

03 March 2023



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation, received on 07 February 2023 in which you asked for:

I have a request under the Official Information Act regarding Milford Sound. Please may RNZ be supplied with the following information:

- * How many landing sites are there in Milford Sound excluding the main airport?*
- * If relevant, how has the number of landing sites changed in Milford Sound in the past five years?*
- * Can concession operators land anywhere or are there designated spots?*
- * How many concession operators are there in Milford Sound?*
- * How long are the concessions valid for before they need to be renewed?*
- * How many concessions have been granted by DOC in the past five years? (Please break down into either calendar or financial years depending on how the information is stored)*
- * Is there a limit to the number of concessions DOC can grant in Milford Sound, and if so, what is that limit?*

On 23 February 2003 you refined your request to

I request under the Official Information Act information regarding tourism activities in Fiordland National Park. Tourism activities should be limited to 'guiding and aircraft landings'. Aircraft landings for recreational purposes are out of scope.

Please supply the following information with regard to tourism activities:

- 1. Excluding the Milford Sound Aerodrome, how many Active Aircraft Landing concessions are there with locations in Fiordland National Park?*
- 2. How are the landing sites specified in the above concessions?*
- 3. How many Active Aircraft Landing concessions are there allowing landings at the Milford Sound Aerodrome?*



4. *How many Guiding concessions with locations in Fiordland National Park have been granted since 1 Jan 2018, please provide this in a calendar year format?*
5. *Excluding Milford Sound Aerodrome, how many Aircraft landing concessions have been granted since 1 Jan 2018, please provide this in a calendar year format?*
6. *How many Aircraft Landing concessions have been granted for the Milford Sound Aerodrome since 1 Jan 2018, please provide this in a calendar year format?*
7. *Is there a limit to the number of Aircraft Landing concessions DOC can grant at the Milford Sound Aerodrome, and if so, what is that limit?*
8. *How long are concessions valid for before they need to be renewed?*

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. *Excluding the Milford Sound Aerodrome, how many Active Aircraft Landing concessions are there with locations in Fiordland National Park?*

There are nine Aircraft landing concessions with locations in Fiordland National Park. They allow for fixed-wing, helicopter and float plane landings.

2. *How are the landing sites specified in the above concessions?*

Across the nine concessions, locations are described in a variety of ways, all include some exclusions e.g. wilderness areas, unless during the roar hunting period for some areas. Limits are also applied to the number of landings that can take place per site, per day/week/year.

There is one concession which allows for landings anywhere in Fiordland National Park (with exclusions), while the remainder of concessions include Aircraft zones with sites identified by name and in some cases map co-ordinates. See Appendix A, Table One as an example.

3. *How many Active Aircraft Landing concessions are there allowing landings at the Milford Sound Aerodrome?*

Aircraft landing concessions are granted, subject to compliance with section 5.5.2 of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan 2007 (The Plan). The Plan defines landings for 'regular operators' (more than 10 landings / take offs per year), 'irregular operators' (no more than 10 landings / take offs per year) and 'one-off operators' (typically for recreational landings). Appendix A, Table Two shows the number of active Aircraft landings in each of these categories.

4. *How many Guiding Concessions with locations in Fiordland National Park have been granted since 1 Jan 2018, please provide this in a calendar year format?*

DOC has granted a total of 158 Guiding related concessions with locations in Fiordland National Park since 1 January 2018. Appendix A, Table Three shows the breakdown of these per calendar year.

5. *Excluding Milford Sound Aerodrome Landings, how many Aircraft landing concessions have been granted since 1 Jan 2018, please provide this in a calendar year format?*

DOC has granted one new Aircraft landing concession since 1 January 2018. This concession was within the available limits set in the Fiordland National Park Management Plan 2007 for aircraft activities.

6. *How many Aircraft Landing concessions have been granted for the Milford Sound Aerodrome since 1 Jan 2018, please provide this in a calendar year format?*

While there have been a number of one-off landing concessions granted, most of these are not for tourism related purposes and are consequently excluded from the count. Three irregular landing concessions have been granted since 2018, these are shown in Appendix A, Table Four.

There have been no new regular landing concessions granted since 2012, when a limited supply allocation process was undertaken.

7. *Is there a limit to the number of Aircraft Landing concessions DOC can grant at the Milford Sound Aerodrome, and if so, what is that limit?*

Landing concessions at the Milford Sound Aerodrome are granted subject to section 5.5.2 of the Plan. While the Plan does not limit the number of 'concessions' that can be granted there are limits on the number of landings. Concessions for 'regular landings' are currently fully allocated, while there is still some capacity to grant 'irregular' and 'one-off' landings.

8. *How long are concessions valid for before they need to be renewed?*

Concessions have a variety of terms depending on what was applied for and granted. Most Aircraft and Guiding concessions have terms of 10 years. Where an application is for a term of more than 10 years the application must be publicly notified, subject to section 17SC of the Conservation Act 1987. One-off concessions typically have a term of up to three months.

