



**Te Tari Taiwhenua  
Internal Affairs**

21 October 2022

Ministerial Services  
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A J Sheppard  
[fyi-request-20348-6fbb0fcf@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-20348-6fbb0fcf@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear A J Sheppard

**Request for information (OIA 2223-0255)**

Thank you for your request for information received by the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department) on 23 September 2022 as a transfer from the Office of the Prime Minister. You requested the following information under the Official Information Act (the Act):

*I request the following information in relation to your ministerial services portfolio.*

- 1. I request the information sent to "toitu envirocare" used to calculate carbon credit offsets for ministerial air travel. Please supply information for individual mps/ministers per year from 2017 when labour took office.*
- 2. Are carbon offsets used for ALL air travel including commercial flights, the use of the RNZAF boeing 737 and various helicopter flights etc?. If not then please clarify air travel in which carbon offsets are used.*
- 3. What is the total cost per year for carbon offsets for ministerial air travel? Please supply details for each year as far back as its held for this.*
- 4. What is the total cost for consultant fees/ advice etc paid to "toitu envirocare" to calculate ministerial carbon offsets for air travel? Please supply details as far back as its held for this*

## Response to your request

*1. I request the information sent to "toitu enviocare" used to calculate carbon credit offsets for ministerial air travel. Please supply information for individual mps/ministers per year from 2017 when labour took office.*

Ministerial Services at the Department has responsibility to process and administer the payment and expenses related to air travel taken by Ministers. As part of the administration process, an aggregate total travelled by air, in kilometres, is sent to Toitu Enviocare on a quarterly basis to calculate carbon credit offsets. The kilometres travelled is not broken down into each Minister's usage. Therefore, we cannot provide you with a breakdown for each Minister and your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act that the document alleged to contain the information does not exist.

However, information relating to Ministers' expenses, including travel expenses, can be found on the Department's website. This information is updated on a quarterly basis and earlier disclosures of Ministers' travel expenses date back to 2009. The link can be found here at [Ministers expense releases - dia.govt.nz](http://dia.govt.nz)

Information in relation to air travel for Members of Parliament (MP), other than those who are Members of the Executive, is administered by Parliamentary Service. The Department therefore does not hold the requested information and this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as the document alleged to contain the information does not exist.

*2. Are carbon offsets used for ALL air travel including comercial flights, the use of the RNZAF boeing 737 and various helicopter flights etc?. If not then please clarify air travel in which carbon offsets are used.*

The use of a RNZAF Boeing 737 by Ministers is not administered by the Department, we are therefore unable to comment on carbon offsets in the use of the aircraft. If you would like information with regards to a RNZAF Boeing 737 you may wish to contact the New Zealand Defence Force.

Ministerial air travel where carbon offsets are calculated is for flights with Air New Zealand and its Star Alliance Partners, which accounted for an average of 98 percent of total Ministerial air travel over the last five years.

The Department may on occasion fund non-scheduled charter/helicopter flights, where these are necessary to transport Ministers and/or Guests of Government for a specific purpose. However, we do not collect information to enable us to offset carbon emissions for these flights. The individual operators however, may have a policy to do so. Where any such transport costs are incurred by a Minister, they will be disclosed in the relevant Minister's expense release.

*3. What is the total cost per year for carbon offsets for ministerial air travel? Please supply details for each year as far back as its held for this.*

The below table represents annual Ministerial air travel carbon emissions and the fees and costs associated with carbon offsets.

Financial Year	Offset (tonnes of CO2-e equivalent)	Cost Charged	Administration Fee (Toitu Envirocare)	GST	Total Invoice Amount
2017/18	1,357	\$33,925	\$6,785	\$6,106	\$46,816
2018/19	1,702	\$48,786	\$8,510	\$8,594	\$65,890
2019/20	1,489	\$37,375	\$7,445	\$6,723	\$51,543
2020/21	659	\$13,260	\$3,295	\$2,483	\$19,038
2021/22	966	\$24,150	\$4,830	\$4,347	\$33,327

Review and compilation of carbon offset costs for previous years would require a significant amount of time and personnel resource in excess of reasonable expectation. This is due to the Department's upgrades to the Finance Systems required over time. Therefore, this part of your request has been refused under section 18(f) of the Act as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

*4. What is the total cost for consultant fees/ advice etc paid to "toitu envirocare" to calculate ministerial carbon offsets for air travel? Please supply details as far back as its held for this*

Please refer to the above table for the administration fees paid to Toitu Envirocare for the last five financial years.

Details of the Department's involvement in the Carbon Neutral Government Programme will be incorporated in the 2021/2022 Annual Report which will be published on the Department's website on 27 October 2022. [The Department of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua - dia.govt.nz](https://www.dia.govt.nz)

Further information on [Ministerial travel](#) can be found in the [Cabinet Manual](#) which is publicly available on the website of the [Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet \(DPMC\)](#).

We intend to publish this OIA response on [www.dia.govt.nz](https://www.dia.govt.nz) (with your personal details having been removed). Publishing responses to OIA requests increase 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**

General Manager – Ministerial Services

Te Haumi – Enterprise Partnerships

Te Tari Taiwhenua – The Department of Internal Affairs