

9 June 2026

**Official information request for regarding costs for Judicial Conduct Panel inquiry into District Court Judge Ema Aitken**

**Our Ref: OIA-2526225**

I refer to your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (**OIA**) dated 2 June 2026 for “updated or final costs for the Judicial Conduct Panel inquiry into the conduct of Judge Ema Aitken”.

**Response**

Crown Law’s final costs in relation to the Panel’s inquiry were \$371,761.96 (GST exclusive). These costs included:

- professional fees and disbursements of special counsel, counsel assisting special counsel, and research assistants to special counsel;
- travel and accommodation expenses for special counsel and counsel assisting; and
- couriers.

Please note this is a GST **exclusive** amount. Costs advised to you by letter dated 25 March 2026 (our ref: OIA-2526142) were GST **inclusive** amounts.

Crown Law also provided advice to the Attorney-General and Acting Attorney-General, and supported special counsel’s participation in the inquiry. This work was absorbed by existing staff as part of their usual duties.

The costs of Judge Aitken’s legal representation, of the Panel itself, and of Ministry of Justice (**MOJ**) staff who supported the Panel is information more closely connected with MOJ. Ordinarily we would transfer those parts of your request to MOJ, in accordance with s 14(b)(ii) of the OIA. However, we are advised you have already requested that information directly from MOJ, such that a transfer would be duplicative and unnecessary.

Please note that we may publish this response (with your personal details redacted), and any related documents, on Crown Law’s website if we decide proactive release of this information is or may be in the public interest. If you have any concerns about this, please let us know within 10 working days of the date of this letter.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact [OIA@crownlaw.govt.nz](mailto:OIA@crownlaw.govt.nz).

Nāku noa, nā  
Crown Law



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