

[REDACTED]
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January 2021

1 May 2023

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Official Information Act Request 2023/09

I refer to your Official Information Act (OIA) request dated 30 March 2023, relating to the Māori Electoral Option (the Option). The information you have requested, and the Electoral Commission's response, follows.

1. *What level of resourcing has been put aside to communicate the Māori Electoral option to Aotearoa and Māori? (human resources and \$amount) over what period of time.*

The Electoral Commission (the Commission) is delivering a Māori Electoral Option Campaign over the period 31 March to 13 July 2023. The major components of this campaign are public information and education, enrolment, and community engagement.

The Commission's budget for the delivery the Option campaign is \$6,843,467. The breakdown of this budget is:

- Māori Electoral Option Public Information and Education campaign \$3,680,575.
- Enrolment Processing and Community Engagement campaign \$3,037,892 (including costs for the 0800-call service).
- IT Systems changes \$125,000.

The budget was initially \$6.5m to cover the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, but was increased to cover the additional period to 14 July 2023 once the date of the General Election 2023 was announced (the General Election date determined the start of the three-month exclusion period for Māori being able to change roll types).

The Commission has budgeted for an additional forty-six temporary staff to augment the Commission's permanent staff in the planning, preparation, and delivery of the Option.

- A Project Co-ordinator, to provide administrative support for the Option project. The Project Co-ordinator is contracted for this purpose from January to August 2023.
- Eleven people to assist with the delivery of the enrolment function (the process of making changes to electors' enrolment records and providing public enquiry support). These staff are contracted for the period 27 March to 21 July 2023.
- Thirty-two people for the community engagement campaign, consisting of 18 Community Engagement Advisors, 12 Youth Advocates, and two engagement co-ordinators to assist with the administration of this function. These are additional staff to our network of permanent staff in nine community engagement hubs and are contracted for the period 20 March – 21 July 2023. The focus has been on recruiting

staff who are Māori, competent Te Reo speakers and comfortable operating in Te Ao Māori.

- A Project Lead Māori Electoral Option Partnerships and Contracts, who will be responsible for managing the contracts with the contracted community groups, and supporting those groups and our Māori community partners to assist us with engaging with Māori.
- One Communications and Education Advisor additional to our permanent communications and education team to support the planning, preparation and delivery of the public awareness and information campaign.

In developing the public information and education component of the Option campaign, the Commission has worked with two agencies, one of which specialises in a te ao Māori approach.

The Commission has contracted three Māori community groups to augment the delivery of engagement with Māori communities in:

- The Far North/Kaitaia
- East Cape
- The Central Plateau/Rangitikei
- Whanganui, including the Awa/Taranaki
- Murupara/Kaingora

The contracts are for the period 27 March to 14 July 2023.

The Commission is also seeking to contract further Māori community groups to augment our Option delivery in Nelson/Marlborough/Kaikoura and Dunedin/Southland. The Commission is currently in discussion with a group in relation to the Nelson/Marlborough/Kaikoura area.

These contracts were the result of a Registration of Interest process, published on the New Zealand Government GETS system.

- 2. Please forward a full communications strategy for communicating this significant change for Māori, including all \$ amounts, target populations and areas.*

Please see attached the Commission's Māori Electoral Option Public Information and Education Campaign Strategy 2023.

- 3. What medium/s are being used to communicate this change in law to Māori.*

- A personalised mailout to all enrolled Māori electors (512,204) confirming which roll they are on at that time, information about the roll choice, and a form to return if they would like to change rolls.
- Text and/or email messages sent to Māori who were sent a mailout pack, but the packs were returned as the person is no longer at the address recorded (texts and/or emails are sent to electors who have previously given us a mobile number or email address).

- A text message is planned to go to all Māori electors on the Dormant Roll, for whom we have a mobile number, advising that their enrolment details are out of date and providing information on how they can update their enrolment information.
 - Targeted community engagement, kanohi ki te kanohi and via digital channels, in areas of high Māori population. Additional staff have been employed by our community engagement teams and organisations have been contracted to undertake engagement in specific areas to augment this activity. The community engagement campaign is delivered from nine permanent hubs situated in Whangarei, Auckland, Hamilton, Rotorua, Gisborne, Napier, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin.
 - Collaborating with Māori groups to support them to share information about the Option. Stakeholder engagement includes sending emails and physical packs to groups with resources to share with their communities and networks. Community engagement teams are meeting with community groups, and attending community events, to give presentations on the Option and provide information and support.
 - Advertising across multiple media channels, including Māori media, to raise awareness and understanding. Channels include TV, radio, digital, social media and out of home advertising.
 - Media engagement providing media releases, background information, updated figures, and interviews to news media in te reo Māori and English to raise awareness and mark key milestones during the campaign.
 - Public information on the Commission's websites, social media channels, brochures, and posters in English, te reo Māori and alternate formats.
 - Electors can access information, forms, and brochures through our 0800 Call Centre provider, Telnet Ltd.
4. *Please forward full plan of the roll out of this new law, including timelines, \$ amounts, target populations and areas.*

The full Project Plan for the Option is attached.

Information relating to budget figures and target populations/areas are included above or in the other documents attached.

5. *How many extra staff have been employed to support with the roll out of this law?*

Please refer to the response to question 1, above.

6. *What training are staff given to roll out this new law?*

All enrolment and community engagement staff, and the contracted community groups, have been provided explicit and targeted training in relation to the part of the Option campaign they are involved in.

The enrolment staff have been trained to process enrolment forms, including the form specifically designed for the Option mailout campaign (the form that was posted out to all Māori electors), and some have been trained to assist with elector enquiries.

The community engagement staff and contracted community groups have received training on the Option to allow them to participate in effective engagement with Māori electors.

The high-level training programme for the Option is attached.

Staff at the Commission's contracted call centre provider have received explicit Option related training to assist them to respond effectively to public enquiries. This included engaging three to reo speakers, to answers enquiries from electors who wished to converse in te reo.

7. *What methods other than physical copy that requires posting are available for Māori to switch rolls?*

People can enrol, update their details, or change roll types online at vote.nz using their New Zealand driver licence, New Zealand passport or RealMe credential. Completed forms can be returned electronically. A photo or scan can be taken of completed enrolment forms or the letter included in the Māori Electoral Option information pack. They can be uploaded at vote.nz/upload or emailed to enrol@vote.nz

Electors will also be able to complete enrolment forms at community events where our community engagement teams are present.

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every 3 months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Ross McPherson
Director
Enrolment