



Office of Hon Bill English

Deputy Prime Minister
Minister of Finance
Minister Responsible for HNZC

Aaron Livingstone
fyi-request-3706-b3023622@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Livingstone

Information request: The financial accounts of the New Zealand Flag Consideration Project

Our reference: DPM OIA012

- 1 On 3 March 2016 my office received a request from you under the Official Information Act 1982 (“OIA”) for information relating to the New Zealand Flag Consideration Project. Specifically, you requested:

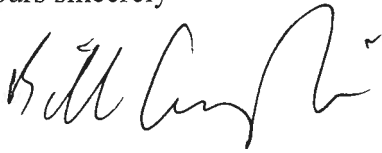
“[A]ll information on the financial accounts of this flag change. From the dates the decision to change the flag up to 2nd of March 2016.”

- 2 I note that, as of yet, there has not been any ‘decision to change the flag’. Whether or not the current New Zealand Flag changes depends on the results of the final referendum which runs from 3 to 24 March 2016.
- 3 We have therefore understood your request to be for all information on the financial accounts from the date that Cabinet approved the process to consider changing the New Zealand Flag, 28 October 2014, to 2 March 2016.
- 4 Providing all information on the financial accounts for the flag consideration project from 28 October 2014 to 2 March 2016 would require the substantial collation of a large amount of information. The flag consideration process has involved a number of agencies and has covered a broad range of activities, including policy development and legislative drafting, public engagement and consultation, preparation and delivery of two referendums, and management and administration of each stage of the project by each agency. As you can imagine, there is a large amount of financial information held across multiple agencies that falls within the scope of your request.
- 5 I therefore decline your request under section 18(f) of the OIA, on the basis that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation and research.
- 6 The budget approved by Cabinet for the flag consideration project is set out in the Cabinet paper dated 28 October 2014, and is available on the website of the Department of the Prime

Minister and Cabinet (item 2, CAB (14) 541 page 12-13):
<http://www.dPMC.govt.nz/dPMC/publications/nzflag-process>.

- 7 I also note that a breakdown of the costs of the flag consideration project will be made publicly available after the conclusion of the second referendum.
- 8 Please note that you have the right to complain about this decision to the Office of the Ombudsmen under s 28(3) of the OIA.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill English', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Bill English
Deputy Prime Minister