

8 March 2023

DOIA23/026

s9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe s9(2)(a)

I refer to your request received on 8 February 2023, which has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), in relation to Aotearoa New Zealand Public Media work. Please find a response to your request below.

1. **The most substantive document/s that show the full and entire spending in any respect, including staffing, contractor, RNZ or TVNZ reimbursement, capital and any other costs, of the work done since inception till now, on the public media merger**
 - a) **Pls itemise the above per type of spend, and break it down per period as recorded by MCH**
 - b) **Pls include the above spend for any other entity that MCH has oversight of**

Total expenditure for the Strong Public Media programme will be published on the Ministry's website following receipt of final invoices. We expect this to be completed by the end of March 2023. Therefore, your request has been refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information you have requested will soon be publicly available.

2. **Documentary evidence of what the above entire costs are forecast to be ultimately, once they have all landed and been completely processed, if that is different from the above figure**

Regarding your request for total cost forecasts, I have refused your request for this information under section 18(e) of the OIA – the information requested does not exist.

Budget 2022 allocated \$23.7 million this financial year for establishment costs towards the Aotearoa New Zealand Public Media (ANZPM) entity. Given the programme was halted in February 2023, we expect total costs to come in within and under allocated budget.

3. **Documentary evidence of the full and entire spend on contractors; on consultants; and on professional services, broken down per period as MCH records them**

Total spend on contractors and consultants (part 3 of your request) will be released following receipt of final invoices, as above.

- 4. Pls detail and release any advice on what of the above spending is completely written off;**
a) and what is able to be or likely to be repurposed now the merger is not proceeding

While the decision has been made not to progress with a new public media entity, aspects of the work will have future benefits. Through consultation on a draft Charter for public media, for example, we now have a more informed view of what New Zealanders want from their public media and an example of modernised public media legislation.

We also have a fully formed business case that evaluates multiple options for strengthening public media in New Zealand, which will continue to be referenced as a basis for future public media options.

There is no expenditure to be “written off”, but there are sunk costs (for example, leased premises and business equipment) that the Ministry needs to continue to pay for until contractual arrangements are satisfied. Such costs will be included in the Ministry’s release of total expenditure for the Programme (as per part 1 of your request).

- 5. If anyone doing any work on this for MCH or any entity, incurred any expenses on overseas travel related to this in any way, pls itemise**


According to our records, there have been no invoices for international travel relating to the programme. TVNZ and RNZ may have undertaken work separately, but the Ministry is not aware of this. You may wish to contact TVNZ and RNZ separately.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact oia@mch.govt.nz.

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

Nāku noa, nā

s9(2)(a)



Emily Fabling
Pou Mataaho o Te Aka - Deputy Chief Executive, Policy and Sector Performance