

Charge for supply of animal usage statistics

Legislation	Official Information Act 1982, s 15(1A)
Agency	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
Ombudsman	Beverley Wakem
Case number(s)	178413
Date	December 2008

Cannot charge for decision making time—charge reduced

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) advised a charge of ‘at least \$3,000’ for supplying animal usage statistics, and the requester complained to the Ombudsman. During the Chief Ombudsman’s investigation it was revealed that the bulk of the charge was for time required to consult with third parties affected by the request. The Chief Ombudsman formed the provisional opinion that this time—which related to the decision whether or not to release or withhold the information—could not be charged for. After considering the Chief Ombudsman’s provisional opinion, MAF reduced the charge to \$583. The Chief Ombudsman concluded that this represented a reasonable charge for supplying the requested statistics.

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