

20 April 2021

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Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation, received on 21 March 2021 in which you asked for:

Information about: the amount of money DOC hasn't collected/has missed out on in the last 12 months, through COVID-related problems, such as the international visitor levies not being collected and concession-related fees being cancelled, and any budget cuts/redundancies/restructuring/deferred spending as a result. This information is in the public interest as it involves a Government agency and taxpayer spending.

Our response to the revenue impacts for the Department of Conservation (DOC) as a result of COVID is as follows:

International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL)

DOC receives half of the IVL revenue from those international visitors who are required to pay the levy when applying for a visa or NZeTA (New Zealand Electronic Travel Authority) to visit New Zealand. The levy is collected by the Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment.

As a result of borders being closed DOC's share of the IVL was \$14.4 million less than forecast in 2019/20 and is forecast to be \$42.5 million less in 2020/21.

The IVL funds new projects for DOC so there have not been any projects developed for this funding. As borders re open and IVL revenue starts to be collected projects will be initiated for approval to be funded by the levy. There was sufficient IVL funding collected in 2019/20 to deliver the initial tranche of projects that were approved prior to COVID.

Crown Concession Revenue

The Department collects Concession, lease and licenses revenue on behalf of the Crown. Prior to COVID the amount collected was \$27.3 million (2018/19 financial year). In 2019/20 \$20.9m was collected which reflected the impact of COVID on the tourism industry in the last quarter of the year.



A waiver of concession and management fees (fee waiver) to applicable tourism related operators was announced by the Government in June 2020. It covers the period from 1 March 2020 to 30 June 2021. As a result of the fee waiver the forecast Concession, lease and licenses revenue to be collected in 2020/21 is \$6.9 million.

However, the Government is providing up to \$25 million to DOC to offset the financial impact of the waiver. The funding means that the vital conservation work the fees normally contribute to won't be affected and preserves the Department's baseline funding in 2020/21 at pre COVID19 levels. As a result, there have not been any budget cuts, redundancies or restructuring.

The media release for the fee waiver was published on DOC's website.

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/media-releases/2020-media-releases/tourism-operators-provided-extra-relief/>

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'K. Martin'.

Kevin Martin
Chief Financial Officer
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai