



4 April 2022

[REDACTED]

Ref: OIA-2021/22-1106

Dear [REDACTED]

**Official Information Act request relating to COVID-19 advertising costs**

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request transferred to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) on 14 March 2022. You requested:

- 1 "How much has been spent on advertising related to Covid 19 to date?"*
- 2 Which other government departments might also have made significant amounts of spending on advertising related to Covid 19?"*

We have interpreted your request to be for the costs for the Unite Against COVID-19 Campaign and the Vaccine Campaign, held by DPMC.

New Zealand's communication approach has been internationally recognised, and it is acknowledged as one of the pillars of the country's successful COVID-19 response. There has been a focus on ensuring the public receive clear information through key channels to guide them through the different phases of the pandemic. In 2021, this included a comprehensive, multifaceted campaign to support the COVID-19 Vaccine rollout, ensuring communities across Aotearoa were well informed about the vaccine and motivated to protect themselves, their whānau, and community.

Between 1 March 2020 and 28 February 2022, a total of \$98,371,951 has been spent by DPMC on public information campaigns in support of New Zealand's COVID-19 response. 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. This figure is made up of the advertising costs of the Unite Against COVID-19 Campaign and the Vaccine Campaign, which include advertising, video and script production, website maintenance, translation services, printing, and other associated costs.

DPMC closely monitors this expenditure to ensure it is targeted to be as effective as possible and consistent with the changing needs with regard to the management of COVID-19. The Vaccine Campaign is developed and funded by the Ministry of Health, working in partnership with DPMC to ensure a complementary and holistic approach to campaign activity. DPMC administers the Vaccine Campaign budget.

The Ministry of Health, Ministry for Pacific Peoples and Te Puni Kōkiri are also involved in providing funding for public information campaigns supporting New Zealand's COVID-19 response.

These campaigns are targeted to reach all people in New Zealand, communicating vital information including alert level changes and the associated actions required by New Zealanders, as well as encouraging key public health behaviours.

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**