



19 February 2026

Ref: OIA-2025/26-0465

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

### Official Information Act request relating to discussions, advice, and communications about waiata and karakia groups and practices

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, which was received by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) on 26 January 2026. You requested:

- “1. The total number of meetings, discussions, or briefings held by the Chief Executive (or their office) since 1 January 2024 relating to waiata and karakia groups, practices, or proposed changes to the frequency of sessions.*
- 2. Copies of any agendas, minutes, notes, or summaries from these meetings.*
- 3. Any correspondence (including emails and messages) between senior leadership and the Public Service Association (PSA) regarding groups or proposed changes to how or when they operate.*
- 4. Any internal communications, reports, or advice provided to or from the Chief Executive regarding participation, workplace time allocation, or cultural engagement policies.*
- 5. Any decisions, policies, or guidance issued about waiata group operations, including any review or proposed limitation of sessions.”*

I have numbered the parts of your request for ease of reference.

Identified as in scope of part four of your request are a few sentences in two Pānui (newsletters) sent by the Chief Executive of DPMC to all staff. I have decided to release the relevant information from each of these to you as extracts, in accordance with section 16(1)(e) of the Act. Information not in scope of your request within the extracts is indicated by three full stops in square brackets ([...]).

Please see the table below:

| Date          | Extract   |
|---------------|---|
| 22 March 2024 | <p><b>Waiata Group: it's good for your wairua</b><br/><i>A message from the Waiata group:<br/>Waiata group has been on mute for the first couple of months of the year, but we're about to burst back into song! We are looking forward to being able to gather in a new space to sing once we have access to the new building, and until then, we're planning to change the day we meet, as a number of enthusiastic members have standing commitments on a Wednesday.</i></p> <p>[...]<br/><i>Studies show that singing is tremendous for your mental wellbeing, and we are offering this uplifting opportunity for free.</i></p> |

| Date            | Extract  |
|-----------------|--|
| 25 October 2024 | <p><b>Te Kōnohete 2024</b></p> <p>DPMC, the Public Service Commission and The Treasury have joined together to enter Te Kōnohete 2024. Te Kōnohete is an annual event where over 26 different government organisations come together to celebrate kapa haka, waiata, whanaungatanga and Te Reo. This year Te Kōnohete will be held on 23 November at Wellington College. I'm told it's a great day, so ask [...] someone [...] from the team if you're interested in attending. Come join the rōpū. Practices are held at The Treasury's Whareniui every Tuesday from 1-2pm.</p> |

For completeness, I note that DPMC's waiata group was also mentioned at two Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Board meetings in 2025.

- At the Board's meeting on 24 September, it was mentioned in the context of the success of a number of initiatives held to celebrate Te Wiki o te Reo Māori (Māori Language Week).
- At the Board's meeting on 25 November, it was noted that the group's attendance appeared to be increasing following a performance at an all-staff event.

The latest version of DPMC's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan (which was agreed to by the ELT Board in September 2025) refers to DPMC's waiata group and its staff engagement networks more broadly. DPMC's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan for 2024/25 and 2025/26 are publicly available on the DPMC website:

| Item | Date            | Document description                              | Website address   |
|------|-----------------|---|---|
| 1    | 14 October 2024 | Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan 2024/25      | <a href="https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/publications/dpmc-diversity-inclusion-equity-plan-2024-25">https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/publications/dpmc-diversity-inclusion-equity-plan-2024-25</a>       |
| 2    | 2 October 2025  | DPMC Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan 2025/26 | <a href="https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/publications/dpmc-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-plan-202526">https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/publications/dpmc-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-plan-202526</a> |

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.

Nāku noa, nā

Alan Cassidy  
Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate and Chief People Officer