Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall

Minister for COVID-19 Response
Minister of Research, Science and Innovation
Minister for Seniors
Associate Minister of Health

2 4 JAN 2023

James
fyi-request-21484-68e93c15@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref. AVOIA170

Tēnā koe James,

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), transferred to me by the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) on 9 January 2023, for:

> *"In relation to DJ Dimension (Robert Etheridge). At a press conference Minister Hipkins gave on the 30/12/21 Hipkins stated "He was able to secure a voucher through the lobby release system, that everyone goes through." In response to a previous OIA request detailing MIQ booking clarification Rebecca, a Senior Ministerial Advisor from Managed Isolation and Quarantine stated no information of this nature regarding MIQ bookings could be passed on without a privacy release or waiver form being signed by DJ Dimension himself. This would obviously and naturally include DJ Dimensions original booking of the MIQ spot. Thus my question and information sought is very straight forward and only requiring a yes or no answer. Did Minister Hipkins or MBIE, have a signed privacy waiver form from DJ Dimension when he he publicly stated he had personally booked his room through the lobby release system? This would also very clearly fall under personal information for DJ Dimension under "Rebecca's" description and would be required for Minister Hipkins to release this information."*

Answers to questions directed to Ministers at press conferences are provided in the spirit of the Act. In cases of questions regarding individuals, Ministers must consider the public interest against matters such as personal privacy when considering whether to release the requested information.

I am advised that Minister Hipkins did not obtain a signed privacy waiver from DJ Dimension in order to provide the information in the press conference on 30 December 2021. He considered the significant public interest in the matter outweighed any privacy interests, and that New Zealanders required reassurance that DJ Dimension's place in Managed Isolation and Quarantine was obtained via a fair process.

I note in your original request of 10 December 2022 to MBIE that you requested information about when DJ Dimension secured his MIQ voucher for his December 2021 trip to New Zealand. I would like to highlight that there is information publicly available on this matter in the form of an answer to a Written Parliamentary Question, published by Minister Hipkins in February 2022: https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/order-paper-questions/written-questions/document/WQ_01593_2022/1593-2022-chris-bishop-to-the-minister-for-covid-19. I have also attached a copy of the information for your convenience.

I trust this information is helpful to you.

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Office of the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall
Minister for COVID-19 Response

1593 (2022). Chris Bishop to the Minister for COVID-19 Response

Published date: 8 Feb 2022

1593 (2022). Chris Bishop to the **Minister for COVID-19 Response** (08 Feb 2022): In relation to the recent visit to New Zealand of Robert Etheridge, known professionally as Dimension, who was reported to arrive in New Zealand on December 16, 2021, on what date was his managed isolation and quarantine space allocated to him for this?

Hon Chris Hipkins (Minister for COVID-19 Response) replied: I am advised that Robert Etheridge secured his voucher in the Virtual Lobby event on 2 November 2021.