

14 May 2024



Official Information Act #23.220 – Response

1. We refer to your request received on 4 April 2024 for information about the Commerce Commission (the Commission)'s expenditure on Public Relations (PR) and Communications support. You have requested:
 - 1.1 **“Actual and Budgeted Expenditure:**
Please provide a breakdown of the actual and budgeted expenditure on PR and Communications support for the current financial year, as well as the previous two financial years, for ComCom.
 - 1.2 **Procurement Process:**
For each instance of expenditure on PR and Communications support, please indicate whether the services were procured through an open tender process or if it was a closed process. In accordance with the principles of the Official Information Act, I seek to understand the transparency and competitiveness of the procurement process.
 - 1.3 **Service Providers:**
Please provide the names of the companies, agencies, or individuals that received payment for providing PR and Communications services to the ComCom. Additionally, I request the value of the contracts awarded to each service provider.”
2. On 2 May 2024, the Commission extended the time limit by which we must make a decision on your request to 10 May 2024. On 10 May 2024 we advised that we had decided to grant your request and that the information would be provided to you without undue delay.

Our response

3. The tables below provide the information requested about services procured to support the Commission's communications function.
4. The Commission has used external communications support where necessary and efficient to supplement its communications team for both capacity and capability reasons. This includes where there is a need to backfill short-term vacancies or support a short-term increase in workload, and provide assistance with tasks like media training, and media and social media monitoring.
5. In responding to this request, the Commission has applied the definition of 'communications' that is set out by the Public Service Commission (Te Kawa Mataaho). This definition of communications includes 'Public Relations'. Further information about the definition that has been applied can be found [here](#).

5.1 Budgeted and actual expenditure

| Financial year | Budgeted expenditure for communications support | Actual expenditure on communications support |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| 2023/24 Year to 10 May 2024 | \$0.235m | \$0.065m |
| 2022/23 Full financial year | \$0.216m | \$0.379m |
| 2021/22 Full financial year | \$0.365m | \$0.918m |

The expenditure in 2021/22 reflects a time when the Communications and Engagement team was being rebuilt and contractor resource was required to support communications needs across a growing organisation.

5.2 Procurement process and service providers

| 2023/24 | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Supplier | Procurement process | Total spend Year to 10 May 2024 |
| iSentia | Direct source from AoG | \$26,950 |
| BRG NZ Limited | Direct source from AoG | \$23,670 |
| Senate Communications Limited | Direct source from AoG | \$13,894 |

| 2022/23 | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| Supplier | Procurement process | Total spend Full financial year |
| JacksonStone & Partners Limited (Four contractors) | Direct source from AoG | \$165,967 |
| Senate Communications Limited | Direct source from AoG | \$141,147 |
| Robert Walters New Zealand Limited (One contractor) | Direct source from AoG | \$51,730 |
| iSentia | Direct source from AoG | \$14,700 |
| Fuseworks | Direct source from AoG | \$5,387 |

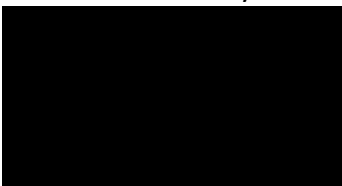
| 2021/22 | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| Supplier | Procurement process | Total spend Full financial year |
| JacksonStone & Partners Limited (Six contractors) | Direct source from AoG | \$657,959 |
| Senate Communications Limited | Direct source from AoG | \$134,609 |
| Inside Recruitment Limited (One contractor) | Direct source from AoG | \$55,817 |
| Fuseworks | Direct source from AoG | \$45,965 |
| Beyond Recruitment Limited (One contractor) | Direct source from AoG | \$12,182 |
| Acorn PR | Selective Procurement | \$11,520 |

6. If you are not satisfied with the Commission's response to your OIA request, section 28(3) of the OIA provides you with the right to ask an Ombudsman to investigate and review this response. However, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss any concerns with you first.

Further information

7. Please note the Commission will be publishing this response to your request on its website. Your personal details will be redacted from the published response.
8. Please do not hesitate to contact us at oja@comcom.govt.nz if you have any questions about this response.

Yours sincerely



OIA and Information Coordinator