



**Te Tari Taiwhenua
Internal Affairs**

18 July 2024

Ministerial Services
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Cooper O'Neil
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Dear Cooper

Official Information Act request (2314-1116)

Thank you for your request for information dated 18 June 2024 made under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Prime Minister's Office. In the letter dated 25 June 2024 you were informed that your request had been partially transferred to the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department). You requested the following information:

Further information on Air New Zealand diverted aircraft to Brisbane to pick up your delegation, before proceeding to Japan. Could you please provide me with all communication, including, but not limited to: text messages and emails relating to this (including text messages with Greg Foran). I would also like copies of any invoices relating to the charter of this flight.

The Department is responding to the second part of your request for invoices relating to the charter flight. The Prime Minister's Office will respond to the first part of your request.

Response to your request

The Ministerial Services Group within the Department has responsibility for processing and administering the payment of expenses related to Ministerial travel. This covers all members of a Ministerial party approved by Cabinet to be paid for by Vote Internal Affairs (Ministerial Services). There may be occasions where members of the wider travelling party are paid for separately, such as by other government departments.

As per the Cabinet minute for the approved expenditure for this international travel, the costs associated with the Prime Minister the Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, the Minister for Trade, Hon Todd McClay, and the approved Ministerial travel party to Japan will be met by Vote Internal Affairs (Ministerial Services). The approved Ministerial travel party consisted of four members of staff and the Prime Minister's spouse.

The Department is unable to provide invoices for the chartered flight from Australia to Japan as we have not received any such invoices to date. Therefore, the Department is refusing your request under section 18(e) of the Act.

However, working within the spirit of the Act I can confirm that as of 30 June 2024, the Department has received airfare invoices for flights from Papua New Guinea to Japan. The total amount invoiced is \$30,378.10. This invoice covers expenses for airfares for the Prime Minister the Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, the Prime Minister's spouse, and three members of staff that were approved under the Cabinet minute.

For your information, the Department is required under legislation to release aggregated expenses on Ministerial travel and accommodation on a quarterly basis on its website¹. I can confirm that the next release of Ministers' travel expenses is set down for 22 August 2024. More information on Ministerial travel² can be found in the Cabinet Manual³.

We may publish this OIA response on www.dia.govt.nz (with your personal details having been removed). Publishing responses to OIA requests 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 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

¹ <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Ministers-expense-releases>

² <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/our-business-units/cabinet-office/supporting-work-cabinet/cabinet-manual/2-ministers-crown-12>

³ <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/our-business-units/cabinet-office/supporting-work-cabinet/cabinet-manual>