

29/08/2024

M P Ross

By email to: fyi-request-27932-c0e732a4@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear M P Ross

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2024/53

On Tuesday, 6 August you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA) for the following information:

- 1) *Is "Independent MPs" a registered political party with the Electoral Commission?*
- 2) *If it is, does "Independent MPs" have the current and required number of financial members to remain a registered political party?*
- 3) *Is there an unregistered political party called "Independent MPs" seeking registration with the Electoral Commission?*
- 4) *If so, in 3), could you please provide the names of the financial members?*
- 5) *If so, in 3), please provide a copy of its party's constitution.*
- 6) *If so, in 3), who is the party's secretary?*
- 7) *If not, in 3), is it legal to call yourself a leader of a political party that does not exist or is not seeking registration from the Electoral Commission while being a member of Parliament?*
- 8) *Are leaders of political parties paid more than a standard Member of Parliament? If so, what is the difference?*
- 9) *Do leaders of political parties receive additional staffing and benefits compared to a normal List MP who is not the leader of a political party? If so, what are these additional staffing and benefits?*

Please find answers to your questions below.

- 1) *Is "Independent MPs" a registered political party with the Electoral Commission?*

No, there is no political party named 'Independent MPs' currently registered with the Electoral Commission.

Parties currently registered with the Electoral Commission can be found on our website: [Register of political parties | Elections](#).

- 2) *If it is, does "Independent MPs" have the current and required number of financial members to remain a registered political party?*

Please refer to our answer to question 1.

3) *Is there an unregistered political party called "Independent MPs" seeking registration with the Electoral Commission?*

No, there is not currently an unregistered political party called 'Independent MPs' seeking registration with the Electoral Commission.

When we receive an application from a political party to register with the Commission, we issue a media release stating that we are considering an application from a named political party. Media releases can be found on our website: [Media & news | Elections](#).

4) *If so, in 3), could you please provide the names of the financial members?*

Please refer to our answer to question 3.

5) *If so, in 3), please provide a copy of its party's constitution.*

Please refer to our answer to question 3.

6) *If so, in 3), who is the party's secretary?*

Please refer to our answer to question 3.

7) *If not, in 3), is it legal to call yourself a leader of a political party that does not exist or is not seeking registration from the Electoral Commission while being a member of Parliament?*

Political parties do not have to be registered with the Electoral Commission to exist. Parties also do not have to be registered with the Commission to appear on ballot papers, therefore to have members of Parliament. For more information about political parties and the role of the Electoral Commission, please refer to our website: [Political parties in New Zealand | Elections](#).

8) *Are leaders of political parties paid more than a standard Member of Parliament? If so, what is the difference?*

This part of your request was formally transferred to the Remuneration Authority on Monday, 12 August as the Authority is better suited to answer this question than the Electoral Commission. Please refer to further communication from the Remuneration Authority in relation to this question.

9) *Do leaders of political parties receive additional staffing and benefits compared to a normal List MP who is not the leader of a political party? If so, what are these additional staffing and benefits?*

This part of your request will be answered by the Parliamentary Service, as they are more suited to answer this question than the Commission. We note that the Parliamentary Service is not subject to the Official Information Act 1982, therefore the transfer of this question has not been made under the Act. Instead, the Parliamentary Service will be treating these as an enquiry. Please refer to further communication from the Parliamentary Service in relation to this question.

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every 3 months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Kristina Temel
Manager, Legal and Policy