

20 December 2023

Section 9(2)(a)

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Our ref: OIA 108245

Tēnā koe Section 9(2)(a)

Official Information Act request: Land Travel

Thank you for your email of 22 November 2023, requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) information about the Ministry of Justice's use of vehicles, taxis and ridesharing apps. Your request was as follows:

We request the following information in relation to your agency's use of vehicles (petrol, diesel and electric), taxis and ride-sharing apps:

1. *What was the department's Taxi expenditure for the 2022/23 financial year?*
2. *What was the department's expenditure on ridesharing apps (such as Uber, Ola, Zoomy, YourRide etc) for the 2022/23 financial year?*
 - a. *If the agency does not separate out taxi expenditure from other ride sharing expenditure, please indicate whether ridesharing or taxi use is the default/most common when such a service is needed and provide and a rough estimate of the proportion of trips that are taken via ridesharing vs taxi*
3. *What was the department's expenditure on public transport (busses, trains, ferries, etc) for the 2022/23 financial year?*
4. *What was the department's other road travel expenditure (running costs of vehicles owned by your agencies, hire cars etc but excluding flights) for the 2022/23 financial year?*
5. *Does the department have internal policies banning their staff or advising them against using ride-sharing apps for work travel? If so, what are these policies?*
6. *Does the department have any concerns about their staff using ride-sharing apps for work travel?*
7. *If the department does not currently use ridesharing, please indicate why not? Similarly, if the department does not use ridesharing as the default over taxis, please indicate why not.*
8. *Has the department purchased any vehicles over the 2022/2023 financial year? If so, how many were electric, diesel and petrol and what was the cost of these purchases broken down by vehicle type (electric, diesel, petrol)?*
9. *What is the running cost of all the department's vehicles?*
10. *Please provide an estimate on the number of kilometers traveled by staff via land transport in the 2022/23 financial year.*

You also requested that “*where possible, data that can be presented in an Excel format is preferred to other methods of presentation e.g., PDF.*”

In response to parts 1, 2, 2.a, the Ministry does not use a single code to track taxi expenditure, but based on expenditure directly through TaxiCharge (using taxi chits) expenditure we could identify through staff purchase cards, we estimate our expenditure on taxis to be \$457,715.45 (excluding GST). The Ministry does not use a single code to track ridesharing expenditure, but based on expenditure with rideshare suppliers, including through staff purchase cards, we estimate our ridesharing expenditure was \$5,005.35 (excluding GST). As noted in response to parts 5, 6 and 7 below, taxis are preferred over ridesharing services.

In response to part 3, expenditure on public transport for the 2022/23 financial year was \$150.44 (excluding GST). Please note that would not have captured situations where a staff member paid for public transport personally and then sought a reimbursement.

In response to parts 4 and 9, the Ministry’s other road travel expenditure (including running costs of the Ministry’s vehicles) for the 2022/23 financial year are detailed in Table 1 appended below.

In response to parts 5, 6 and 7, the Ministry’s internal Travel Policy states that ridesharing services are “permitted but not preferred”. The Ministry has a preferred supplier for taxi services through a syndicated agreement. Taxi services through that supplier are less costly than ridesharing services due to the discounts and arrangements offered by the supplier.

The preference to use this taxi service is also due to the risks and concerns identified for ridesharing services around data, privacy, health & safety, carbon emissions, and the Government’s Supplier Code of Conduct.

Any concerns *about Ministry staff using ride-sharing apps for work travel*, were noted by the Strategic Leadership Team in November 2020 and no plans were made to revisit the matter.

In response to part 8, as part of its fleet replacement programme (which includes an active disposal programme) the Ministry bought 94 vehicles in the 2022/23 financial year, all of which were electric (including plug-in hybrid electric vehicles). The Ministry spent \$5,087,258.74 (excluding GST and the clean car discount) in total on the 94 vehicles. The fleet replacement programme was part of the Ministry’s mandated response to the Carbon Neutral Government Programme. Of the 94 vehicles purchased, some were included as part of establishing a new team, Family Court Navigators (Kaiārahi), as well as replacing a number of leased vehicles with Ministry owned vehicles.

As part of this process, the Ministry engaged a third party to perform a study on the benefits of leasing electric vehicles compared to owning vehicles. This study identified that ownership is more cost effective in the long run. The Ministry also has capital expenditure available as opposed to operational expenditure, which would have been required for leasing fleet vehicles.

In response to part 10, the Ministry estimates its staff travelled 3,048,868 kilometres via land transport in the 2022/23 financial year.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: justice.govt.nz/about/official-information-act-requests/oia-responses/

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. The Office of the Ombudsman may be contacted by email to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phone on 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kel-Wat'.

Kelvin Watson
Deputy Secretary, Corporate and Digital Services

Table 1: Ministry expenditure on land transport 2022/23

Land Transport	Total Expenditure
Vehicle running cost	\$764,860.23
Mevo	\$454.10
Rental cars	\$408,254.25

Notes for Table 1:

- Running costs include, but are not limited to, petrol, warrants of fitness, servicing, registrations, car washing, repairs and public EV charging.
- These costs are excluding GST

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