



**Te Tari Taiwhenua  
Internal Affairs**

25 July 2024

Ministerial Services  
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James  
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Dear James

**Official Information Act request (OIA 2425-0007)**

I refer to your request dated 17 June 2024 to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) regarding the costs of the Prime Minister's travel to Japan.

On 1 July 2024, DPMC transferred your request to the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department). You requested the following information (numbering added):

*Under the OIA I would like to request the following:*

- 1. Cost of flights for the PM and those accompanying him from PNG to Tokyo via Hong Kong broken down by individuals on the flight, please provide names (except for security).*
- 2. Total cost of flights from Brisbane to Tokyo on Air NZ99 for the remaining people who did not accompany the PM.*
- 3. Names of people who flew in business class and cost per ticket.*
- 4. Names of people who flew in premium economy and cost per ticket.*
- 5. Total number of media on this flight.*

The Department will be responding to the parts of your request that we have responsibility for as outlined below.

**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). For this international travel, there were members of the wider travelling party that were paid for separately by the respective government departments or responsible agencies.

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 Ministerial Services. The approved Ministerial travel party consisted of four members of staff and the Prime Minister's spouse. Furthermore, a portion of the cost to send a Kapa Haka group to Japan will be met by Vote Internal Affairs.

Please note, Ministerial Services does not have responsibility for travel costs for any parties other than those stipulated in the Cabinet minute. We also do not have responsibility, or hold information, about media delegates.

The answers to the parts of your questions that Ministerial Service has responsibility for are provided below.

1. *Cost of flights for the PM and those accompanying him from PNG to Tokyo via Hong Kong broken down by individuals on the flight, please provide names (except for security).*

In response to questions one and two I can advise that as of 30 June 2024, the Department has received 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. The names of the three members of staff are withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act "to protect the privacy of natural persons".

2. *Total cost of flights from Brisbane to Tokyo on Air NZ99 for the remaining people who did not accompany the PM.*

The Department cannot provide costs for the chartered flight from Australia to Japan as we have not received any such invoices to date. Therefore, the Department is refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act "as the information does not exist or cannot be found".

3. *Names of people who flew in business class and cost per ticket.*
4. *Names of people who flew in premium economy and cost per ticket.*

In terms of the flight from Papua New Guinea to Japan, the Prime Minister, his spouse and three staff travelled business class from Papua New Guinea to Hong Kong. For the Hong Kong to Tokyo part of the travel, the Prime Minister and his spouse travelled business class, the three staff travelled premium economy. As noted above, the names of the staff accompanying the Prime Minister are withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.

5. *Total number of media on this flight.*

As stated above, the Department does not hold this information.

For your information, the Department is required under legislation to release aggregated expenses on Ministerial travel and accommodation on a quarterly basis on its website<sup>1</sup>. I can confirm that the next release of Ministers' travel expenses is set for 22 August 2024. More information on Ministerial travel<sup>2</sup> can be found in the Cabinet Manual<sup>3</sup>.

As is required by section 9(1) of the Act, I have considered where necessary whether the grounds for withholding information under section 9(2) as set out in this response letter are outweighed by other considerations which would make it desirable, in the public interest, to make that information available. In this instance, I do not consider that to be the case.

We may publish this OIA response on [www.dia.govt.nz](http://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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



**Karl McDiarmid**  
Acting General Manager – Ministerial Services  
Te Haumi – Enterprise Partnerships  
Te Tari Taiwhenua – The Department of Internal Affairs

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

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

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

