

10 March 2023

Section (9)(2)(a)

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Our ref: OIA 102306

Tēnā koe Section (9)(2)(a)

Official Information Act request: Inquiry regarding Ministry costs for Alcohol and Drug Treatment

I refer to your email to the Minister of Police, requesting information relating to the Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Court (AODT Court). On 2 December 2022 your request was partially transferred to the Ministry of Justice (the Ministry). Specifically, you requested:

- '1) In relation to Table 3, what were the agency costs incurred by the Ministry of Justice, the Department of Corrections and the NZ Police for the 447 offenders who appeared in the standard court?*
- 2) Since the CBA was intended to compare costs and benefits of the two court processes, what was the rationale for excluding the costs associated with the standard court from the analysis?'*

In response to your request, the final costs incurred by the Ministry of Justice (the Ministry), the Department of Corrections and the NZ Police for the 447 matched offenders who appeared in the standard court, were not used in the costs benefit analysis¹. Rather, the costs provided were estimated as the difference between the total cost of the participants in the AODT Court, and costs of comparable offenders over the same time period in the Standard District Court (i.e. the counter-factual costs). This difference in costs was estimated for all 477 AODT Court participants and matched offenders from November 2012 until June 2018.

The approach of using differences in costs between AODT Court participants and matched offenders was based on the recommendations of Sapere during their initial costings of the AODT Court in 2016.² These costings were updated and finalised by the Ministry of Justice in 2019 and used in the cost benefit analysis.

Ministry of Justice

For the Ministry of Justice, the AODT Court costs were based on the actual costs of the Court. This assumes that court staff time (including Judges) is 5.9 times what would otherwise be incurred, as the AODT Court uses 5.9 times the resources of a standard court. There are no team leaders employed (and therefore no costs for this) in the Standard District Court.

¹ *The Ministry's cost model for the AODT Court.*

² Sapere (2016). *Cost-effectiveness Analysis of the AODTC Pilot.* Report to the Ministry of Justice.

The AODT Court is assumed to make no difference to property costs, as the building and court room would likely have remained occupied in any case.

Based on these assumptions, the total cost to the Ministry for matched offenders was estimated as 18.9% of the total costs of AODT Court participants.

Department of Corrections

For the Department of Corrections, the costs for the AODT Court were based on the salaries and visiting time costs of probation officers. There were no comparable costs incurred by the Department of Corrections for matched offenders. The AODT Court imposes a unique cost of having probation officers present when each court sits.

New Zealand Police

For the NZ Police, the costs for the AODT Court were based on the salaries of Police prosecutors, frontline staff and the District Manager. The comparable costs incurred by the NZ Police for matched offenders were for Police prosecutors and the District Manager, but with a lower number of FTEs involved for Police prosecutors.

Based on these assumptions, the total cost to the NZ Police for matched offenders was estimated as 39.9% of the total costs of AODT Court participants.

Estimated full costs

The estimated full costs to the Ministry, the Department of Corrections and the NZ Police for the 447 AODT Court participants and matched offenders, from November 2021 to June 2018, are provided in Table 1.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: justice.govt.nz/about/official-information-act-requests/oia-responses/.

If you require any further information, please contact Ministry of Justice Media & Social Media Manager Joe Locke at media@justice.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. The Office of the Ombudsman may be contacted by email at info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phone on 0800 802 602.

Table 1. Estimated AODT Court participant and matched offender costs to agencies: November 2021 to June 2018.

Agency	Cost (AODTC-Matched)	Cost AODTC	Cost Matched Offenders
Ministry of Justice	\$6,768,693	\$8,346,617	\$1,577,925
Department of Corrections	\$297,061	\$297,061	\$0
NZ Police	\$1,573,452	\$2,618,067	\$1,044,615
Total	\$8,639,206	\$11,261,746	\$2,622,540

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized initial 'A' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Alida Mercuri
General Manager, Criminal Justice