



1 December 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request made under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), received on 10 November 2023. You requested the following (numbered for ease in responding):

1. *who is the voice over artist you have used for the Operator's voice?*
2. *Was this person an internal spokesperson?*
3. *If sourced externally, how much did it cost?*
4. *Also how many contact centers do you have across NZ?*
5. *Does the Department maintain contact centers overseas; say operating out of a NZ embassy abroad?*
6. *Will all of the contact centers be accepting local and foreign phone requests?*
7. *What steps has IR taken to reduce wait times in light of the additional phone traffic?*
8. *How many staff are employed by each contact centre at the time writing; for the purposes of being concise, including staff on leave, that would ordinarily be available or be able to be deployed across your business?*

Question 1

I am refusing this part of your request under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA, to protect the privacy of natural persons. However, I can advise that Inland Revenue's contract for voice talent is with The Surgery Studio Ltd.

Question 2

The voice talent individual is not an Inland Revenue employee or spokesperson.

Question 3

The cost of sourcing the voice talent with The Surgery Studio Ltd is dependent on the number of recordings that have been requested and the timing of them. In the last year, from November 2022 to October 2023 the total cost, excluding GST, was \$24,300.

Questions 4 and 5

Inland Revenue has employees that answer contacts from its customers, through voice or non-voice channels in 19 offices across New Zealand.

Question 6

Inland Revenue's customer service lines accept all local and overseas based calls; however, toll free-calling is not available in every country. You can read more about how people can contact Inland Revenue on its website at [contact us \(ird.govt.nz\)](https://www.ird.govt.nz/contact-us).

Question 7

The time it takes to answer a customer's phone call is impacted by the demand for a service, number of employees available and the skillset needed to take calls or answer queries via specific channels. Inland Revenue adjusts its staffing to best manage its customer experience across all its channels. For example, around key events such as individual income tax assessments, Inland Revenue makes various tools available to assist

its customers to not wait for a long time on the phone, such as the ability to book a call back either at a time and date that suits, or when they reach the 'front of the queue'. Inland Revenue also has several self-service options for its customers to use on voice as well as non-voice channels, such as *myIR*. In the 2022–23 fiscal year, there were 2.1 million attempted calls, 10% fewer than in 2021–22. Inland Revenue answered 63% of calls received compared to 56% in 2021–22.

Question 8

As Inland Revenue does not have designated 'contact centres,' the number of Customer Service Officers (CSOs) per site has been provided below based on their office location. This includes permanent and fixed term staff (including those on leave and parental leave). These staff work across different channels and not all answer voice calls, some do a mix of voice and non-voice work, however, they all provide services to customers in some aspect of their role.

Table 1 – Number of CSOs per office at 21 November 2023

Location by Office	Customer Service Officers
Manukau (Auckland)	239
Takapuna (Auckland)	118
Moorhouse (Christchurch)	81
Russley (Christchurch)	269
Dunedin	87
Greymouth	17
Garnett (Hamilton)	290
Home Straight (Hamilton)	124
Invercargill	8
Napier	55
Nelson	11
New Plymouth	1
Palmerston North	137
Rotorua	3
Tauranga	137
Timaru	2
Upper Hutt	153
Wellington	145
Whangarei	49
Total	1,926

Right of Review

If you disagree with my decision on your OIA request, you can ask an Inland Revenue review officer to review my decision. To ask for an internal review, please email the Commissioner of Inland Revenue via: commissionerscorrespondence@ird.govt.nz.

Alternatively, under section 28(3) of the OIA, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision. You can contact the office of the Ombudsman via email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

If you choose to have an internal review, you can still ask the Ombudsman for a review.

Publishing of OIA response

We intend to publish our response to your request on Inland Revenue's website (ird.govt.nz) as this information may be of interest to other members of the public. This letter, with your personal details removed, will be published in its entirety. Publishing responses increases the availability of information to the public and is consistent with the OIA's purpose of enabling more effective participation in the making and administration of laws and policies and promoting the accountability of Ministers and officials.

Thank you for your request.

Yours sincerely



Amanda Gray
Service Owner – PD&D – Voice & SMS Channel Management