



JUDICIAL OFFICE FOR HIGHER COURTS
Te Tari Kaiwhakawā mo ngā Kōti Mātāmua

File No: A/15/ItrVSiemer/JO/20160513

13 May 2016

Mr Vince Siemer
27 Clansman Terrace
Gulf Harbour
Whangaparoa 0930

By Email: vsiemer@hotmail.com

Dear Mr Siemer

1. I refer to your email of 18 April 2016 following our telephone conversation of 15 April 2016.
2. As previously advised, the judicial conference agenda is held by the Judicial Office for Higher Courts as the administrative support arm of the judiciary. We hold this information on behalf of the judiciary who are not subject to the Official Information Act.
3. Regarding your complaint to the Ombudsman in relation to this matter (your emails of 22 April 2016 and 4 May 2016 refer), your recollection of our telephone conversation is incorrect. I did not promise to reconsider the matter; rather I undertook to respond to your email of 12 April 2016 in which you assert that my answer to your request for the official agenda was 'insufficient and not acceptable'. This letter provides my response.
4. The answers to the various questions you ask in your email in relation to the Judicial Office are as follows:
 - i. The Judicial Office for Higher Courts provides professional support and administrative services to the Chief Justice, the Higher Courts heads of bench and the Higher Courts judiciary. It has a staff of 115 including the Director.
 - ii. The Office is not a statutory body. It was created by agreement between the Chief Justice and the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Justice. It brought together under one administrative structure the administrative support previously provided to the Chief Justice, the President of the Court of Appeal and the Chief High Court Judge.
 - iii. The Office budget for the current financial year is \$10,070,000.
 - iv. The Office is funded from the *Higher Court Services* appropriation within Vote Courts. This is a Departmental Output Expense within the Multi-Category Expense appropriation *Courts, Tribunals and Other Authorities Services, including the Collection and Enforcement of Fines and Civil Debts Services*.

- v. The Statement of Intent 2015-2019 published by the Ministry of Justice outlines the functions of the Office in Annex 2. Responsibilities include support and advice for the Chief Justice and the Higher Courts judiciary in relation to judicial communications, education and development, operations and judicial administration.
- vi. The annual compensation for the Director of the Office is set within a remuneration range of \$157,000 to \$212,740.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brigid Corcoran".

Brigid Corcoran
Director, Judicial Office