



15 November 2021

Ref: OIA-2021/22-0318

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act request relating to the Cost of COVID-19 Advertising

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 22 September 2021. You requested:

I would like to know the total cost to date, date of your answer, of the covid 19 advertisements on all media and print and digital billboard platforms.

The time frame for responding to your request was extended under section 15A of the Act by 15 working days because it necessitated consultations to be undertaken before a decision could be made on the request. Following this extension, I am now in a position to respond.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) is involved in multiple advertising campaigns in relation to COVID-19. The Government allocated an appropriation to the Ministry of Health (MoH) to support the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination strategy. DPMC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with MoH in 2021 that allows DPMC to spend up to a total of \$28.25M of this appropriation on as part of the COVID-19 Vaccine Campaign.

The total expenditure for the COVID-19 Vaccine Campaign to 30 September 2021 is \$15,727,424. Please note that there were no Vaccine Campaign costs before March 2021.

On top of supporting the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 vaccination campaign, DPMC is also coordinating the Unite against COVID-19 campaign. The spend on this campaign includes upkeep of the Unite against COVID-19 website (covid19.govt.nz/).

The following table shows DPMC's combined expenditure on COVID-19 advertising across both campaigns, 31 March 2020 and 30 September 2021 (inclusive):

Period	(\$)
2019/20 (31 Mar – 30 Jun 2020)	
Campaign spend through Advertising Agencies	19,454,089
Unite against COVID-19 Website (including web set-up costs)	457,637
Printing costs	215,067
	20,126,793

2020/21	
Campaign spend through Advertising Agencies	24,124,628
Unite against COVID-19 Website	619,500
Printing costs	287,307
	25,031,435
2021/22 (1 Jul – 30 Sep 2021)	
Campaign spend through Advertising Agencies	19,835,670
Unite against COVID-19 Website	26,861
Printing costs	87,931
	19,950,461
Total	65,108,690

The advertising costs outlined above do not include the cost of staffing the COVID-19 Group Communications and Engagement Team or the cost of translation services.

I note that you requested information up to the date of DPMCs answer. Under the Act, you cannot make a request for information that will possibly be created after the date the request is received, because the information does not exist at the time you are making the request.

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 Group