



13 April 2018

Ref: DOIA 1718-1179

Redacted - Privacy

Dear **Redacted**

Thank you for your email received on 14 March 2017. In your email you requested the following under the Official Information Act 1982:

"Under the Official Information Act 1982, please answer the following questions:

- 1. Has your department/ministry given funding to the Arawa River Iwi Trust since 2009/10; if so, how much funding has been provided?*
- 2. What was the purpose for which this funding was given?*
- 3. What were the outcomes your department/ministry contracted for in providing this funding?*
- 4. Was an evaluation completed in relation to this funding/contract? Did the evaluation find the outcomes contracted for had been met?*
- 5. Was Te Arawa River Iwi Trust given funding in the 2017/18 financial year? Is Te Arawa River Iwi Trust to be given funding in the 2018/19 financial year?*
- 6. Does your department/ministry have a policy on providing funding to organisations when individuals associated with those organisations are under investigation by the Serious Fraud Office? If so, what is that policy?"*

We provide the following:

1. In response to question one, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment funded the Te Arawa River Iwi Trust through the 2015 round of Te Pūnaha Hīringa: Māori Innovation Fund Commercial Advisors Scheme. The Trust was approved funding of \$75,000 excl. GST for their *Te Arawa River Iwi Commercial Apiculture Industry* project.

The scheme pays only upon receipt of an invoice from the collective, copying in an invoice from a Ministry-approved commercial advisor. The Trust requested total reimbursement of \$42,187.50 excl. GST from their available funding.

2. In response to question two, in 2015 the scheme aimed to help Māori collectives, such as the Trust, to gain the capability, understanding and knowledge they needed to realise the economic potential of their assets. The scheme could also help collectives to engage more effectively with the wider enterprise development and innovation systems.
3. In response to question three, the scheme supported Māori collectives to work with a commercial advisor to identify and assess investment opportunities, and to develop and embed the skills and networks they need to put their plans into action.

The Trust received funding to explore the commercial and environmental impacts of large-scale riparian plantings along the Te Arawa Iwi Lands of approximately 100 hectares. In order to achieve this, the Trust wished to undertake a scoping study to:

- a. assess the possible conversion of 100 hectares of land into apiculture units;
 - b. assist in the establishment of an apiculture business; and
 - c. assess the diminution of nitrogen run off and the protection of boundaries of waterways.
4. In response to question four, applicants are not required to complete an evaluation of their funding/contract.

A review of the Māori Innovation Fund, which includes the Commercial Advisors Scheme, is expected to be undertaken in the 2018/19 financial year.

5. In response to question five, no.
6. In response to question six, the Ministry does not have a policy specifically related to providing funding to organisations when individuals associated with those organisations are under investigation by the Serious Fraud Office.

While there is no specific policy, as public servants we are obliged to follow the principles of being fair, being impartial, being responsible, and being trustworthy. These are the foundation principles of our Code of Conduct and the State Services Commission's Standards of Integrity and Conduct and they guide the actions of all public servants. We also take into account guidance from the Office of the Auditor General on making investment decisions.

Informed assessment of applications is a critical aspect of the Ministry's investment process. For the 2015 round of the scheme, the Ministry engaged a robust process that included an independent assessment panel scrutinising applications, including applicants in so far as they were aware, and to ensure that applications recommended to be supported by the scheme had been thoroughly considered.

Recipients of funding were also required to maintain a high standard of honesty and integrity at all times in the performance of their Agreement with the Ministry and were required to avoid actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest.

I trust you find this information helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review of the responses we have provided. Information on how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Hinemaua Rikirangi
Te Tumu Whakarae
Te Kupenga
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment