



28 August 2014

D E Sheridan  
Email: [fyi-request-1960-cde43f6e@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-1960-cde43f6e@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear D E Sheridan

**Official Information Request for Information Relating to Government Spending on Communications**

I refer to your Official Information Act request of 27 August 2014 addressed to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). I am writing to seek clarification of your request so that we would be in a position to respond. As it is currently framed, your request does not appear to be seeking information that DPMC holds and neither is it clear for the majority of your request which government department or agency may be in a position to respond. Your request raised a number of questions on spending on communications and other related matters. The specific questions you raised were:

*"Could you please provide the following information regarding the office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. It largely relates to how the government is spending money - which should be a transparent process.*

*1. Re: Press support employed by the office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet i. How many full time people have been employed by the NZ government to liaise with the press or deal with the press in any way (either social media or main stream media or any other form of media), or who have supported such operations - on a yearly basis for the past 10 years? i.e. How much has been paid on salaries per year for this over the past 10 years?*

*ii. Please provide the numbers of people who have done the above part time on a yearly basis for the past 10 years.*

*ii.a. How much has been paid per year for salaries for part time press support for each year over the past 10 years?*

*iii. Please provide the numbers of people who do the above on a contracted basis, including:*  
*a. their names, and*  
*b. the amount paid to the top 10 press contractors per year on a yearly basis for the past 10 years and c. the total amount paid to such contractors for each of the past 10 years*

*iv. How much has been paid overall for press activities (including salaries as well as money paid for various public relation and press type services) for each of the last 10 years?*

*2. Re: Senior Press support employed by the NZ Prime Minister and Cabinet Please provide each of the following:*

- i. the names,*
- ii. roles,*
- iii. salaries and*
- iv. bonuses*

*of the senior press support persons employed by the NZ Prime Minister and Cabinet for each of the last 10 years.*

*3. Re: Briefing of the Prime Minister and Cabinet i. How often is the Prime Minister usually briefed a. in writing and b. verbally by his senior press support people?*

*ii. How often is the Cabinet usually usually briefed by their senior press support people?  
a. in writing and  
b. verbally*

*iii. In particular, how often has the Prime Minister usually been briefed by senior staff person Jason Ede?*

*a. in writing and  
b. verbally*

*c. What is Jason Ede's current role in government?*

*d. Is Jason Ede still on the public payroll? If so, how much is he being paid in salary per year?*

*e. What has Jason Ede's salary been per year for each of the past 10 years?*

*f. What bonuses has Jason Ede been paid per year for each of the past 10 years?*

*iv. How often is the Prime Minister usually briefed by David Farrar regarding the results of polls and provided recommendations?*

*a. in writing and  
b. verbally*

*c. Please provide the results of polling and canvassing by David Farrar, as well as copies of his recommendations for each of the last 10 years.*

*d. How much has David Farrar been paid by the NZ government for services for all of the services he has provided the government for each of the last 10 years?*

*4. Re: Connection with main stream media - A i. How many press support people who are employed (full time or part time) by the NZ Prime Minister's office and Cabinet, formerly worked in main stream media?*

*ii. What are their names?*

*iii. With which media were they affiliated?*

*iv. What was the salary of each of the 5 highest paid press support people employed to work for the NZ government for each of the past 10 years.*

*5. Re: Connection with main stream media - B i. How many press support people employed under contract by the NZ Prime Minister's office and Cabinet formerly worked or currently work in main stream media?*

*ii. What are their names?*

*iii. With which media were they affiliated?*

*iv. What was the salary (and name) of each of the 5 highest paid press support people who were contracted to work for the NZ government for each of the past 10 years.*

*v. How much money has been paid to press contractors for each of the past 10 years:*

*6. How much money was paid per year for each of the past 10 years by the NZ government for any reason to the following papers (including their online version) to each of the following by the NZ government?*

*i. The New Zealand Herald*

*ii. The Dominion Post*

*iii. The Press*

*iv. The Otago Daily Times*

*v. Herald on Sunday*

*vi. The Sunday Star-Times*

vii. *The National Business Review*  
viii. *Business North*

6. *How much money was paid per year for each of the past 10 years by the NZ government for any reason to TV stations? (Please list by TV station and amount.)*

