



14 March 2022

By email: [REDACTED]

Ref: [REDACTED]

Dear Darryl Betts

**Official Information Act request relating to advertising expenditure for the COVID-19 Response**

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 14 February 2022. You requested:

*"Part 1 - advertising expenditure.*

*Please provide a breakdown of advertising expenditure according to the following dimensions. Please note that I am not requesting 4 separate breakdowns, but rather a single breakdown with 4 dimensions.*

*Dimension 1 - primary subject matter:*

- 1. Covid-19 vaccines or boosters.*
- 2. Restrictions, rules, mandates, guidelines, laws, etc. which relate to Covid-19, including but not limited to masks, social distancing, hygiene, lock downs, and testing.*
- 3. Alternative Covid-19 prevention strategies, including but not limited to exercise, exposure to sunshine, healthy diet, weight control, immune system fortification (e.g. dietary supplements such as Vitamin D).*
- 4. Non-vaccine GP and out-patient treatments for Covid-19.*
- 5. Other*

*Dimension 2 - advertising medium:*

- 1. Facebook*
- 2. YouTube*
- 3. NZ television broadcasters – conventional advertising*
- 4. NZ television broadcasters – public service announcement air-time*
- 5. NZ print media and online news sites*
- 6. Physical advertising (e.g. signs)*
- 7. Other*

*Dimension 3 - expenditure:*

- 1. The amount of expenditure (NZD) (if any) relating to the period prior to 1st January 2020.*
- 2. The amount of expenditure relating to the period between 1st January 2020 and the present date.*
- 3. The amount of expenditure which is committed, budgeted or expected for the period subsequent to the period covered by (2) above.*

*Dimension 4 - source of funding for the advertising:*

- 1. Government*

2. *Public or private company*
3. *Other*

*Part 2 - advertising services:*

*Please provide the following information for each of the advertising mediums listed under "Dimension 2" above:*

1. *What instructions were given by the government (or its representatives) to the advertising medium in relation to the advertising, including but not limited to target audience, triggers, presentation format, and timing. Note that included services which were not declined by the government constitute "instructions".*
2. *What services, if any, were or will be provided for free by the advertising medium.*
3. *What services, if any, were provided by the advertising medium but paid for by a non-government third party.*
4. *What services, if any, were requested, but were either declined or not offered by the advertising medium.*

*If you need any clarification from me on any aspect of this request please let me know as soon as possible."*

A total of \$92,624,096 has been spent by DPMC on public information campaigns in support of New Zealand's COVID-19 response between 1 March 2020 and 31 January 2022. Please note that this includes funding for COVID-19 public information campaigns run by the National Crisis Management Centre before the COVID-19 Group was established within DPMC on 31 June 2020. This figure includes \$32,468,008 for costs of the Vaccine Campaign. The costs of creative, advertising, content, website maintenance, translation services, printing, and other associated costs for the public information campaign are developed and funded by the Ministry of Health and delivered by DPMC through the Unite Against COVID-19 channels.

We closely monitor this expenditure to ensure it is targeted to be as effective as possible and consistent with the changing needs and management of New Zealand's COVID-19 response. The vaccine public information campaign is developed and funded by the Ministry of Health, working in partnership with DPMC to ensure a complementary and holistic approach to campaign activity. DPMC administers the Vaccine Campaign budget.

These campaigns are targeted to reach all people in New Zealand, communicating vital information including COVID Protection Framework (Traffic Light) and policy setting changes and the actions required by New Zealanders, as well as encouraging key public health behaviours.

New Zealand's communication approach has been internationally recognised, and it is acknowledged as one of the pillars of the country's successful COVID-19 response. There has been a focus on ensuring the public receive clear information through key channels to guide them through the different phases of the pandemic, taking the actions required at given time. In 2021, this included a comprehensive, multifaceted campaign to support the COVID-19 Vaccine rollout, ensuring communities across Aotearoa were well informed about the vaccine and motivated to protect themselves, their whānau, and community.

Regarding the part of your request for a breakdown of advertising expenditure by medium, because all media placement is via a contracted media agency, and DPMC does not place

requests with media outlets directly, media costs are not broken down by individual media outlets in the DPMC financial system.

I am therefore refusing your request to have this information broken down by medium under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information is not held by the department and I do not believe that it is held by another public sector agency.

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

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Cheryl Barnes  
**Deputy Chief Executive**  
**COVID-19 Response**

