

ENQ-39175-C1Z5K4

29 July 2020

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Via: ██████████

Official Information Act Request

Dear ██████████

Thank you for your email received on 7 July 2020 for the following information:

“What was the agency's total greenhouse gas footprint in the most recent year in which records exist (if such records exist)? Please provide a breakdown of those emissions if they are available.

Does the agency have a policy of requiring employees and/or contractors to offset work-related emissions, eg domestic or international flights?

Does the agency have an emissions reduction plan, or emissions reduction targets, either in place or in development? If so, please provide details of the plan and/or targets.”

Your request has been treated as a request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Given our work as New Zealand's environmental regulator is centred on environmental protection, we feel strongly committed to making a positive difference to our environment, and to do our utmost as an organisation to reduce our carbon footprint.

To give effect to this commitment we have signed up to an environmental certification programme with Toitū Envirocare (previously Enviro-Mark Solutions) to measure, manage, and minimise our environmental impacts. Much of the information that informs this response comes through our Toitū Envirocare involvement. You can find out more about our involvement with Toitū Envirocare through this link <https://www.toitu.co.nz/our-members/members/environmental-protection-agency>.

The response to your request follows:

1. *What was the agency's total greenhouse gas footprint in the most recent year in which records exist (if such records exist)?*

The most recent year that records of our total greenhouse gas footprint exist is the 2018-2019 financial year. We measure this using the Global Warming Potential (GWP), which was developed to allow comparisons of the global warming impacts of different gases. Specifically, it is a measure of how much energy the emissions of 1 tonne of a gas will absorb over a given period of time, relative to the emissions of 1 tonne of carbon dioxide (CO₂).

This means that our total greenhouse gas footprint for the 2018-19 financial year is 380.11 GWP per tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents (tCO₂e). The table below breaks this down into activity categories:

2018/2019 Activity	GWP (t CO ₂ e)
All travel	346.46
Electricity	21.78
Paper use	4.28
Waste landfilled with landfill gas recovery (LFGR) Office waste	7.60
Total	380.11

2. *Does the agency have a policy of requiring employees and/or contractors to offset work-related emissions, eg domestic or international flights?*

The EPA does not have a formal policy for employees and contractors to offset work-related emissions. However, we do have other initiatives to help encourage low-emission travel for work. These include:

- promoting active transport to and from work by providing bike cages and shower facilities
- making Snapper cards available for staff to use when heading for meetings in the CBD, rather than using a taxi
- a staff awareness campaign to help encourage teams to consider travel-related emissions data, and explore potential improvements.

3. *Does the agency have an emissions reduction plan, or emissions reduction targets, either in place or in development? If so, please provide details of the plan and/or targets.*

By signing up to the environmental certification programme, Toitū carbonreduce, the EPA has made a commitment to measure, manage, and minimise its environmental impacts. The 2017-18 financial year was the baseline year for the certification programme. Since this baseline measurement, the reduction strategies that we implemented led to a 10 per cent reduction in emissions.

The current targets that we have set focus on head office emissions. By 1 July 2021 we have committed to achieve a reduction in emissions intensity per full-time equivalent (FTE) of:

- 8% from purchased electricity
- 8% from head office travel
- 15% from waste-to-landfill and paper usage.

We have a range of initiatives to encourage sustainability in general, such as offering all new staff a reusable shopping bag and having supplies of reusable lunch containers in staff kitchens. We are keeping people informed about our journey to sustainability on our website, <https://www.epa.govt.nz/about-us/sustainability/>

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of this decision by the Ombudsman. You can contact the Ombudsman on 0800 802 602, or by email at info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

We will publish your request and our response on our website, www.epa.govt.nz, within 10 working days from today. We make OIA responses available so others can read more about the work we do and the questions we are asked. Any information that might identify you will be removed to protect your privacy.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us via ministerials@epa.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Lim'.

Philip Lim
General Manager
Finance and Systems