



18 November 2025

[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your request made under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), received on 21 October 2025. You requested the following:

- 1) The total of all incomes received under the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme for the last tax year.*
- 2) The total of all tax paid under the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme for the last tax year.*
- 3) The total of all tax returned to the employees of the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme for the last tax year.*

#### **Information released**

Total income received under the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme is defined as total wages paid to employees who were employed under this scheme. For the 2023-24 income year, which is the most recently available finalised year, this was \$972.9 million.

Total tax paid under the RSE scheme, calculated as PAYE withheld from salary and wages less the component of PAYE relating to ACC earner premium, was \$111.4 million.

We have interpreted your request for the total of all tax returned to be amounts squared up with Inland Revenue, in situations of a tax refund. It should be noted that most RSE employees do not square up with Inland Revenue; of the 22,249 employees identified as using the scheme in 2023-24, only 391 had a square-up applied at year end.

Of those, and assuming the RSE income was the last dollar earned, the amount withheld was too little (i.e. we infer tax to pay on RSE income) for 84 people, and the amount withheld was too much (we infer an RSE refund) for 307 people, amounting to -\$272,000.

You will note use of the word "infer" in the above paragraph. This is because RSE income is not necessarily the only source of income, and other factors such as expenses (some of which may be related to the RSE activity, and others not, but which we cannot separate out) might also apply.

The approach taken for the inference was:

- Under the 2023-24 progressive tax scale work out tax on total taxable income
- Work out tax on (total taxable income less RSE income)
- The difference between the above two lines is the tax on the RSE income

- This is then compared to the tax withheld during the year (PAYE less earner premium)
- If positive, this is inferred RSE-tax to pay
- If negative this is an inferred RSE-refund

This approach treats RSE income as the last dollar earned and it ignores any RSE expenses which cannot be separated out. It also ignores whether the taxpayer actually did get a refund from Inland Revenue once their *other* taxable activity was also taken into account.

**Inferred square ups of tax on RSE workers assuming it was the last dollar earned, year ended 31 March 2024**

	Number of employees	Amount withheld \$M	Inferred RSE square up \$M
Squared up and infer RSE tax to pay	84	0.793	0.061
Squared up and infer RSE refund	307	2.827	(0.272)
Did not square up	21,858	107.809	n/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,249</b>	<b>111.429</b>	<b>n/a</b>

**Publishing of OIA response**

We intend to publish our response to your request on Inland Revenue's website ([ird.govt.nz](http://ird.govt.nz)) as this information may be of interest to other members of the public. This letter, with your personal details removed, may be published in its entirety. Publishing responses increases the availability of information to the public and is consistent with the OIA's purpose of enabling more effective participation in the making and administration of laws and policies and promoting the accountability of officials.

Thank you again for your request.

Yours sincerely



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