

9 November 2022



REF: OIA-11185

Dear 

**Request made under the Official Information Act 1982**

Thank you for your email of 23 September 2022 to the Hamilton City Council requesting information relating to the opening ceremony of the new Hamilton Expressway on 14 July 2022, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

On 11 October 2022, the Hamilton City Council transferred your request to Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency for response.

I have numbered each part of your request and will answer each in turn.

- 1. A budget breakdown for any costs related to the opening of the Hamilton Expressway, most notably the opening ceremony, but also any other events that were endorsed by Government and related to the opening, such as after parties and other congregations. Separate these costs out to include but not be limited to the following categories: :*
  - Any costs for the presence of any attendees at the event/s: (This includes things like; upfront payments, accommodation fees, travel fees etc.)*
  - Consultation costs, i.e., with organizing the event/s*
  - Any material costs related to equipment needed for hosting the event, i.e., microphones, speakers, ribbons, balloons, collateral etc.*
  - Any costs related to food and beverages served at the event/s*
  - Any design costs i.e., for banners, signs, pamphlets, presentations etc.*
  - Any costs related to providing the venue/s (at Claudelands Arena or otherwise)*
  - Any other costs relevant to the hosting of the event/s (if there are large categories I have missed, please identify these and list accordingly. Please list negligible costs not listed above as 'other')*

One event was held for the opening of this section of the Expressway. The following document falls within scope of this part of your request and is enclosed:

- WEX final expenditure.

Please note the figure of \$71,344 is \$4,301.89 less than the total expected cost at the time of answering written parliamentary question 25370 (2022), which can be found here: [www.parliament.nz/en/pb/order-paper-questions/written-questions/document/WQ\\_25370\\_2022/25370-2022-simon-court-to-the-minister-of-transport](http://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/order-paper-questions/written-questions/document/WQ_25370_2022/25370-2022-simon-court-to-the-minister-of-transport).

The difference in total cost is because the figures have been refined following the subsequent receipt of final cost information.

2. *How many people attended the event?*

- *For these attendees, how many of them were paid to be there? (This includes things such as travel expenses and accommodation costs)*
- *Please provide a list of all the attendees that were paid in any way to be there (This list should include their name, job title, and reason for being there)*

There were approximately 143 guests invited to attend the opening, with 59 RSVP.

Regarding the exact number of people who attended the event, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as this information is not held by Waka Kotahi, and we have no grounds for believing that the information is held by another organisation. There was no attendance register and the exact number of attendees is not known.

Regarding payments for things such as travel expenses and accommodation costs for non-Waka Kotahi staff, none were paid by Waka Kotahi to attend the event or received a contribution to the cost of attending the event.

To provide the travel cost of Waka Kotahi staff associated with the opening ceremony would require a detailed line-by-line assessment of individual invoice documents and also checks of credit card records for multiple team cost centres. I am therefore refusing this part of your 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, I have considered whether charging or extending the timeframe for responding to your request would be appropriate, as required under section 18A of the Act. However, these measures would still not enable us to effectively collate and respond to your request.

We have also considered consulting with you, as required under section 18B of the Act to refine your request but this would not enable us to provide the information relating to attendance as per your request.

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

In line with Waka Kotahi policy, this response will soon be published on our website, with personal information removed.

If you would like to discuss this reply with Waka Kotahi, please contact the Ministerial Services team, by email to [official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Kinvig', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

**Mark Kinvig**

National Manager, Infrastructure Delivery