

12 June 2023

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
New Zealand Taxpayers' Union
Auckland Rate payers' Alliance
[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Official Information Act (OIA) request: 2023 Census spend and Cyclone Gabrielle

On 12 May 2023, you contacted Stats NZ requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *How much has been spent on incentives for people to complete the census across the nation?*
- *How much has been budgeted for incentives to offer to people who complete the census across the nation?*
- *How much extra funding has been allocated to cyclone affected areas to help encourage people to complete the census?*
 - *How much of this extra funding been spent so far in cyclone affected areas?*
 - *Which areas have received extra funding?*
- *How much has been spent specifically on advertising the census in each cyclone affected area since extra funding was allocated? For example, local papers, radio etc.*
- *How much has been spent on advertising the census nationally since the extra funding was allocated for cyclone affected area?*

Incentive budget and spend

Stats NZ and census partners have used incentives as a tool for supporting participation and generating completed census forms. This measure has intentionally been introduced into the field operation to lift census responses, particularly for priority response groups and in areas with lower response to the census. Priority response groups include Māori, Pacific peoples, and young people aged 15 to 29 years.

The use of vouchers at community locations as an incentive to complete the 2023 Census have ranged in value from \$20 – \$40 per person. A total budget of \$1 million has been allocated for this, to provide a maximum of 25,000 vouchers/completed responses to the 2023 Census. This is being drawn from the \$36.672 million funding package agreed with Cabinet (note – this included a \$1 million koha budget as itemised below) to

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manage the impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle and the extension to the non-response follow-up period.

Further to this and in response to low census completion rates from Māori, Stats NZ has entered an agreement with the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency to support the completion of census forms by non-responding households in Auckland, with vouchers up to the value of \$100 per household being provided in return for census completions, up to a total \$1 million if required. With the ability to deliver a programme at scale and pace, the aim is to collect approximately 50,000 completed Individual Forms from Māori residing in the Auckland region who have not yet completed the census by visiting approximately 10,000 dwellings during May and June 2023.

The use of vouchers reflects reciprocity to respondents for their effort and time to complete the census and are being used as a form of manaakitanga at census support events (at which people are assisted to complete their census forms).

Across both streams of work, \$176,090 has been spent on supermarket and petrol vouchers given out as an incentive to complete the 2023 Census as at 18 May 2023.

This is in addition to costs associated with the One NZ Warriors partnership, of which \$80,000 was spent on tickets and food and beverage vouchers.

Please note that initiatives have been ongoing throughout the month of May up to the date of this letter. Accordingly, not all initiatives are able to be captured in this response and the figure supplied is likely to change.

Responding to the impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle

\$36.672 million was received to respond to the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle on the 2023 Census. Further information, and relevant papers are available on our website at the following link: [Cabinet papers – Report back on 2023 Census preparations](#).

A breakdown of the \$36.672 million is as follows:

Data Collection Extension	(\$000)
Data Collection staff extension in red & amber zones	14,274
Data Collection extension in green zones (NRFU)	7,278
Accommodation/Travel	1,781
IT Licences and Support costs	3,476
Print and Post	420
Logistics Costs	982
Address Verification/Response Reconciliation Team	436
Manual Intervention Team	890
Sub-total	29,537
Support costs to households/koha	1,000

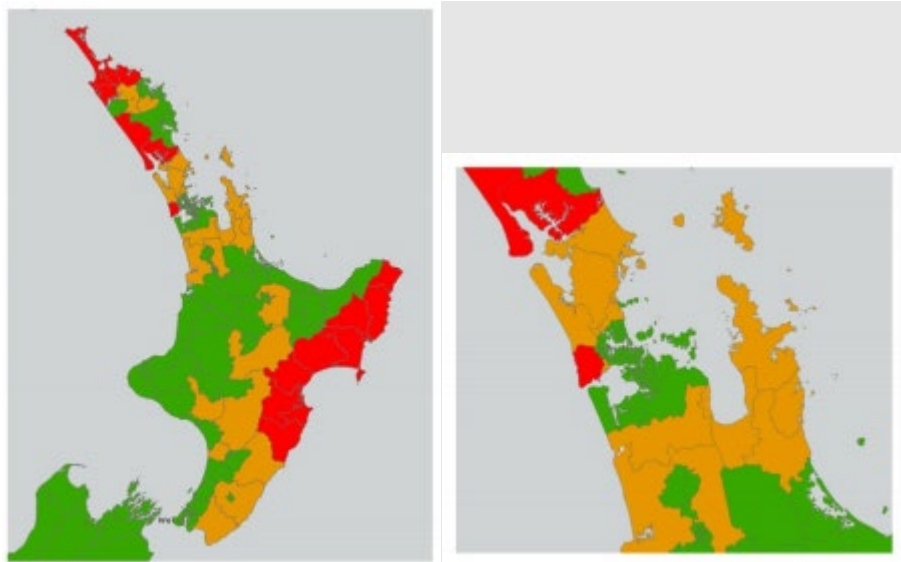
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Marketing, Communications and Engagement	3,300
Programme Costs	2,835
Total	36,672

Note that this breakdown refers to red, amber and green zones. At the time the funding was considered, the North Island was categorised as follows:

- Green Areas – where collectors could conduct field activities
- Amber Areas – where collectors could conduct field activities but there were parts where this was not appropriate
- Red Areas – where it was not appropriate to conduct field activities

The following maps are available in the Cabinet paper *Responding to the impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle on the 2023 Census (Office of the Minister of Statistics)* (see Appendix one) and correspond to the funding allocated above.



As at the end of May, approximately \$13.5 million of this funding had been spent in cyclone affected areas.

Advertising spend

Of the \$3.3 million allocated to marketing, communications, and engagement above, the media spend advertising the campaign in cyclone impacted areas – Coromandel, Gisborne, Hawkes Bay, Northland and East Coast, as at the end of May is approximately \$329,914.26.

In respect of this figure, please note that television spend is a national buy, so the numbers in respect of this have been calculated based on the population of each area to get an estimated percentage of the spend. Radio was also bought nationally or in package buys which has made it difficult to group the spending by region. Additionally, \$1,770,085.74 is the approximate media spend advertising the campaign nationally.

Should you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact Stats NZ at: OfficeoftheGSCE@stats.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response, please feel free to contact us or you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

It is Stats NZ's policy to proactively release its responses to official information requests where possible. This letter, with your personal details removed, will be published on the Stats NZ website. Publishing responses creates greater openness and transparency of government decision-making and helps better inform public understanding of the reasons for decisions.

Ngā mihi nui, nā



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Stats NZ