



24 February 2022



Ref: OIA-2021/22-0630

Dear 

Official Information Act request relating to advertising costs of COVID-19 advertising

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 18 November 2021. You requested:

“What is grand total to date of all Unite Against Covid19 advertising across all mediums?”

On 16 December 2021 the time limits for responding to your request were extended by an additional 10 working days to allow for the consultations needed to make a decision on your request. DPMC also noted that under section 2(1) of the Act, days in the period commencing 25 December 2021 through to 15 January 2022 are not counted as working days.

Due to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet’s (DPMC) involvement in the government response to COVID-19, our timelines to respond to requests have been impacted. I apologise for the delay in responding to your request.

We have interpreted your request to be for the costs for the Unite Against COVID-19 Campaign and the Vaccine Campaign, held by DPMC.

A total of \$87,657,993 has been spent by DPMC on public information campaigns in support of New Zealand’s COVID-19 response between 1 March 2020 and 31 December 2021. 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 is made up of the advertising costs of the Unite Against COVID-19 Campaign and the Vaccine Campaign, which include advertising, video and script production, website maintenance, translation services, printing, and other associated costs. We closely monitor this expenditure to ensure it is targeted to be as effective as possible and consistent with the changing needs with regard to the management of COVID-19. The Vaccine 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 alert level changes and the associated 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.

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 DPMC 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