

19 May 2020

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Dear Cody C

I refer to your email of 24 April 2020 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

*"Did MFAT charge more than the airlines charged for Covid-19 repatriation flights?
I.e. Were these flights passed onto those being repatriated at cost?"*

The costs to passengers reflect the high operational costs of charter flights as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The New Zealand Government will not profit from these flights.

Ticket prices do not represent the total cost of charter operations, which are underwritten and subsidised by the New Zealand Government. The Government has a global framework for pricing repatriation flights based on their length. This makes costs equitable and predictable, and is simple to understand and administer. These flights typically operate on a partial cost recovery basis. If we operated a strict cost recovery system, the flight would likely cost each person far more.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details redacted) may be published on the Ministry's website.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the OIA to seek a review of this response by the Ombudsman.

Yours sincerely



Wendy Adams
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade