

13 February 2024

s9(2)(a)

Thank you for your request to Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities, dated 7 January 2024, which you made under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Homes and Communities/Kāinga Ora or Nick Maling, Home and Communities/Kāinga Ora's General Manager National Services in this statement did not ever refer to the department to 'Home and Communities/Kāinga Ora in which the department is its correct name. Why?

In the statement Nick Maling refers the Home and Communities/Kāinga Ora spends \$1.8 million between July 1 and November 6 on decontamination of 56 homes. Also refers to 135 homes in 2019-20 and 64 in 2020-21 and again 119 in 2022-23.

This information is all very good but the Home and Communities/Kāinga Ora to my knowledge has not released information regarding the number of properties the department has lost due to fire or explosions of properties owned by you eg taxpayers during the same periods, especially 2023.

In each of these cases, properties when they are damaged by explosions or fire are investigated to the causes by fire investigator team and reports made.

So the question then arises how many of these buildings are determined to be caused by either electrical faults (eg. unauthorised electric faults) or illegal drug growing or manufacture in the same period(s).

So the questions to arise is with the cost to Home and Communities/Kāinga Ora for say the \$1.8 million the department has spend of decontamination in July to November how much of this \$1.8 million has been recouped by the department from the tenant(s) occupying the properties decontaminated?

When the tenant(s) require to find other accommodation either during or after decontamination or fire causes and in the future, do the Home and Communities/Kāinga Ora provide new accommodation for them and at what cost? What amount of the \$\$\$ from the tenant(s) regards to the damage they caused?

We have extracted the key questions we believe you are asking in this request and provide answers below.

Q1. How many properties have Kāinga Ora lost due to fire or explosions?

The table below sets out the fire incidents and demolitions in Kāinga Ora homes over the last four financial years, and the current financial year to date. It is important to note that a fire incident does not mean the home is 'lost' i.e. is subsequently demolished – the majority of fire-damaged homes are able to be repaired and re-let. We do not record "explosions".

Fire incidents and demolitions in Kāinga Ora homes:

Financial Year (ending 30 June)	Number of fire incidents	Number of fire demolitions
2019-20	297	49
2020-21	379	38
2021-22	379	44
2022-23	352	44
2023-24	192	31

Q2. How many properties damaged by explosions or fire are determined to be caused by electrical faults or illegal drug growing or manufacture for the same period?

The table below sets out the fire incidents in Kāinga Ora homes due to an electrical cause. We do not have any fires recorded as being caused by illegal drug growing or manufacture and we do not record “explosions”. The vast majority of fires in Kāinga Ora homes are caused by unattended cooking. Any illegal activity is reported to Police.

Fire incidents in Kāinga Ora homes due to electrical cause:

Financial Year (ending 30 June)	Electrical cause fire incidents
2019-20	20
2020-21	26
2021-22	27
2022-23	35
2023-24	10

Q3. What is the cost to Kāinga Ora of the \$1.8 million spent on decontamination in July to November 2023 and how much of this \$1.8 million has been recouped by the department from the tenant(s) occupying the properties decontaminated?

For context, methamphetamine (meth) use is a growing public health concern in New Zealand, and as the prevalence of meth use increases, so too does the impact on homes and properties.

Like other landlords, Kāinga Ora is faced with the issue of meth contamination in some of our homes. It is important to keep in mind that Kāinga Ora is New Zealand’s largest single property owner, with 72,000 properties. The number of properties requiring meth testing and decontamination work, and the cost of this work, is relative to the size of our housing portfolio.

To clarify, the \$1.8 million for the period 1 July to 3 November 2023 (provided to Stuff in November last year) covers costs for testing (\$513,786.28), decontamination (\$701,929.96) and reinstatement (\$599,317.20).

Decontaminating from meth can sometimes include considerable work to reset the home back to a lettable standard. Maintaining a quality home and ensuring it is safe and healthy for current and future customers is a priority for Kāinga Ora, and the reinstatement costs reflect our high standards.

All costs incurred from testing, decontaminating and reinstatement are paid by Kāinga Ora. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to seek recovery from the tenants of costs associated with testing, cleaning, reinstating, demolishing, or the loss of value of a property. For the time period from July to November 2023, no costs have been recovered.

Q4. Does Kāinga Ora provide alternative accommodation for tenant's during or after decontamination or fire? What are the costs of providing alternative accommodation for tenants during or after decontamination or fire.

If decontamination or fire remediation work cannot safely occur while the household remains at that property, and if the household is unable to stay with family or friends during short-term remediation work on their home, Kāinga Ora will look to temporarily or permanently transfer the tenancy to another Kāinga Ora managed property. Any costs for transferring the tenancy are not separately recorded.

I trust you will find this information helpful.

Please note that Kāinga Ora proactively releases its responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request may be published at <https://kaingaora.govt.nz/publications/official-information-requests/>, with your personal information removed.

Nāku noa, nā



Nick Maling
General Manager – National Services

7th January 2024

Home and Communities/Kainga Ora

National Office

PO Box 2628

Wellington 6140.

Attention: Nick Maling,

In a media statement on the 2nd January 2024, 'By the numbers Kainga Ora's growing meth. contamination problem'.

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Look forward to your reply.

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