

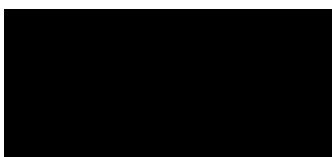


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28 January 2025

Ref: 16782



Tēnā koe [Redacted]

Thank you for your email of 14 January 2025, to Fire and Emergency New Zealand requesting information relating to fire costs in the Northland region. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) and our response is below.

- 1. The full cost of the Whangārei Heads fire which broke out on Thursday, Jan 9 with a full breakdown [including helicopters, crew, equipment, etc]*
- 2. The five most expensive fires in the Northland region in 2024 with full cost breakdowns*
- 3. The five most expensive fires in the Northland region in 2023 with full cost breakdowns*
- 4. The five most expensive fires in the Northland region in 2022 with full cost breakdowns*

Please find attached, as an **Appendix** to this response, and separated by individual tabs, the:

- Known costs incurred from the Whangārei Heads fire (including GST); and
- Breakdown of the most expensive fires in each calendar year (excluding GST).

In relation to the Whangārei Heads fire, please be advised the figures we provided will not reflect the actual cost. This is because this fire occurred within this month, and it will require time for Daily Time Records and invoices associated with this fire incident to be received and processed. It can take up to three months to get a reliable figure. For this reason, we are partially refusing question 1 of your request under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the document(s) alleged to contain the information requested do not exist.

In relation to the remaining tabs which show the breakdown of the most expensive fires in each calendar year since 2022, please note:

- The costs represent the additional costs we incur beyond our fixed cost of maintaining a response capability.
- External firefighting services are those resources that are not owned or, in the case of people, are not employed by Fire and Emergency. They may include forestry companies or Department of Conservation personnel, and operators of heavy equipment such as diggers, bulldozers, water tankers, etc.
- Employee payments may include payments for overtime and travel reimbursements. Volunteer payments may include reimbursements for mileage, parking, petrol, travel costs or meals.
- The costs of a fire could increase if it has occurred in the past three months as the accounting process to receive invoices and process payroll can experience delays.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

We trust that the information being provided is of assistance. If you require further information, please email officialinformationrequests@fireandemergency.nz.

Please note that because of the identified public interest in the information that you have requested, we intend to publish this response (with your personal details removed) on our website.

Nāku noa, nā



Aidan Saunders
Manager, Information Requests

