

Reference: 20150136

18 May 2015



Thank you for your Official Information Act request, received on 20 April 2015. You requested the following:

** How many government departments or agencies have contacted the National Infrastructure Unit (NIU) to discuss potential Public-Private-Partnerships (as required by a 2010 policy for all projects involving the procurement of assets worth more than \$25 million)?*

** The infrastructure.govt.nz website describes the NIU's role as including, "act as a secretariat for" the National Infrastructure Advisory Board. It also states that the NIAB provides the NIU with "advice and perspectives on infrastructure project appraisal". What access to NIAB board members have to the ordinary day-to-day communications of the National Infrastructure Unit?*

** More specifically, do members of the National Infrastructure Advisory Board (NIAB) have access to information (including verbal discussions) regarding potential Public-Private-Partnerships as discussed with other government departments?*

** What remuneration do NIAB board members receive (either per year or per meeting)?*

** What is the procedure for declaring conflicts of interests relating to NIAB board members?*

** What is the procedure for dealing with declared conflicts of interests relating to NIAB board members?*

** Have any declarations of conflicts of interest have been recorded for NIAB board members; if so, what were those conflicts of interest?*

** Have any NIAB board members recused themselves from decisions or votes during board meetings for reasons of conflicts of interest?*

The National Infrastructure Advisory Board (NIAB) acts in an advisory capacity only, based on the experience and roles of its members primarily in the infrastructure private sector. The role of NIAB is to support the National Infrastructure Unit (NIU) in developing its infrastructure plans and related publications. These are long term, strategic documents, and therefore need some independence from the government of the day.

As the Board has no decision-making or voting function, we do not maintain a conflicts of interest register. As their external interests are what make them valuable to the NIU, Board members are invited to provide an update at each meeting on infrastructure matters in their particular area of interest.

The Board is provided with periodic updates about infrastructure policy work that Government agencies are undertaking, but is not provided with information that is commercially or Budget sensitive, and is not involved in the day-to-day communications of the NIU.

NIAB members are entitled to claim \$750 in remuneration for each Board meeting or other expected attendance (for example, the recent New Zealand Infrastructure Forum), as well as \$468.75 for preparation per meeting and the payment of associated travel expenses. There are up to five Board meetings per year, depending on the requirements of the NIU. Not all Board members claim remuneration.

While information about PPPs continues to be located at <http://www.infrastructure.govt.nz>, Treasury's PPP team is based within Commercial Operations, rather than the NIU. To reflect this, the Treasury website will become the primary location of PPP information, at <http://www.treasury.govt.nz/statesector/ppp>. The Board is provided with occasional updates on PPP projects but has no input into these decisions.

The PPP team does not keep a record of all its interactions with Government departments and agencies about potential PPP projects. Some discussions have been had with most of the capital intensive agencies, such as the NZ Transport Agency, the Ministry of Education and the Department of Corrections.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Treasury website.

This fully covers the information you requested. You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision.

Yours sincerely

David Taylor
Manager, National Infrastructure Unit