Concessions may 'continue to operate beyond expiry', providing they meet section 17ZAA or 17ZAB of the Conservation Act 1987. Some of the Aircraft and Guiding concessions are operating under these scenarios, they are known as 'rolling-on'.



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



Nāku noa, nā



Steve Taylor
Director, Regulatory Services
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Appendix A

Table One: Example of landing sites

Area			Maximum Landings		General Special Conditions
Eastern Poplar Zone, Fiordland National Park as defined by the map attached as Schedule 8			<p>For 328 days of the year – landings shall not exceed 3 per day</p> <p>For 37 days of the year only – landings shall not exceed 10 per day, the Concessionaire shall not exceed 3 landings per day at Lake Quill.</p>		<p>(A) Landings may not be made in the proximity (within 500 metres) of Milford Track unless landings are for servicing of the guided walk facilities or management purposes only.</p> <p>(B) Landings may not be made in the proximity (within 500 metres) of the Kepler Track except for in the proximity of Luxmore Hut unless landings are for servicing of the guided walk facilities or management purposes only.</p> <p>(C) Landings may not be made in the proximity (within 500 metres) of the Routeburn Track, Fiordland National Park unless landings are for servicing of the guided walk facilities or management purposes only.</p>
MAP ID	Site name	NZMG	Easting	Northing	Other Conditions
9	Lake Alabaster	D39	2126600	5623500	
10	Lake Mantle	D39	2122000	5621000	
11	McKerrow Island	D39	2118000	5620400	
13	Pyke Lodge	D40	2123700	5617000	
14	Hidden Falls	D40	2122300	5609000	
15	Hollyford Airstrip	D40	2124700	5596500	
16	Gunns Camp	D40	2125400	5594000	



23	Lake Erskine	D41	2114000	5583600	
35	Deep Cove	C43	2052800	5511900	No landings before 9am or after 6pm unless authorised by Area Manger Te Anau
36	West Arm	C43	2063400	5505300	
39	Park Pass	E40	2131000	5614000	
40	Livingstone Range	D41	2124800	5585000	No landings permitted within 2.5 km of the Routeburn Track
45	Norwest Lake	C43	2066500	5512000	
46	Lake Quill	D41	2092800	5586000	

Southwest Remote Zone, Fiordland National Park as defined by the map attached as Schedule 8			3 landings per week		
MAP ID	Site name	NZ MG	Easting	Northing	Other Conditions
37	Supper Cove	B44	2040600	5484200	
38	Cascade Cove	B44	2013000	5470300	

Western Remote Zone, Fiordland National Park as defined by the map attached as Schedule 8			3 landings per week		
MAP ID	Site name	NZMG	Easting	Northing	Other Conditions
17	St Annes Point	D40	2095600	5613000	



18	Transit River	D40	2093200	5610500	
19	Lake Morton	D40	2092500	5600600	
20	Poison Bay	C40	2086800	5599700	
21	George Sound Hut	C41	2072200	5565700	No landings before 9am or after 6pm unless prior permission gained from Area Manager, Te Anau
22	Stillwater River	C41	2067400	5561400	
24	Stillwater River	C42	2064000	5559000	
25	Caswell Sound	C42	2062000	5558000	
26	Lake Marchant	C42	2063500	5557500	
27	Lake Marchant	C42	2065500	5554500	
28	Emelius Arm	C42	2054800	5551100	
29	Irene River	C42	2059900	5550200	
30	Myth River	C42	2066300	5549300	
31	Irene River	C42	2063300	5547200	
32	Tawera Tarn	C42	2067200	5545100	
33	Mt Irene	C42	2067000	5543700	Landings are permitted to the West of the Summit only.
34	Charles Sound	C42	2051800	5545500	
41	Unnamed Lake	D40	2095800	5602000	
42	Lake Chamberlain	B43	2043300	5520900	
43	Lake Browne	B43	2043300	5520900	
44	Malaspina Reach	B43	2043700	5525200	

Glaisnock Wilderness Area, Fiordland National Park as defined by the map attached as Schedule 8.		Aircraft access is prohibited except for on the shorelines of the Glaisnock during March and April inclusive for the purpose of dropping off and picking up hunters only.
Pembroke Wilderness Area, Fiordland National Park as defined by the map attached as Schedule 8.		Aircraft access is prohibited

Darren's Remote Area, Fiordland National Park as defined by the map attached as Schedule 8.	3 landings per week	Kaipo Valley Airstrip <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landings only permitted to embark/disembark self-reliant backcountry recreationists such as rock climbers, mountaineers, hunters and trampers. No tourist scenic landings.			
MAP ID	Site name	NZMG	Easting	Northing	Other Conditions
12	Kaipo Airstrip	D39	2108000	5623500	Access only during the months of March and April

Table Two - Count of concessions for landings at the Milford Sound Aerodrome

Regular	Irregular	One-off
34	5	0

Table Three – Count of Guiding Concessions granted since 2018

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
38	52	14	18	29	7

Table Four – Count of Milford Sound Aerodrome landing concessions granted since 2018

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1	0	1	0	1	0