



22 December 2021

Ref: DOIA 2122-1068

M.R.M

Email: fyi-request-17460-576431c7@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear M.R.M

Thank you for your email of 5 November 2021 to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

"In October 2021 it was announced that "Distinction (Hotel) Hamilton, one of three MIQ managed isolation facilities in Waikato, will move to housing local community cases, enabling them to stay in the region." Against this backdrop, it was reported on 3 November 2021 that; "Nearly 700 people are self isolating at home in Auckland, with the total number of active cases in the region now more than 1900."

Please provide me with all of the relevant information regarding the selection criteria being used to decide - in the Waikato region - which Covid-19 infected cases are required to isolate at the Amohia - Community Isolation Quarantine facility (previously called Distinction (Hotel) Hamilton) and which Covid-19 infected cases can self-isolate in their homes.

Also, please provide me with the exact number of people - in the Waikato region - who have been allowed to self-isolation in their homes to-date, and, what health sector agency or agencies is or are responsible for caring for these cases?

In addition, please provide me with full disclosure information regarding the two other Hamilton managed isolation facilities (Ibis Tainui and Jet Park Hamilton) as follows:-

- 1) Are they still being used as a managed isolation facilities only, and, if so are cases still being transported to Auckland quarantine facilities when they have tested positive for Covid-19 during the 14 day stay period? If not, where are the Covid-19 infected cases moved to?*
- 2) What has the occupancy rate been for all rooms at the abovementioned two other Hamilton managed isolation facilities for the 12 months from 1 November 2020 to 31 October 2021.*
- 3) What has the occupancy rate been for all rooms at the Distinction (Hotel) Hamilton for the period from 1 November 2020 until the date its use was changed to a "community isolation quarantine facility".*
- 4) How much has it cost to-date to manage and operate the Ibis Tainui and Jet Park Hamilton since the date they were first used as managed isolation facilities until 31 October 2021.*

5) *How much has it cost to-date to provide military, police and security guard services at the Ibis Tainui and Jet Park Hamilton since the date they were first used as managed isolation facilities until 31 October 2021.*

6) *How much has it cost to-date to manage and operate the Distinction (Hotel) Hamilton since the date it was first used as a managed isolation facility until the date its use was changed to a "community isolation quarantine facility".*

7) *How much has it cost to-date to provide military, police and security guard services at the Distinction (Hotel) Hamilton since the date it was first used as a managed isolation facility until the date its use was changed to a "community isolation quarantine facility."*

8) *How much has it cost in total to-date to do necessary building alterations and improvements - including installation of new air conditioning units, etc. - to the Distinction (Hotel) Hamilton so that it could be used as a "community isolation quarantine facility", and, specify what alterations and improvements were done, as well as their individual and respective costs."*

On 15 November 2021, questions five and seven as it relates to costs for New Zealand Police were partially transferred to New Zealand Police under section 14 of the Act, as the information sought is more closely connected with its function.

On 3 December 2021, parts a and b of your request (the information requested that precedes the numbered questions) was transferred to Waikato District Health Board under section 14 of the Act, as the information sought is more closely connected with its function.

On 3 December 2021, the due date for response was extended by 15 working days, as consultations necessary to make a decision on the request could not be completed within the original timeframe.

The remaining parts of your request, parts 1-8, are addressed below.

1) Are they still being used as a managed isolation facilities only, and, if so are cases still being transported to Auckland quarantine facilities when they have tested positive for Covid-19 during the 14 day stay period? It not, where are the Covid-19 infected cases moved to?

- Ibis Tainui and Jet Park Hamilton are being used as Managed Isolation Facilities for border returnees.
- Distinction Hamilton is the dedicated quarantine facility for community cases and community close contacts in the Waikato (please note: this facility has been renamed 'Amohia' which is a term gifted by Iwi and the Maori King to reflect its change to a community facility).
- Positive border cases in the Waikato region are transferred to Jet Park Auckland. Amohia is to be used for local community cases only as per an agreement with local Iwi.

2) What has the occupancy rate been for all rooms at the abovementioned two other Hamilton managed isolation facilities for the 12 months from 1 November 2020 to 31 October 2021.

3) What has the occupancy rate been for all rooms at the Distinction (Hotel) Hamilton for the period from 1 November 2020 until the date its use was changed to a "community isolation quarantine facility".

In relation to the above two questions, please refer to the attached document (attachment 1 – Room Occupancy) which contains the requested information.

