



HUD2024-004901

s 9(2)(a)

Dear s 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 01 July 2024 requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), I address each of your questions below:

- 1. How much Government money has been paid to operate Tuscany Villas on Fenton St in Rotorua as emergency housing each year since March 2020 until now (July 1). Please provide figures for each year.**

As previously advised in our response of 27 August 2020 and 2 March 2021, Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (the Ministry) would not usually name motels contracted to provide accommodation services. However, it recognises that Tuscany Villas and Emerald Spa Motor Inn have been named either in the media or as part of the Contracted Emergency Housing (CEH) resource consent application process.

Regarding the values of each contract, this information is being withheld under the following sections of the Act:

- 9(2)(b)(ii), to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information
- 9(2)(j), to enable a Minister of the Crown or any department or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).

You may wish to note that the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) is able to release detailed information about the amount of funding provided under Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH-SNGs) for individual motels as payments for motel rooms via EH-SNGs are at market rates and do not involve negotiation with individual moteliere for long-term arrangements. To negotiate fair value over the duration of a contract for a set number of units per night, the Ministry must be able to enter negotiations with moteliere.

Should the funding amount for individual motels be released it would unreasonably affect the Ministry's ability to negotiate in the future. Similarly, release of the contract values is commercially sensitive to the individual moteliere as it discloses the income they will earn under the contracts.

I can confirm that these contracts are in line with those that have been entered into with providers in a number of other regions where motel accommodation is being used.

2. Who was the money paid to?

TVR Investments Limited.

3. Under what agreement was the motel used for emergency housing (for example was it a Covid-19 response motel, emergency housing SNG or contracted emergency housing - if it changed over the years please provide details of when the agreement changed).

As part of the COVID-19 response, the Ministry worked with established housing support service providers, iwi and Māori organisations to place around 1,500 rough sleepers or people experiencing homelessness in 1,200 motel units in 16 locations across the country.

Tuscany Villas was contracted on 25 March 2020 as part of this response and has since been extended to operate under this agreement.

There has been a large reduction in these motels since this time. The Government committed to ensuring that people accommodated in motels do not need to return to homelessness and provided funding for people to remain in motels with wrap around support services while longer-term accommodation is found.

We are working closely with housing support services providers to identify long-term housing such as social housing and private rental opportunities for people in these motels.

4. How much Government money has been paid in maintenance to fix damage to the rooms and/or replace missing items at Tuscany Villas each year until now from March 2020.

The Ministry expects fair wear and tear and regular maintenance to be covered as part of its negotiated nightly rate.

Regarding how much Government money has been paid in maintenance to fix damage to the rooms and/or replace missing items at Tuscany Villas, we are refusing your request under section 18(f) of the Act as a substantial amount of work would be required to collate the information you have requested. This would involve reviewing individual invoices received over the last three and a half years and cross referencing them between different financial and contract management systems.

We can advise that when damage did occur, we sought evidence of the damage and quotes for the repairs/missing items to ensure that claimed costs were fair and reasonable.

5. How many people have been housed in Tuscany Villas each year since March 2020 until now? Please provide figures for each year.

Table 1. Number of People Housed by Year - Tuscany Villas

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
140	238	72	29	S

Note:

- Data is up to June 2024
- Tuscany Villas Motel became HUD Contracted COVID-19 Response Motel in April 2020.

- The table counts a distinct number of people in a given year, based on the recorded start date of their stay. It counts all individuals within a household. In some instances, it is possible for an individual to be counted in multiple years.
- These figures are based on Provider Reporting, which can be incomplete and may be revised in future. The quality and completeness of provider reporting can vary from month to month.
- S denotes 'suppression', where small numbers are not disclosed to protect individuals' privacy.

Tuscany Villas was originally contracted as part of our COVID-19 response and was used to accommodate rough sleepers. This cohort tends to be transient, and this is reflected in the high turnover volume of people housed over the period 2020-2021.

Following this time, there was a reduction in demand and a change in the cohort being placed in the motel. Those who engaged and required ongoing support services stayed in the motel longer term. Note, the number of people housed represents those that were placed into the motel in each year and differs to the motel occupancy.

