



**Te Tari Taiwhenua  
Internal Affairs**

7 March 2022

Ministerial and Secretariat Services  
45 Pipitea St  
Thorndon  
PO Box 805, Wellington 6140, New Zealand  
Phone +64 4 495 7200  
[dia.govt.nz](http://dia.govt.nz)

John Trafalgar  
[fyi-request-18508-96489c2f@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-18508-96489c2f@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear John Trafalgar

**Official Information Act request (OIA 2122-0570)**

I refer to your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 9 February 2022 to the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department) requesting the following information:

*Please advise the kilometres driven in 2021 on each of the assigned vehicle provided to each Minister that is funded by the taxpayers, regardless of whether a chauffeur is allocated or not, and regardless of whether the Minister is inside or outside Cabinet.*

*If possible, please break down the mileage by calendar month. If not, an annual total for each Minister suffices.*

**Response to your request**

We have interpreted your request as being for mileage of chauffeur-driven vehicles and Ministerial self-drive vehicles in the Crown fleet managed by the Department, through the VIP Transport Service (VIP Transport), used by Ministers in 2021.

I am refusing your request under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information requested is not held by the Department, and there are no grounds for believing it is being held by another agency. To provide the information to you would require the creation of information, which is not a requirement under the Act.

While the Department does not record mileage for Crown fleet vehicles. However we regularly release surface travel expenses involving Ministers, their spouse or accompanying staff on our website. The data released cover costs for the use of chauffeur-driven vehicle and self-drive vehicles provided by VIP Transport, taxis, mileage claims for personal vehicles used to conduct official business, and payment of parking fees.

In reporting surface travel expenses, the Department does not segregate expenses between Ministers, their spouse or accompanying staff. Neither does the Department separate out the information into individual categories of chauffeur-driven vehicles, self-drive vehicles, taxis, mileage claims and parking fees.

The latest quarterly Ministers' expenses released by the Department can be found at [Ministers expense releases - dia.govt.nz](https://www.dia.govt.nz/ministers-expense-releases). You can also find previous Ministers' surface travel expense releases in the link.

### **Background information**

The Department's VIP Transport manages the Crown fleet which operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week across New Zealand. The Crown fleet is comprised of chauffeur-driven vehicles, as well as self-drive cars for Ministers and former Prime Ministers as per entitlements under the Ministers' Travel Services within New Zealand Determination 2020 and the Members of Parliament (Former Prime Ministers' Travel Services) Determination 2017. The service also organises taxis or other private providers, where Crown fleet vehicles are either not available or practical.

Those entitled to use chauffeur-driven vehicles include Ministers, visiting dignitaries, Heads of State and Heads of Government; Governors-General, former Governors-General and former Prime Ministers; the Leader of the Opposition, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the House and senior members of the judiciary.

Ministers are the largest group of entitled users. Clause 2.1 of the Ministers' Travel Services within New Zealand Determination 2020 (Determination) provides that 'A Minister may use a chauffeur-driven car arranged by VIP Transport at any time for any purpose, at the Minister's discretion'. Ministers need to travel regularly to fulfil their obligations, and the confidential, chauffeur-driven service allows Ministers to use this time efficiently. Clause 2.3 (1) of the Determination provides that a Minister is entitled to one self-drive car for use at the Minister's discretion.

The Determination can be found on the New Zealand Parliament's website at [Ministers' Travel Services within New Zealand Determination 2020 - New Zealand Parliament \(www.parliament.nz\)](https://www.parliament.nz/ministers-travel-services-within-new-zealand-determination-2020)

We intend to publish this response to [www.dia.govt.nz](https://www.dia.govt.nz) with your personal details removed. Publishing responses increases the availability of information to the public and is consistent with the purpose of the Act to enable effective participation in the making and administration of laws and policies, and to promote the accountability of Ministers and officials.

If you have any concerns with the information in this response, you have a right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. Information on how to do this is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](https://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



**Briget Ridden**  
Acting General Manager  
Ministerial and Secretariat Services