

17 March 2022

REF: OIA 83228

Daniel Fallon
Independent Reporter

By email: fallooda@gmail.com

Tēnā koe Daniel

Request for Official Information: Working from home policy

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 March 2022 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

"Whether Te Arawhiti has specific policy around having staff work in the building vs working remotely, and any reasoning behind this decision.

Does Te Arawhiti view it as their employees responsibility to support local business by working on site and is this a part of Te Arawhiti's official COVID-19 employee safety policy?

Is working on site required for delivery of Te Arawhiti's work stream or can the agency function with a fully remote team."

A response to your request is set out below.

In Te Arawhiti, working from home (WFH) policies are distinct to remote working policies. Remote working refers to staff who are permanently located and work outside of our Wellington offices. WFH refers to agreed work practices for staff to work from home for part of their contracted hours. We have used these 'definitions' as the basis for responding to your request.

Question: Whether Te Arawhiti has specific policy around having staff work in the building vs working remotely, and any reasoning behind this decision.

Te Arawhiti does not currently have a WFH policy, a draft policy and procedure was being trialled but has been postponed due to the current COVID 19 Protection Framework setting. We do not anticipate the policy to be completed and endorsed until the second half of 2022.

Any WFH policy will meet the guidelines and principles set out by the Public Service Commission: Te Kawa Mataaho (PSC) to be 'flexible by default'. More information is available at this weblink: <https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/our-work/pay-gaps-and-pay-equity/flexible-work-by-default/>.

The reasoning for implementing a WFH policy at Te Arawhiti is set out at by PSC at the following weblink: <https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/our-work/pay-gaps-and-pay-equity/flexible-work-by-default/?e6318=6369-resource-3-the-benefits-of-flexible-working>.

Question: Does Te Arawhiti view it as their employees responsibility to support local business by working on site and is this a part of Te Arawhiti's official COVID-19 employee safety policy?

The support of local business requirements does not form part of any Te Arawhiti's policy. However, Te Arawhiti strives to be a responsible member of our local community, we do this by engaging local suppliers, encouraging our staff to participate in local sporting events, and demonstrating appropriate community behaviours when at work and representing Te Arawhiti. Almost all our staff are Wellington based. We do not however have a formalised policy on our responsibilities to support local business through by encouraging working on site.

Is working on site required for delivery of Te Arawhiti's work stream or can the agency function with a fully remote team.

The requirement to work on site and deliver on our workstream will vary depending on the type and nature of the role as per the aforementioned Te Kawa Mataaho (PSC) "flexible by default" guidelines.

Outside of current Covid restrictions and mandated lockdowns there are no plans for Te Arawhiti to operate fully remotely.

When Te Arawhiti acknowledged receipt of your OIA request, we advised we may proactively release your OIA response on our website.

After considering our response to your request, we can advise that it will be published no earlier than 20 working days from the date of this letter at www.tearawhiti.govt.nz. Your personal and other identifying information will be removed.

If you have any concerns about the information in this response being published on our website please contact us by emailing officialcorrespondence@tearawhiti.govt.nz by 5.00pm on 31 March 2022.

Nāku noa, nā



Darrin Sykes

Deputy Chief Executive – Organisational Services | Tumu Whakarae Tuarua