4) How much has it cost to-date to manage and operate the Ibis Tainui and Jet Park Hamilton since the date they were first used as managed isolation facilities until 31 October 2021.

The Ministry needs the ability to carry out commercial activity, including negotiations, for MIQ on an ongoing basis, both with existing MIQ facility providers (hotels) and potential facilities (hotels not part of the MIQ network). The release of the information sought would hinder the commercial operations of MIQ, including its ability to negotiate with existing/new providers.

The release of the requested information could also impact the commercial position of the hotels MIQ is engaged in commercial activities with.

Therefore, the requested information is withheld under the following sections of the Act:

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| section 9(2)(b)(ii) | protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information |
| section 9(2)(i) | to enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities |
| section 9(2)(j) | enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations). |

While we are unable to furnish the individual costs you requested, we can provide aggregated data on the cost of running facilities and MIQ more broadly. As of 31 August 2021, the committed costs from 1 September 2021 to 30 June 2022 to the New Zealand Government for MIQ hotels is \$136,198,512 (excluding GST). This is based on the agreed 90-day notice period MIQ has with hotels.

Currently, the weekly cost for operational support and delivery of services for the MIQ system is approximately \$14.5 million.

The total cost of MIQ up to 31 August 2021 is \$915.91 million. This amount relates to the Ministry's costs only and includes contracts with the hotels being used as MIQ Facilities, transporting guests to and from airports and facilities, security and staff employed in the MIQ Branch of the Ministry (whether front-line or in the Ministry's head office in Wellington). It does not include the cost to pay other frontline Government-MIQ workers, such as those working for the relevant District Health Boards, the New Zealand Defence Force, the New Zealand Police, and the New Zealand Aviation Security Service.

5) How much has it cost to-date to provide military, police and security guard services at the Ibis Tainui and Jet Park Hamilton since the date they were first used as managed isolation facilities until 31 October 2021.

In relation to costs for New Zealand Police, this part of the question has been transferred to New Zealand Police for response.

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) has advised it had no information it could provide. By way of context, it advised the information requested does not exist in a readily retrievable format and a breakdown cannot be provided. NZDF would have to identify each individual posted, calculate the portion of their salary for the time they were posted to MIQ, and then generate incidental costs per individual.

In relation to security costs met by the Ministry, costs for individual facilities are not disclosed as they are commercially sensitive. Therefore the information requested is refused under section 9(2)(i), to enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.

However, the Ministry can advise that across the MIQ network from 1 July 2021 to 30 November 2021 a total of \$32.78 million was spent on security.

6) How much has it cost to-date to manage and operate the Distinction (Hotel) Hamilton since the date it was first used as a managed isolation facility until the date its use was changed to a "community isolation quarantine facility".

Please refer to the response for question four.

7) How much has it cost to-date to provide military, police and security guard services at the Distinction (Hotel) Hamilton since the date it was first used as a managed isolation facility until the date its use was changed to a "community isolation quarantine facility."

Please refer to the response for question five.

8) How much has it cost in total to-date to do necessary building alterations and improvements - including installation of new air conditioning units, etc. - to the Distinction (Hotel) Hamilton so that it could be used as a "community isolation quarantine facility", and, specify what alterations and improvements were done, as well as their individual and respective costs."

As noted in the response to question four, the Ministry needs the ability to carry out commercial activity, including negotiations, for MIQ on an ongoing basis, both with existing MIQ facility providers (hotels) and potential facilities (hotels not part of the MIQ network). The release of the information sought would hinder the commercial operations of MIQ, including its ability to negotiate with existing/new providers.

The release of the requested information could also impact the commercial position of the hotels MIQ is engaged in commercial activities with.

Therefore, the requested information is withheld under the following sections of the Act:

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|---------------------|--|
| section 9(2)(b)(ii) | protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information |
| section 9(2)(i) | to enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities |
| section 9(2)(j) | enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations). |

Please note that as of August 2021, the total cost paid for upgrades across the MIQ network was \$11.4 million. This figure includes upgrades to support secure and safe MIQ operations (covered by the Ministry), and meet Infection, Prevention and Control measures (covered by Ministry of Health). CCTV installation and air filtration systems upgrades account for the bulk of the \$11.4 million spent.

I do not consider that the withholding of information from this response is outweighed by public interest considerations in making the information available.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Scahill', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Scahill

General Manager, Operational Delivery and Practice
Managed Isolation and Quarantine