

24 February 2023

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Tēna kōrua [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 30 January 2023 in which you asked for:

- 1. Any document and/or information supporting your gender non-binary, transgender, and gender fluid workforce. For example, anything related to pronouns, gender transition policy or guidelines, specific action plans or strategies, survey results, workforce data, gender-neutral bathrooms policies or information, and leave provisions for gender reassignment/affirmation.*
- 2. If you do not have any of these, do you intend to produce this information during 2023? And if not, what is the rationale for not having it?*

On 10 February you clarified (or refined) your request to:

*‘any documents specific to gender minority topics for your workforce’. You also advised that you were ‘not interested in D&I policies, but documents related to gender non-binary, transgender staff, staff wanting to transition and gender fluid staff. This doesn’t have to include emails or informal communications but yes, any formal policies in draft or final focused on supporting the gender minority workforce’.*

## **Context**

DOC places importance on developing a culture where everyone can participate and thrive. In this respect we are working towards being an organisation that is inclusive by default.

We are continuing to work to incorporate inclusion and diversity into our organisational culture, through a work programme, which primarily focuses on three areas:

1. [Papa Pounamu](#) commitments
2. [Kia Toipoto: Gender, Māori and Ethnic Pay Gap Action Plan 2022 \(doc.govt.nz\)](#)
3. Women in leadership research.



For your knowledge we do have an Inclusion and Diversity Policy and Strategy (which I note you do not wish to receive) however it does not specify policy supporting gender non-binary, transgender, and gender fluid workforce. For context, this policy is planned for review in 2023, and may consider a wider range of work to that listed above.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. *'Any document and/or information supporting your gender non-binary, transgender, and gender fluid workforce'*. Clarified as, *'documents related to gender non-binary, transgender staff, staff wanting to transition and gender fluid staff. This doesn't have to include emails or informal communications but yes, any formal policies in draft or final focused on supporting the gender minority workforce'*.

I am providing relevant documents, policy, or guidance that explains our current approach. Please however note that the majority of this information is held within our internally facing intranet pages, rather than in downloadable documents. Where information is held on the intranet, I have supplied that information as a body of text.

- **Property** – All of our buildings are built to the Building Code and Building Act 2004. In accordance with section 118 of the Building Act, every building requires toilet facilities for people with disabilities. These facilities are open to people of all genders.

Whilst our property policy does not specifically refer to gender neutral facilities, all regional offices are managed at place, therefore there may be some regions that offer gender neutral toilet facilities, such as our national office in Wellington.

- **Uniform** – Depending upon role, some staff are required to wear a DOC uniform. The uniform comes in two cis gender fits, and staff are able to order and mix whichever fits they prefer.
- **Rainbow Network** - The Rainbow Network was founded in 2018 and was our first employee-led network. Since then, it has continued to grow and develop, bringing visibility to the rainbow community at DOC. The Rainbow Network provides advocacy, resources and tools that support us in creating a safer, more inclusive workplace culture and community improving the health, wellbeing and safety of rainbow people.
- **Rainbow (LGBTQIA+) Training Module** – Our organisation provides a training module for staff to access online. This module has been designed to learn about the Rainbow Network, the basics of gender and sexuality, and simple ways staff can be supportive and inclusive of the rainbow community at DOC. Topics covered are:
  - Gender
  - Sexual identities and orientations
  - What does LGBTQIA+ mean and understanding what each letter stands for
  - Pronouns – what they are, why they are used and normalising pronouns



- **Pronouns** – Whilst we do not have a specific policy document regarding the use of pronouns, the current 'brand' information, held on our intranet, provides best practise email signature guidelines which states that: *'after your name, you may add your iwi affiliation(s), preferred pronouns, and/or relevant qualifications'*.
- **Employee Data** – we do not hold any survey data regarding non-binary, transgender or gender fluid information. DOC captures information pertaining to gender through the recruitment and payroll systems. Staff are asked to select one of the following:
  - Female
  - Male
  - Another Gender
  - Prefer not to respond
- The [Pūrongo-ā-tau – Annual Report 2022 \(doc.govt.nz\)](https://www.doc.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Purongo-a-tau-Annual-Report-2022.pdf) at page 64 provides DOC's 2021/22 demographics with 0.4% of our staff identifying as 'another gender'.
- Policy - Regarding your query concerning our approach to leave provisions for gender reassignment / affirmation, all leave provisions, for any reason, are considered within our 'leave policy', which is held on our intranet. 'Discretionary leave' may be applicable in this situation, and is available for all staff to apply for, either with or without pay. The policy states that,


*'Where employees apply for discretionary leave (with or without pay) the manager will endeavour to support this. The manager will be guided by the benefits to the individual, the community and the impact on the Department's business when making a decision to approve.'*

*Application must be made and approval in writing obtained prior to discretionary leave (with or without pay) being taken, i.e. a leave application form completed (with a supporting memo if the leave is for an extended period)...*

2. *'If you do not have any of these, do you intend to produce this information during 2023? And if not, what is the rationale for not having it?'*

We trust that our response satisfies your request with all relevant in scope information provided. As previously noted we are committed to being an inclusive organisation and have an ongoing programme of work dedicated to Inclusion and Diversity (the strategy for which will be revisited this calendar year). As part of this work, we will consider how best to support all minorities, including gender non-binary, transgender and gender-fluid people.

Nāku noa, nā

  
Ginny Baddeley  
**Chief People Officer**  
**Department of Conservation**  
**Te Papa Atawhai**