7. *How much money was paid per year for each of the past 10 years by the NZ government for any reason to radio stations? (Please list by radio station and amount.)*

8. *How much money was paid per year for each of the past 10 years by the NZ government for any reason to bloggers? (Please list by blog name [and owner] and the amount.)*

9. *How much money was paid per year for each of the past 10 years by the NZ government for any reason to Cameron Slater?*

10. *How much money was paid per year for each of the past 10 years by the NZ government for any reason to Simon Lusk?*

11. *How much money was paid per year for each of the past 10 years by the NZ government for any reason to Aaron Bhatnager?*

12. *How much money was paid per year for each of the past 10 years by the NZ government for any reason to Jordan Williams?*

13. *Is Cameron Slater or Carrick Williams authorized to be arms dealers on behalf of the New Zealand government?*

14. *Has the New Zealand government:*

i. *authorized Cameron Slater's recent trip to Israel to act in the interest of the NZ government?*

ii. *had expenses paid or any other form of remuneration by the NZ government or any of it's Cabinet Minister's for his recent trip to Israel?*

*(If so what has he been paid and what else regarding his trip has been paid for at public expense?)*

15. *What is the relationship of the NZ government (including its press support people) with [www.waterfordpress.co.nz](http://www.waterfordpress.co.nz)?*

16. *Re: Social media management*

i. *How much money per year for each of the past 10 years has been spent on social media management?*

ii. *What did social media management consist of?*

iii. *What were the top 20 social media sites with which the government Press support liaised with?*

18. *How much money has the NZ government paid to the following media personalities on an annual basis for each of the last 10 years:*

1. *Mike Hosking*
2. *Paul Henry*
3. *Paul Holmes*

18. *Re: Censorship*

- i. Is the NZ government engaged in censoring social media it does not like in any way?*  
*ii. To what part of government can questions be asked to investigate interference with visibility of social media?"*

Although you have addressed your request to DPMC, it does not appear to be seeking official information likely to be held by this department. DPMC is a government department with the principal role of providing advice to the Prime Minister and Cabinet on a wide range of complex issues. DPMC also provides impartial advice to the Governor-General. In addition, DPMC leads national security planning and has the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management as a business unit within the department.

Your request appears to be seeking information about communications spending and staffing, briefing of Cabinet Ministers by press staff, and other matters across government. You have specified many of the questions to be relating to the "NZ government," others appear to relate to the Office of the Prime Minister, other Ministerial offices or government departments or agencies. DPMC is only in a position to respond to any relevant matters in relation to DPMC itself and cannot provide information about other departments or agencies or Ministerial offices.

Your first questions relate to spending on communications and communications staff across government. There is some information on public relations and communications staff by DPMC provided to the Government Administration Select Committee as part of the annual estimates and financial review processes. Other departments also provide this information to relevant Select Committees. You can find the latest information in responses to the questionnaires for the Supplementary Standard Estimates Questions for 2014/15 which are available via the Parliament website at: [www.parliament.nz](http://www.parliament.nz) and can be found under "Parliamentary Business," "Select Committees."

Information about spending and staffing for Ministerial Offices would be held by the Department of Internal Affairs (Ministerial and Secretariat Services). Information specific to the Office of the Prime Minister or other Ministerial Offices would need to be addressed to those offices. If the information you are seeking is likely to be held by a Ministerial Office or another government department or agency covered by the Official Information Act, you may wish to make a request directly to that Minister or department. The State Services Commission (SSC) provides a list of all government organisations. In addition, the SSC website has available a list of the current public service Chief Executives with a link to each of the relevant department websites where you would be able to get contact details for any individual department you are interested in. You can access the SSC website at: [www.ssc.govt.nz](http://www.ssc.govt.nz). Contact details for government Ministers can be found on the Parliament website at: [www.parliament.nz](http://www.parliament.nz).

If you are requesting official information likely to be held by DPMC, for instance if you are seeking information on some of the matters you raised here but for DPMC only, you need to make a request to this department which specifies clearly the information that you are seeking.

Yours sincerely



Rachel Walker  
Acting Director – Office of the Chief Executive