

30 August 2019

Amanda Cropp
Stuff

E-Mail: Amanda.cropp@stuff.co.nz

Dear Amanda

Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) Request

I refer to your e-mail of 24 July 2019 requesting the following information:

- How many comms / PR staff did you employ (FTE) for the years ending 30 June 2014 and 2019?

Refer to information below.

- How many comms / PR people did you employ (FTE) on contract for the years ending 30 June 2014 and 2019?

Refer to information below

- How much was your comms/PR budget for the years ending 30 June 2014 and 2019?

	Communications Team					
	Actuals 2018/19	Actuals 2017/18	Actuals 2016/17	Actuals 2015/16	Actuals 2014/15	Actuals 2013/14
Total	524,075	502,988	463,220	363,383	308,463	289,906

These figures include staff costs and other operational costs such as the printing and distribution of our monthly *FYI Dunedin* newsletter to all residents. Over the six years, the Comms team has risen from two permanent FTEs to four permanent FTEs. This reflects an increased workload in key areas such as social media and media enquiries, and the DCC's efforts to improve the way it communicates with its residents. Extra staff members also mean the organisation is better placed to get information out quickly to the public in emergencies.

Because of the significant number of large infrastructure projects underway or in planning, the Comms team also has an additional Communications Advisor on a two year contracted role. This cost is met from infrastructure budgets.

The Comms team figures do not include public relations work carried out by our in-house economic development and destination marketing unit Enterprise Dunedin or engagement roles.

The Comms team also takes a public information management role in emergencies.

Team numbers

As outlined above, the desire to improve communications generally, and to provide good communications for new large capital projects in areas such as 3 Waters and Transport, has led to an increase in Comms staff. There are also greater demands in areas such as social media and emergency responses.

- What proportion of the comms/PR budget was spent on outside comms/PR consultants or contractors?

Financial Year	Actuals	% on consultancy
2018/19	524,075	5.3%
2017/18	502,988	2.7%
2016/17	463,220	1.4%
2015/16	363,383	3.5%
2014/15	308,463	16.9%
2013/14	289,906	7.5%

Communication team role

The role of the Comms team is to improve the quality of communications coming from the DCC. This means providing clear, accurate, useful and timely information to our residents and ratepayers about the things we are doing, and are involved with, in the city and wider Dunedin area.

The team supports and gives advice to other departments and facilities about the work they are doing and how that can be communicated to the public. The team's role includes preparing and editing content for media releases and advisories as well as for some key documents (such as the 10 year plan consultation document), letters, newsletters, the website, social media, promotional material etc. The team also responds to media enquiries and plays a key part in internal communications.

- How many media enquiries did you receive for the years ending June 2014 and 2019?
Since October 2017 we have averaged three to four media enquiries a day (Monday-Friday). We do not have any data before that date. Please note that the Comms team do not handle formal media enquiries made under LGOIMA.

- What is your target turnaround time for media enquiries?

We try to respond the same day the enquiry is received.

- How often did you meet the target response time last year?

Most of our responses were given the same day.

- What proportion of time did your comms/PR team spend on responding to media enquiries last year?

We don't record this information, but responding to media enquiries is a key part of the team's role and takes up a significant amount of time. As mentioned above, the Comms team has a diverse role which includes providing advice, preparing and editing content for media releases, publications, letters, the website and social media, and internal communications work as well as responding to media enquiries.

- How many live (in person or by phone) media interviews did your chief do last year?

We don't record this information.

- If you have a policy or guidelines on how comms/PR staff should respond to media enquiries, please provide a copy.

The DCC doesn't have a policy or formal guidelines. Our approach is to treat all media fairly and to provide accurate, clear and relevant information as quickly as we can.

- How many of your current comms/PR employees are former journalists?

All of the current comms team are former journalists. Three of the four team members haven't worked in that sector for more than 12 years.

- What is the range of salaries paid to your comms/PR staff from lowest to highest?

Given there are only 4 staff members in the Comms team, to provide a range of salaries would easily identify the top and lowest paid person and their salary, therefore, pursuant to section 7(a) of LGOIMA we decline to provide this information to protect the privacy of a natural person.

As we have declined to provide some information you are advised that you have the right to seek a review by the Office of the Ombudsman.

Yours faithfully



Jennifer Lapham
Governance Support Officer