

21 March 2025

By email to: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2025/07

On Saturday 22 February 2025, you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA) for the following information:

How many business units does the Commission have, and how many people are on the executive leadership team?

What is the core headcount of the Commission? Please advise the number of employees in each business unit?

Does the Electoral Commission undertake an annual engagement survey to ask about employee experience with bullying and the Commission's response to managing bullies in the workplace? If so, what were the results of the survey and did any business unit have a higher number of bullying complaints than others?

How many bullying incidents have been investigated, and substantiated in the workplace?

Can you provide a breakdown of bullying complaints by business unit? I am aware bullying in the workplace can be quite hard to measure especially if psychosocial safety is low. What steps if any have been taken to improve the engagement and psychosocial safety of employees in the workplace?

Finally how many people have had "without prejudice" conversations resulting in them being exited from the Commission along with a settlement agreement? Had any of these people complained of being bullied by their manager?

I would appreciate it if you could provide this information for the most recent available period. If possible, please include any relevant details or breakdowns that can help understand the context of these complaints.

The Commission has 6 business units: Operations, Enterprise Services, Strategy, Governance and Development, Programme, Māori Advisory and Legal, Regulation and Policy. There are 8 people on the Executive Leadership Team. The current headcount of the Commission is 166 which is made up of 153 permanent employees and 13 fixed term employees. The numbers of people in each business unit is set out below. The Office of the Chief Executive includes the ELT members (including the Chief Executive) and an Executive Assistant.

| Business Unit | Headcount |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Office of the Chief Executive | 9 |
| Operations | 94 |
| Enterprise Services | 34 |

| Business Unit | Headcount |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Strategy, Governance and Development | 12 |
| Programme | 9 |
| Māori Advisory | 2 |
| Legal, Regulation and Policy | 6 |
| Total | 166 |

In November 2024, the Board approved an updated Workplace Behaviour Policy in consultation with our staff. As part of this work, comprehensive guidance with tools and resources for all employees was produced. During 2024, the Commission ran workshops with our staff and managers on workplace behaviours. 88% of employees found the activities and content covered in the workshop was useful. We are committed to providing a safe and inclusive workplace culture where all people are respected and valued.

The Commission uses Ask Your Team for employee engagement surveys. In October 2022 and March 2024, the Commission's survey asked the same three questions about unacceptable behaviour which are in the table below along with the responses.

| Question | Answer 2022 | Answer 2024 |
|--|---|---|
| The Commission has clear and effective systems for dealing with unacceptable behaviours | 58% average question score across the Commission with responses ranging from 49% to 83% | 51% average question score across the Commission with responses ranging from 43% to 69% |
| How we deal with unacceptable behaviours is applied equally to everyone working for the Commission | 52% average question score across the Commission with responses ranging from 48% to 60% | 43% average question score across the Commission with responses ranging from 14% to 68% |
| In the last 12 months I have observed bullying or intimidating behaviour at the Commission | Yes 37% and No 63% with responses ranging from Yes 0%-46% and No 54%-100% | Yes 45% and No 55% with responses ranging from Yes 9%-78% and No 22%-91%. |

To date we have not had any bullying incidents investigated and substantiated. We have provided support and information to employees who have raised concerns about unacceptable workplace behaviour. Employees are aware how to raise a complaint formally and informally. Ongoing, our People and Culture Business Partners meet with teams to discuss ways to raise concerns about unacceptable behaviours.

Our new Workplace Behaviour policy that was approved in November 2024 requires us to keep a register of complaints and to date we do not have any complaints on the register.

Since November 2023, two permanent employees have had a "*without prejudice*" conversation and have left the Commission. Neither of these cases involved complaints of bullying by their manager.

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every 3 months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Lucy Hickman
Deputy Chief Executive, Enterprise Services