



24 March 2022

by email

Ref: OIA-2021/22-0677

Dear

Official Information Act request relating to travel costs and cost of UAC website

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request transferred to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) on 26 November 2021. You requested:

“Costs of those operating and managing the various call centres / websites / etc. in place as a result of Covid-19, and;

The cost of travel for the various government officials, including the Prime Minister, to attend to Covid-related activities such as vaccination encouragement around the country”

The time frame for responding to your request was extended under section 15A of the Act by 20 working days because it was necessary for consultations to be undertaken before a decision could be made on your request. Following this extension, I am now in a position to respond.

DPMC has interpreted the first part of your request as asking for the cost of website maintenance and development for the Unite Against COVID-19 Campaign and the Vaccine Campaign, held by DPMC. The department does not operate a call centre as part of its COVID-19 response.

A total of \$1,452,159 has been spent by DPMC on website maintenance and development in support of New Zealand's COVID-19 response between 1 March 2020 and 28 February 2022. Please note that this includes funding for COVID-19 public information campaigns run by the National Crisis Management Centre before the COVID-19 Group was established within DPMC on 31 June 2020.

A total of \$207,304 has been spent on travel by DPMC for the COVID-19 response up to 28 February 2022. Please note that prior to the establishment of the COVID-19 Group within DPMC on 2 December 2020, travel costs for DPMC's COVID-19 response were paid for by the National Emergency Management Agency, which is a departmental agency of DPMC. This includes, fares, taxis, vehicle claims, and accommodation. Please note that DPMC can only provide travel costs in total and cannot break these down by type of activity.

Travel by Ministers, including the Prime Minister, is administered by the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA). Information on travel and accommodation expenses for Ministers of the Crown can be found through the following link over the page:

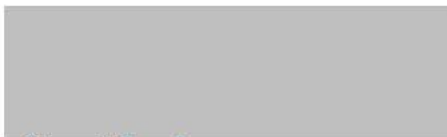
dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/ad46619e19fa042bcc256a8a0001c7b4/9043710c18c461cbcc257826001635b0!OpenDocument

For information regarding the cost of the Prime Minister's travel relating to the COVID-19 response, I suggest that you contact DIA.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Cheryl Barnes
Deputy Chief Executive
COVID-19 Response