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

28 August 2026

Ref: OIA-2026/27-0137

[redacted]

Tēnā koe [redacted],

**Official Information Act request relating to Registration requirements and Elections timeframes**

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 17 August 2026. You requested:

> *"[…] information under the Official Information Act 1982 concerning Cabinet, Cabinet committee and Prime Ministerial consideration of the 2026 political party registration deadline of 6 August 2026 and the approximately 59-day period between that date and Writ Day on 4 October 2026.*
>
> *Please provide:*
> 1. *The titles, dates, reference numbers and responsible Ministers for all Cabinet papers and Cabinet committee papers concerning changes to political party registration requirements or timeframes relevant to the 2026 General Election.*
> 2. *All Cabinet and Cabinet committee minutes recording decisions concerning those registration requirements or timeframes.*
> 3. *All briefings, aide-mémoires, memoranda or other advice held by DPMC concerning:*
>    a. *the 6 August 2026 registration deadline;*
>    b. *the period before Writ Day during which new political parties cannot be registered;*
>    c. *the approximately 59-day period between 6 August and 4 October 2026;*
>    d. *the effect of that period on new or emerging political parties.*
> 4. *All advice provided to the Prime Minister or the Prime Minister's Office concerning the above matters.*
> 5. *All correspondence held by DPMC between the Prime Minister or Prime Minister's Office and:*
>    a. *the Minister of Justice;*
>    b. *the Ministry of Justice;*
>    c. *the Electoral Commission;*
>    d. *Cabinet colleagues;*
>
>    *concerning the party-registration deadline.*
> 6. *All records identifying when the particular period ultimately enacted was first proposed and by whom.*
> 7. *All records explaining the reasons for choosing that period rather than a shorter period closer to Writ Day.*
> 8. *Any assessment, advice or discussion concerning whether the change could:*
>    a. *disadvantage newly forming political parties;*
>    b. *advantage existing registered political parties;*
>    c. *affect political competition or democratic participation;*
>    d. *affect rights protected by the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990.*
> 9. *Any advice from the Electoral Commission concerning the operational time actually required between completion of a party-registration application and Writ Day.*



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10. *Any Cabinet material comparing alternative registration deadlines.*
11. *Any risk analysis concerning legal challenge, judicial review, constitutional implications or public-law issues arising from the change.*
12. *A chronology of Cabinet and Cabinet committee consideration of the relevant policy, including dates on which decisions were made.*
13. *Details of any relevant Cabinet material that has already been proactively released, including the document title and release location.*

*If DPMC does not hold a document but knows which Minister or agency holds it, please transfer the relevant part of this request in accordance with the Official Information Act.*

*If information is withheld, please identify the statutory ground relied upon and release all reasonably severable material.*

*This request is urgent because the 6 August 2026 registration deadline has already passed and the General Election is scheduled for 7 November 2026."*

On 25 August 2026, we partially transferred your request to the Electoral Commission. In that same decision letter, we noted that we would usually have transferred parts of your request to the Minister and Ministry of Justice. However, as you have made substantially similar requests to them directly, we instead referred you to their forthcoming responses.

As also noted in our letter of 25 August 2026, DPMC has granted your request for urgency, having taken into account the reasons you provided for seeking an urgent response, including the 2026 General Election timetable and your wish to obtain the requested information in sufficient time to consider any legal action before the election.

The present reply covers Part 4 in full and any additional material we may hold in scope of Parts 3 and 5 – that is, any additional information we hold within the scope of those parts that is not covered by the transfers and referrals described in our transfer letter.

**Information to be refused**

Searches of our information management systems and consultations with relevant subject matter experts have not identified any material held by us in scope of Part 4 of your request. Accordingly, I have decided to refuse Part 4 of your request under section 18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist.

Before refusing this part of your request, we consulted the Prime Minister's Office on a possible transfer under section 14 of the Act; however, they have advised that they do not hold any information in scope of your request and, as such, they have declined transfer.

DPMC has not identified any additional information held by us in scope of Parts 3 and 5 of your request that would not be addressed by the responses you will receive from the Minister of Justice, the Ministry of Justice, and the Electoral Commission. These parts of your request, insofar as they relate to information held by DPMC, are therefore refused under section 18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist.

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**