



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

12 October 2012

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Rob Owen
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Dear Rob

Thank you for your email of 17 September 2012, in which you request:

1. *Who the other members are? [of the Novopay Governance Board]*
2. *Who appointed the Board and what the criteria were?*
3. *What skills and experience they brought to the implementation and the responsibilities they were assigned?*
4. *What remuneration they receive? If this is by meeting I would like to know the frequency of the meetings.*

You also noted that the Ministry may like to reconsider its earlier response and provide more detail on the scope and scale of the simulations and verifications that were run.

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982.

Responses to your questions

1. *Who the other members are (of the Novopay Governance Board)?*

The Novopay Governance Board is currently made up of officials from the Ministry of Education and one official from the State Services Commission, with four external members. The Board is chaired by Rowena Phair, the Ministry's Deputy Secretary, Student Achievement. The other Ministry officials are: Rebecca Elvy, Group Manager Education Workforce; Leanne Gibson, Chief Information Officer; and Tina Cornelius, Chief Finance Officer. The Board invites external advisors to attend as required. Please note that Ministry officials attending have changed over time, as the Novopay project has been underway since 2008.

There are also four permanent external members of the Board. The names of the attendees from the State Services Commission and the four external members are withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons, and section 9(2)(f)(iii), to protect the political neutrality of officials. There do not appear to be overriding public interest reasons that support the release of this information.

2. *Who appointed the Board and what the criteria were?*

The Board was established by the former Deputy Secretary, Schooling, in 2008. Ministry membership on the Board is based on role. The external members were selected as they had experience of managing a payroll change project, or could provide expert advice about the delivery of the project.

3. *What skills and experience they brought to the implementation and the responsibilities they were assigned?*

The skills and experience of the Novopay Board members enable them to:

- Provide review and assurance on all governance interests of the project, including business, user and supplier
- Provide independent advice and support on the Schools Payroll Project Board, specifically to the Project Executive
- Receive and review key project documents, including project Highlight reports and Board papers, and provide feedback
- Provide advice on decisions at Project Board meetings
- Attend all Board meetings and any Board-level special meetings or workshops, except with prior agreement from the Project Executive to be absent
- Provide access to information to support the successful achievement of the project outcomes
- Monitor progress and delivery quality in implementing any approved recommendations and escalating as necessary.

The Novopay Project Board assists the Project Executive (Deputy Secretary, Student Achievement) in being accountable to corporate management for the success of the Novopay Project, and has the authority to direct the project within the remit set by corporate management.

The Novopay Project Board is also responsible for the communications between the project management team and external stakeholders.

The Novopay Project Board approves all major plans and authorises any major deviation from agreed Stage Plans, within the tolerances set by corporate management. The Novopay Project Board accepts the completion of each stage (on the recommendation of the Steering Committee). It ensures that required resources are committed and arbitrates on any conflicts within the Novopay Project, or negotiates a solution to any problems between the Novopay Project and external bodies. In addition, it approves the appointment and responsibilities of the Transition Project Manager and any delegation of its Project Assurance responsibilities.

At the beginning of the Novopay Project the Board was responsible for:

- Delegation of responsibilities to Project Steering Committee
- Agreement with the Programme Director responsibilities and objectives
- Confirmation with corporate or programme management of project tolerances
- Specification of external constraints on the Novopay Project, such as quality assurance
- Approval of an accurate and satisfactory PID, including that it complies with relevant customer standards and policies, plus any associated contract with the supplier
- Delegation of any Project Assurance roles
- Commitment of project resources required by the next Stage Plan



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As the Novopay Project progresses, the Board is responsible for:

- Provision of overall guidance and direction to the Novopay Project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints
- Review of each completed stage and approval of progress to the next
- Acceptance and approval of Stage Plans from the Steering Committee, and any Exception Plans
- Ownership of one or more of the identified risks, as allocated at plan approval time – that is, the responsibility to monitor the risk and advise the Ministry Project Managers of any change in its status and to take action, if appropriate, to ameliorate the risk
- Approval of changes
- Compliance with corporate or programme management directives

4. *What remuneration they receive? If this is by meeting I would like to know the frequency of the meetings.*

The four external members of the Board do receive remuneration. I have withheld the actual amount of remuneration paid to the external members of the Novopay Governance Board under section 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons. There do not appear to be overriding public interest reasons that support the release of this information.

I can advise you however that the remuneration paid is in the range of \$640 - \$1692 per person per Board meeting. This covers the cost of external members previewing and reviewing board documents in addition to attending the meetings. The Board meets monthly or as required, and has done so since it was established.

You have also asked for some further information about the scope and scale of the simulations that were run. I can advise that there was extensive testing of the system before implementation. Before go live, the project ran two full simulations, and six cycles of payroll verification.

The Ministry considered whether to undertake a two-stage implementation. It was originally planned to implement Novopay in the South Island first and then the North Island. However this approach was abandoned because of:

- The complexity of moving staff between the old and new systems would have put pay at risk for those staff.
- Pressures of time because of the impending end-of-life of the existing payroll service.

Under sections 19 and 28(3) of the Official Information Act 1982 you have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision.

Yours sincerely

Leanne Gibson
Chief Information Officer