



2 October 2024

John Luke
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Ref: PMO 098-2024-25

Dear John

Official Information Act request: Costs associated with National Party Conference / AGM

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, received on 10 September 2024. You requested:

You attended the National Party 2024 Conference that ran Friday 2 August to Sunday 4 August, dates per national.org.nz/2024_agm.

You would have been supported by a number of staff from your office, or from other ministerial offices, or ministries.

I am requesting:

- 1. The number of staff supporting you - including your ministerial office staff or from ministries, or contractors.*
- 2. The cost of accommodation for each of the staff, including where the staff were accommodated and their room types.*
- 3. The cost of staff transport incurred - including flights, transport to and from the venue / dinner, etc.*
- 4. The cost of dining and other costs incurred for their attendance.*
- 5. Receipts of all the above.*

I can confirm that one Ministerial office staff member attended the conference with the Prime Minister. The Ministerial Services group within the Department of Internal Affairs has responsibility for processing and administering the payment of expenses related to Ministerial travel and expenses. Ministerial Services have provided the following costs associated with the staff member's attendance at the AGM. The costs below do not include GST.

Breakdown of costs	
Accommodation (2 nights) and breakfast	\$500.00
Airfares – Wellington to Auckland (and return)	\$857.22
Total	\$1,357.22

Ministerial Services have not received an invoice for the taxi costs for the staff member.

Information about Minister's expenses is publicly disclosed on the Department of Internal Affairs website on a quarterly basis. The information includes Ministerial credit card expenditure and surface travel costs for Ministers, their spouse or partner and staff. You can view this information here: <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Ministers-expense-releases>

I am advised that the way Ministerial Services receives invoices for travel makes it difficult to separate particular flights and individual receipts because they do not receive individual invoices. To provide individual receipts would require substantial work. The view is that public transparency needs are met by the quarterly publication of Minister's expenses. Therefore your request for receipts is declined under the following sections of the Act:

- *Section 18(d) that the information requested is or soon will be publicly available; and or:*
- *Section 18(f) that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.*

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

Yours sincerely


Cameron Burrows
Chief of Staff