



30 March 2026

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 12 March 2026, requesting information about business rules, policies and guidance governing international travel for the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry).

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on your request set out below.

- *Copies of any current policies, internal guidance, or business rules governing international travel by the Chief Executive (or equivalent).*

The Ministry has a Travel and Transport Policy and an Incidental Travel Expenses Policy. The policy and guidance apply to all Ministry staff, including the Chief Executive. These policies govern the Ministry's guidance for international travel.

Please see the attached the Ministry's internal guidance related to international travel.

- *Any specific provisions relating to:*
 - *The addition of personal leave or private travel to an official overseas work trip.*
 - *Cost-sharing arrangements where personal travel is added to a business trip.*
 - *Approval processes required where personal travel is appended.*
 - *Whether this travel is publicly disclosed.*

Staff can undertake private travel using their annual leave days within reasonable limits in conjunction with business travel, provided there is no additional cost to the Ministry.

Annual leave while travelling must be approved beforehand by the one-up manager. The one-up manager will not approve private travel if it perceived to be the primary reason for travel.

The Chief Executive's travel is approved by the Ministry's Chief Financial Officer. This travel is annually reported as part of the Chief Executive's expenses which is uploaded on the Ministry's website, here: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/corporate/chief-executive-expenses/

- *Further, a list of instances, within the last 3 financial years (including any planned travel to the end of this financial year), where personal travel was appended to official international travel by the CE (or equivalent), including how cost apportionment was handled.*

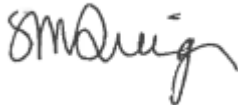
No personal travel was added to the Chief Executive's official international travel in the past three financial years, and none is planned for the rest of the financial year. As such, your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as this information does not exist.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, 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.

Ngā mihi nui

pp. 

Anna Graham
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services

International travel

This page provides information about international travel for business purposes and the process required by the Ministry when organising international travel. It is important you check the Incidental Travel Expenses Policy to see how it applies to your international travel requirements. Please note that, under MSD's current policy, International Travel is for approved work-related business only. If you require a laptop, you must request a 'clean' laptop via Service Desk which will only have information you require for your business trip, and notify IT Security with your approved travel and destinations IT_Security@msd.govt.nz. Refer Flexible Working Guidelines 'Requests to work overseas' [Flexible Working Guidelines - Doogle \(ssi.govt.nz\)](#).

On this Page:

Obtaining a quote for international travel

Before the FIN1031 International Travel Request Form can be completed, the Executive Assistant or Travel Arranger must contact Orbit to obtain a quote for the travel so an accurate cost can be included. All flights, accommodation, and rental vehicles are booked through Orbit.

[Email Orbit \(mailto:international.booking@orbitwellington.com\)](mailto:international.booking@orbitwellington.com) to request a quote and copy in the Travel Team at the National Accounting Centre.

The email must include the following information:

Where you are travelling to (ie city and country).

Dates of travel - especially when you have to be at your destination(s) and for how long.

The type of flight you would like (ie most direct or cheapest).

Class of travel (ie economy, premium economy, seat and bag, works etc.). Note: premium economy or business class travel may only be approved in restricted circumstances (refer to the Travel Policy for further information).

Any stopover preferences. Note: stopovers must be approved by the relevant DCE or CE (refer to the Travel Policy for further information).

Ask how long Orbit is able to hold the flight for you (this is important as part of the approval process).

Note: the initial quotes are used as a rough guide only. They are valid at the time of initial consultation, and are liable to change between booking and purchase – this is a condition of the airline. For this reason it is recommended to gain approval as soon as possible.

[Email Orbit International \(mailto:international.booking@orbitwellington.com\)](mailto:international.booking@orbitwellington.com)

[Email NAC Travel Team \(mailto:NAC_Travelteam@msd.govt.nz\)](mailto:NAC_Travelteam@msd.govt.nz)

Orbit will provide you with quotes for several flights, based on the best options available and the information you provided via email.

The traveller must decide on the best option for flights taking into consideration:

Total flight time for each option.

How many (if any) stopovers there are and the length of each stopover. Accommodation may be required if there is a long wait between connecting flights.

The time of day of the flight. You may prefer to fly through the night on a long haul flight.

The recovery time each option would allow.

The cost of each option.

The class of travel.

Note: In most cases Orbit will not be able to confirm the booking until they have the purchase order and a copy of the traveller's passport. The Travel Arranger should scan and email this to Orbit as soon as possible.

Authorisation of international travel

Once the quote has been received from Orbit and the traveller has decided on the flights, the FIN1031 International Travel Request Form must be completed.

The International Travel Request Form must be completed first as other forms (ie Travel Advance Application), the travel booking, and payment cannot proceed until the International Travel Request Form has been approved by the appropriate Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) or the Chief Executive (CE).

Once the International Travel Request Form has been completed, the form is sent to the relevant DCE for approval. Note: all DCE international travel must be approved by the CE.

[FIN1031 International Travel Request Form - MSD \(Word 68.26KB\)](http://doogole/documents/helping-you/finance/finance-forms/fin1031-international-travel-request-form-msd-2024.docx), [\[http://doogole/documents/helping-you/finance/finance-forms/fin1031-international-travel-request-form-msd-2024.docx\]](http://doogole/documents/helping-you/finance/finance-forms/fin1031-international-travel-request-form-msd-2024.docx)

How to complete the International Travel Request Form

Use the following step-by-step guide to help you complete the FIN1031 International Travel Request Form (all sections must be completed). If there is more than one traveller, a separate form must be completed for each person.

