DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET
TE TARI O TE PIRIMIA ME TE KOMITI MATUA

31 August 2026 Ref: OIA-2026/27-0084

[redacted]

Tēnā koe [redacted],

Official Information Act request relating to Use of social media by Ministers, ministerial offices and Members of Parliament representing the Government

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 30 July 2026. You requested:

> *Pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982, I request the following information from 1 January 2025 to the date this request is processed relating to the use of social media by Ministers, ministerial offices and Members of Parliament representing the Government.*
> *Please provide:*
> 1. *Any briefings, advice, reports, discussion documents or other material relating to:*
>   - *the use of social media by Government MPs;*
>   - *risks or opportunities associated with MPs' online communications;*
>   - *expectations around public communications by members of the Government.*
> 2. *Any advice provided to the Prime Minister, Ministers, Cabinet or ministerial offices regarding:*
>   - *social media strategy;*
>   - *online conduct by MPs;*
>   - *maintaining consistent Government messaging;*
>   - *reputational or political risks arising from MPs' social media activity.*
> 3. *Any records relating to guidance, expectations or advice provided to Ministers or Government MPs regarding:*
>   - *posting on social media platforms;*
>   - *commenting publicly on Government policy;*
>   - *responding to political issues online;*
>   - *engaging with journalists, critics or members of the public online.*
> 4. *Any advice or analysis relating to:*
>   - *misinformation or disinformation risks involving elected representatives;*
>   - *the impact of MPs' social media activity on public trust;*
>   - *the role of social media in Government communications.*
> 5. *Any correspondence between DPMC and:*
>   - *the Prime Minister's Office;*
>   - *Ministers' offices;*
>   - *Parliamentary Service;*
>   - *National Party staff or other political party representatives, relating to expectations, concerns or guidance around MPs' use of social media."*

On 6 August 2026, parts [1] – [4] of your request were transferred to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA). This response covers part [5] of your request.

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Information being released

DPMC interpreted part [5] of your request to be for general guidance about use of social media, rather than advice on a particular proposed or existing social media post. DPMC has identified one document that falls within the scope of this part of your request. I have decided to release this document in full:

- *Approach to communications where a Minister has a constituency interest*

This document is general guidance provided in draft to the office of the Hon Chris Bishop as a result of the Audit Office's consideration of his decisions to fund the City Link bridge. You can see the Audit Office's letter here: Management of conflicts of interest relating to the City Link bridge — The Audit Office.

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



Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

Approach to communications where a Minister has a constituency interest

*This guidance is drafted for a situation where a Minister has **portfolio responsibility** for matters or projects relevant to their electorate (and is therefore wearing their Minister "hat" in respect of those matters).*

It is intended to mitigate the risk of a perception that a Minister is being/has been inappropriately influenced by their role as MP when making Ministerial decisions.

When posting/communicating about portfolio responsibilities relevant to a Minister's electorate

- Be clear whether the communication is being made as Minister or MP (this might be made clear by either the text or the context)
- Avoid references to both Ministerial and MP roles at the same time. (It is generally fine for references to both roles to be included in factual/background material e.g. Ministerial letterhead or a biography for an event.)
- Avoid references to MP advocacy or prior work as MP on an issue that is now a portfolio responsibility
- Avoid promotion of a government project in a way that implies it is an MP's project or success rather than a Ministerial or government matter

Approaches that will generally be appropriate

- Explaining that a project has been completed or started in an electorate, framed as a government or Ministerial project (including positive statements about the objectives or achievements of the project)
- Factual updates from an MP perspective if required (e.g. this project has now commenced and you can expect more congestion on this route, here is where you can find more information)

The Cabinet Office is available to provide advice on specific questions and/or draft posts or communications.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982