6. Has Tuscany Villas been used to house other people other than the homeless? For instance, staff of wrap-around services or security guards etc. If so, please explain.

Tuscany Villas accommodates whānau who either have an immediate housing need or are experiencing other forms of homelessness.

The Ministry contracts wrap around support services across the country through a range of different providers for different services. Support Service providers determine what is required to provide appropriate support to whānau. This can involve staff staying onsite overnight for operational purposes to ensure 24/7 access to support.

7. What is the per week charge to the Government for someone staying at Tuscany Villas? Please provide a range if the charges changed over time.

The Ministry contracts with motels for units on a per night basis. As per my response to question one, we are unable to provide you with the associated costs.

8. How much Government money has been paid to operate Emerald Spa on Fenton St in Rotorua as emergency housing each year since March 2020 until now (July 1). Please provide figures for each year.

Please refer to my response to question one.

9. Who was the money paid to?

Please refer to my response to question two.

10. Under what agreement was the motel used for emergency housing (for example was it a Covid-19 response motel, emergency housing SNG or contracted emergency housing - if it changed over the years please provide details of when the agreement changed).

Emerald Spa Motor Inn was contracted by the Ministry as part of its COVID-19 response on 25 March 2020. This motel transitioned to be used for CEH on 1 July 2022 and continues to be contracted under this agreement.

11. How much Government money has been paid in maintenance to fix damage to the rooms and/or replace missing items at Emerald Spa each year until now from March 2020.

As per my response to question four, we are unable to provide this information for the period this motel operated under a Covid-19 agreement. However, we can advise that while operated as CEH, security deposits can be paid by MSD on behalf of those staying in emergency housing, and this includes the Ministry's CEH.

These security deposits are used to cover a range of different costs incurred by a client. You can find out more on what this entails [here](#). The Ministry does not hold this data but understands you have requested this from MSD.

12. How many people have been housed in Emerald Spa each year since March 2020 until now? Please provide figures for each year.

Table 2. Number of People Housed by Year - Emerald Spa

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
92	200	68	75	22

Note:

- Data is up to June 2024
- Emerald Spa Motel became HUD Contracted COVID-19 Response Motel in April 2020. It became Contracted Emergency Housing in July 2022.
- The table counts a distinct number of people in a given year, based on the recorded start date of their stay. It counts all individuals within a household. In some instances, it is possible for an individual to be counted in multiple years.
- These figures are based on Provider Reporting, which can be incomplete and may be revised in future. The quality and completeness of provider reporting can vary from month to month.

Emerald Spa was originally contracted as part of our COVID-19 response and was used to accommodate rough sleepers. This cohort tends to be transient, and this is reflected in the high turnover volume of people housed over the period 2020-2021. Following this time, there was a reduction in demand and a change in the cohort being placed in the motel. Those who engaged and required ongoing support services stayed in the motel longer term. Note, the number of people housed represents those that were placed into the motel in each year and differs to the motel occupancy.

13. Has Emerald Spa been used to house other people other than the homeless? For instance, staff of wrap-around services, security guards etc. If so, please explain.

Emerald Spa is one of ten motels currently being used for CEH in Rotorua. These motels predominately focus on supporting families with children.

The Ministry contracts wrap around support services across the country through a range of different providers for different services. Support Service providers determine what is required to provide appropriate support to whānau. This can involve staff staying onsite overnight for operational purposes to ensure 24/7 access to support.

14. What is the per week charge to the Government for someone staying at Emerald Spa? Please provide a range if the charges changed over time.

Please refer to my response provided to question seven.

In terms of section 9(1) of the Act, I am satisfied that, in the circumstances, the decision to withhold information under section 9 of the Act is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable to make the information available in the public interest.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

As part of our ongoing commitment to openness and transparency, the Ministry proactively releases information and documents that may be of interest to the public. As such, this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on our website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'W. Barris', followed by a horizontal line.

Will Barris,
General Manager, Partnerships and Performance
Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development