Details of Travel

Complete:

Traveller's name.

Traveller's designation (ie role).

Whether mobile global roaming/data is required (yes/no).

Date of departure.

Date of return.

Traveller's signature.

Travel Arranger's name.

Destination. If there are several destinations, enter the place where the traveller will stay the longest.

Cost centre of traveller.

Section A: Description and Justification of Travel

Description of Travel: a summary of where you are going, who you will meet, what you are visiting, and how long you will be there.

Justification of Travel: a summary of why you should go on the trip. Explain what you hope to achieve, what you will gain from the trip, what you will bring back to the organisation in terms of knowledge and experience, and what the long-term benefits to the Ministry are.

Section B and C

Obtain signed approval by the appropriate General Manager, DCE, or CE.

Section D: Detailed Breakdown of Cost

Provide a breakdown of your expected travel costs. This is the basis of your approved budget.

Air travel, accommodation, taxis, and rental car information should be based on the quote provided by Orbit.

The total cost should be given in New Zealand dollars. Convert prices in foreign currency to New Zealand dollars using an online converter such as the Westpac currency converter. Provide the conversion equation in the 'Other (Specify)' field. When converting it is wise to add a few extra dollars to allow for fluctuations in exchange rates.

Note: The cost of flights, accommodation, and taxis could change between the time the quote is received and the time of booking. It is in your interest to provide a price range for your flights, accommodation, and taxis including what the likely cost will be. This will prevent the need to request approval again if the costs increase beyond what was approved.

[Westpac currency converter \[https://www.westpac.co.nz/tx-travel-migrant/foreign-exchange-and-international/currency-converter/\]](https://www.westpac.co.nz/tx-travel-migrant/foreign-exchange-and-international/currency-converter/)

Create order via Weka for international travel

Once the FIN1031 International Travel Request Form has been completed, the Travel Arranger must raise a requisition in Weka for each traveller.

Raise this as a noncatalog item, attach your quote and signed FIN1031 form. Create as one line and add an extra line for Miscellaneous charges, we recommend a \$100 minimum to cover hotel charge back fees, exchange rate fluctuations, incidentals etc.

Note: When completing the item description for the flight you do not need to enter all stopovers, just the departure and arrival city.

For guidance on creating a requisition in Weka, refer to the [Making a purchase in Weka \[http://doogie/helping-you/payments-and-expenses/buy-something/making-a-purchase-in-weka.html\]](http://doogie/helping-you/payments-and-expenses/buy-something/making-a-purchase-in-weka.html) page.

Ensure that the natural account 26257 is used when creating the requisition.

Orbit will send a confirmed itinerary via email once the purchase order has been received. Orbit will email the air ticket and any vouchers the traveller may need.

[Making a purchase in Weka \[http://doogie/helping-you/payments-and-expenses/buy-something/making-a-purchase-in-weka.html\]](http://doogie/helping-you/payments-and-expenses/buy-something/making-a-purchase-in-weka.html)

Mobile overseas roaming

If you require mobile overseas roaming or mobile data, complete [Forms - Request for Roaming with Data and International Calling \[https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforms.ssi.govt.nz%2Fforms%2Fnew%3Form_template_public_name%3DRequest%2Bfor%2BRoaming%2Bwith%2BData%2Band%2BInternational%2BCalling&data=05%7C02%7CAmanda.Wat\]](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforms.ssi.govt.nz%2Fforms%2Fnew%3Form_template_public_name%3DRequest%2Bfor%2BRoaming%2Bwith%2BData%2Band%2BInternational%2BCalling&data=05%7C02%7CAmanda.Wat)

Once submitted allow a week for mobile roaming and data to be set up (in the event of unplanned travel an exception can be made).

Travel cancellations and alterations

All cancellations and alterations to travel must be made through Orbit. Flight alterations must be pre-approved by the Budget Manager, except in exceptional circumstances.

Refer to the Incidental Travel Expenditure Policy for further information.

[Incidental Travel Expenditure Policy \(Word 104.59KB\) \[http://doogie/documents/resources/helping-staff/policies-standards/finance/msd-incidental-travel-expenditure-policy-sep-2024-gov.docx\]](http://doogie/documents/resources/helping-staff/policies-standards/finance/msd-incidental-travel-expenditure-policy-sep-2024-gov.docx)

Overseas conferences and events

Approval must be obtained from the relevant DCE or the CE via a FIN1031 International Travel Request Form prior to registering for an overseas conference or event.

Note: If a conference organiser offers a special package which is more cost effective than registering and booking accommodation separately through Orbit, this may be purchased subject to approval by the Budget Manager. Please refer to Incidental Travel Expenditure Policy.

Refer to the Overseas Payments page for guidance on how to arrange payment of invoices in foreign currency.

[Overseas payments \[http://doogie/helping-you/payments-and-expenses/make-payments/overseas-payments.html\]](http://doogie/helping-you/payments-and-expenses/make-payments/overseas-payments.html)

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Checks for travellers

Before travelling, you should check the baggage policy of the airline(s) you are travelling with.

Note: Excess baggage costs will not be reimbursed to staff, except where due to carrying Ministry property.

Travellers should also refer to the SafeTravel website before booking travel to check for any security or health risks associated with the travel destination. Travel should be registered with SafeTravel after the booking has been made.

[SafeTravel website \[https://www.safetravel.govt.nz/\]](https://www.safetravel.govt.nz/)