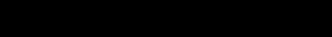



19 February 2021



By email: 

Tēnā koe 

Official Information Act Request
Our Ref: OIA353/1

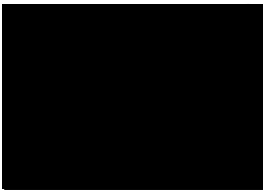
1. I refer to your email of 10 February 2021 in which you seek information on “how long each company has been home to a Crown Solicitor warrant”.
2. Crown Solicitor appointments are made to individuals. This means that a warrant attaches to the person rather than their firm. A Crown Solicitor’s firm will however support a Crown Solicitor and provide the services necessary for the work that falls within their warrant.
3. We do not have complete records of where all the Crown Solicitors worked at the time they were appointed. The firm names are not included in the notices of appointment and a number of appointments were made many decades ago.
4. However, we do have some details which have been compiled from various sources. Those sources being the New Zealand Gazette, Law Directories, New Zealand Law Journal, Papers Past, Archives New Zealand, Crown Law offsite files and other Crown Law records.
5. Below is the result of our best efforts to find out when the firms first had a Crown Solicitor in their office. The accuracy of this information cannot be guaranteed and is affected by such things as Crown Solicitors changing firms as well as changes of firm names. Where the firm names of past Crown Solicitors suggest there might be a connection, we have provided that additional information. Possible historical connections may be made with the current firm due to the names of the firms, where surnames are used.

6. **Auckland – Meredith Connell:** 18 January 1921. This was when Vincent Meredith was appointed.
7. **Christchurch – Raymond Donnelly:** 4 June 1914. This was when Samuel Raymond was appointed. The firm appears to have changed names over the years. In 1914 he worked at Smithson & Raymond.
8. **Dunedin – RPB Law:** Robin Bates was at Wilkinson Adams when he was appointed on 4 March 2002, but in 2014 Robin Bates started a new firm and continued as the Dunedin Crown Solicitor.
9. **Gisborne – Elvidge & Partners:** 3 November 2005. This was when Russell Collins was appointed.
10. **Hamilton – Hamilton Legal:** John Strang was appointed on 21 June 1946 while he was at Strang, Taylor & Sanford. Since then, the firm names of the Hamilton Crown Solicitors have been Strang, Sandford & McMullin; Sandford, Jamieson Almao; possibly Almao Kellaway; Almao Douch and then Hamilton Legal. The current Crown Solicitor, Jacinda Hamilton was at Almao Douch when appointed on 1 November 2019 and the firm rebranded to Hamilton Legal on 1 July 2020. Please note that we cannot confirm these firms were all connected, it is simply possible based on the names.
11. **Invercargill – Preston Russell Law:** Graeme Noble was appointed on 10 December 1981 while at Preston, Evans, Noble & Early. Another lawyer at that firm was appointed as Crown Solicitor in 1987. Then on 7 November 2005 the current Crown Solicitor, Mary-Jane Thomas of Preston Russell Law, was appointed. Again, we cannot confirm these firms are connected, but it is possible based on the names.
12. **Manukau – Kayes Fletcher Walker:** 11 May 2015. This is the appointment date of the current Crown Solicitor, Natalie Walker. Manukau was a new warrant area established in 2015.
13. **Napier – Elvidge & Partners:** 16 June 1995. This was when Graham Lang was appointed.
14. **New Plymouth – C&M Legal:** 1 July 2010. This is the appointment date of the current Crown Solicitor, Cherie Clarke.
15. **Palmerston North – BVA The Practice:** 24 June 1987. This is the appointment date of the current Crown Solicitor, Ben Vanderkolk. The firm was previously known as Ben Vanderkolk & Associates.
16. **Rotorua – Gordon Pilditch:** 1 February 2006. This was when Alan (Fletcher) Pilditch was appointed.
17. **Tasman – O'Donoghue Webber:** 11 October 2010. This is the appointment date of the current Crown Solicitor, Mark O'Donoghue.
18. **Tauranga – Pollett Legal Ltd:** Anna Pollett was at Hollister-Jones Lellman when she was appointed on 1 August 2017. However, she established a new firm (Pollett Legal Ltd) soon after and that practice commenced on 15 January 2018. The Crown

Solicitor prior to Ms Pollett was from Hollister-Jones Lellman, but it is a separate firm to Pollett Legal Ltd and remains as such today.

19. **Timaru – Gresson Dorman & Co:** 20 April 1954. This was when Michael Gresson was appointed.
20. **Whanganui – Wilkinson-Smith Lawyers:** 1 December 2016. This is the appointment date of the current Crown Solicitor, Michele Wilkinson-Smith.
21. **Wellington – Luke Cunningham Clere:** The date of appointment for Sir William Cunningham is unclear, but may have been around 1936.
22. **Whangarei – Marsden Woods Inskip Smith:** 4 November 1971. This was when Philip Smith was appointed.
23. You have the right, by way of complaint to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the OIA, to seek an investigation and review of our decision on your request for information.

Ngā mihi
Crown Law



Manager, Public Prosecutions Unit

PROACTIVELY RELEASED