media.Team@education.govt.nz.

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to refer this response to an Ombudsman. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Ellen MacGregor-Reid
Deputy Secretary
Strategy, Planning and Governance