

15 August 2023

Requesters name redacted for proactive
release

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OIA 28750

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release

I refer to your email of 28 July 2023 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

1. *How many domestic flights (paid for by the government) have staff taken in 2022?*
2. *How many international flights (paid for by the government) have staff taken in 2022?*
3. *How much has your department spent overall on flights in 2022?*
4. *How much has your department spent on airline memberships (such as Air New Zealand's Koru membership) in 2022?*
5. *How much has your department spent on taxis and Uber rides in 2022?*
6. *How much has your department spent on public transport fares for staff in 2022?*
7. *How much has your department spent on petrol and diesel in 2022?*
8. *How much has been spent on travel for the partners/family of ministers in 2022?*

Your request has been numbered for ease of reference.

On 3 August 2023, we sought clarification on part 8 of your request. You clarified that this part of your request is for:

How much has been spent on travel for the partners/family of ministry staff in 2022?

Please note the information provided below covers the period 1 January 2022 - 31 December 2022.

1. *How many domestic flights (paid for by the government) have staff taken in 2022?*

3,437 domestic flights were undertaken between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2022. Domestic flights within New Zealand, either point-to-point domestically for meetings, or as domestic legs of international travel, is undertaken for inter-governmental negotiations, meetings, and to take up overseas postings, which is an integral part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (the Ministry) business. Domestic travel involves hundreds of Ministry staff, their partners and dependents.

2. *How many international flights (paid for by the government) have staff taken in 2022?*

8,560 international flights were undertaken between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2022. International flights from New Zealand for inter-governmental negotiations, meetings and to take up overseas postings is a core part of the

Ministry's business. International travel involves hundreds of Ministry staff, their partners and dependents.

3. *How much has your department spent overall on flights in 2022?*

From 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022, NZ\$11.467 million was spent on flights.

4. *How much has your department spent on airline memberships (such as Air New Zealand's Koru membership) in 2022?*

NZ\$1,530 was spent on airline memberships from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022.

The Ministry's policy for airline lounge membership is that staff can only be reimbursed for lounge membership if one of the following applies:

- the staff member is a current member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT); or
- an SLT member pre-approves the lounge membership because there is a sound business case for a staff member to have one; for example, the Chief of Protocol hosting meetings at an airport lounge.

5. *How much has your department spent on taxis and Uber rides in 2022?*

From 1 January to 31 December 2022, NZ\$399,761 was paid using the Ministry's corporate credit cards, for taxis and Uber rides by staff located in the Ministry's Wellington and Auckland offices, and by staff at the Ministry's 58 posts overseas.

6. *How much has your department spent on public transport fares for staff in 2022?*

Approximately NZ\$47,991 was spent on public transport (e.g. public buses and trains between airports and hotels, from hotels to meeting venues, etc.) between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2022.

7. *How much has your department spent on petrol and diesel in 2022?*

NZ\$317,416 was spent on petrol and diesel in the 2022 calendar year, mainly by the Ministry's global network comprising 58 posts.

8. *How much has been spent on travel for the partners/family of ministry staff in 2022?*

From 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022, NZ\$7.186 million was spent on travel costs (NZ\$4.799 million on flights and NZ\$2.387 million on accommodation, meals, etc) transferring staff and their family members to/from the Ministry's posts overseas.

Please note that we may publish this letter (with your personal details redacted) on the Ministry's website.

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade