

7 August 2023

Michael Brenndorfer
fyi-request-23419-83dc7e4e@requests.fyi.org.nz

REF: OIA-13068

Dear Michael

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 7 July 2023 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Your agency had announcing ongoing half price public transport fares for multiple groups, including Total Mobility card users.

However, Auckland Transport has returned Total Mobility subsidies to only 40% of standard adult fares, and have stated on their website and in social media replies that the half price fares does not apply to Total Mobility card users.

I am requesting the communications that have been sent by NZTA to the regional transport authorities relating to the half price fares, and in particular in relation to their application to Total Mobility card users.

To best answer your request, we thought it may be useful to provide some explanation of how the government intended the half price system to work, particularly for Total Mobility users:

- From 1 July 2023 the half price fares scheme is called Community Connect and it covers public transport for some users and Total Mobility. For Total Mobility users, the Community Connect scheme provides a 50 percent discount on normal subsidised fares for Total Mobility services only (for example, contracted door-to-door service) and not on other forms of public transport. As usual with Total Mobility, any amount over the regional cap is paid by the user in full.
- Some Public Transport Authorities (PTAs), including Auckland Transport (AT), may wish to offer their own additional discounts for selected groups of users which could include Total Mobility users. In the case of AT, it offers 40 percent off trains, buses and ferries for Total Mobility card holders under the Accessibility concession – this discount is not part of government policy.
- In short, AT is providing the required Total Mobility discount (i.e. 50 percent off Total Mobility services). AT is also additionally offering 40 percent off standard adult fares on public transport for Total Mobility card holders. This further step is not required by government and any discussion about the discount should be directed to AT.

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency also undertook an initial search for communications on this subject matter, including emails, which has returned a significant number of results. Reviewing each of these pieces of correspondence would require a large amount of time and staff resources to collate and determine whether they fall in the scope of your request. I am therefore refusing this request under

section 18(f) of the Act as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

In refusing this part of your request, we have considered whether consulting with you, charging for the information, or extending the timeframe for responding to your request would help as required by sections 18A and 18B of the Act. However, as your request is specific in nature, this would not assist us in providing a response to your request as the substantial manual search required to collate the information would not be reduced.

Waka Kotahi would, however, consider a refined request to, for instance, only the formal communications with AT about the discount on Total Mobility services, as this would result in fewer pieces of correspondence.

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to refuse this request. The contact details for the Ombudsman can be located at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

If you would like to discuss this reply with Waka Kotahi, please contact us by email to official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Deborah Hume
National Manager, Multimodal Integration