



14 April 2022

Grant Bristow  
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Ref: OIA-2021/22-1116

Dear Grant Bristow

### 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 16 March 2022. You requested:

*Could you please provide data/ information relating to the following from the point in which the Pandemic began to most recent data?*

- 1) *Television advertising across all platforms.*
- 2) *Radio advertising across all platforms.*
- 3) *Internet/ web-based advertising across all platforms.*
- 4) *Advertising specifically relating to Social Media.*
- 5) *Advertising across paper media, i.e. Newspapers*
- 6) *Advertising posters, handouts, literature etc.*

*Please provide breakdowns of the advertising relating to:*

- 1) *Immunization shots number one and two.*
- 2) *Immunization boosters*
- 3) *Immunization for 12–16-year-old*
- 4) *Immunization for 5- 11-year-olds*
- 5) *Information regarding lock down*
- 6) *Information regarding the Traffic Light System*
- 7) *Information regarding Vaccine Passports Information regarding Vaccine Mandates.*

*Finally, of these totals, could also please provide statistics/information on advertising based on Maori.*

On 7 April 2022 you clarified that your request is for the costs for the Unite Against COVID-19 Campaign and the COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign. Please note that the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) is only in a position respond to your request in relation to any relevant information held by this agency.

An extensive public information campaign to support New Zealand's fight against COVID-19 – including the highly transmissible Omicron variant – has been a critical part of supporting and informing New Zealanders throughout the pandemic.

A total of \$106,107,468 has been spent by DPMC on public information campaigns in support of New Zealand's COVID-19 response between 1 March 2020 and 31 March 2022. 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. We closely monitor 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.

This campaign is targeted to reach all people in New Zealand, communicating vital information as well as encouraging key public health behaviours regarding vaccinations for COVID-19. 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.

Regarding the part of your request for a breakdown of the budget of the public information campaigns, because all media placement is via a contracted media agency, and DPMC does not place requests with media outlets directly, media costs are not broken down in the manner you have requested in the DPMC financial system.

I am therefore refusing this part of your request under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information is not held by DPMC and I do not believe that it is held by another public sector agency.

DPMC does not hold information relating to the part of your request for *Finally, of these totals, could also please provide statistics/information on advertising based on Maori*. I believe this information is held by the Ministry of Health. Accordingly, I have decided under section 14(b)(i) of the Act to transfer this part of your request to the Ministry. The Ministry has the usual timeframes under the Act from receipt of this transfer to make a decision on your request.

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**