

13 November 2025

By email to: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2025/78

Thank you for your request of Thursday 16 October 2025 under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Specifically, you have said:

I recently updated my enrolment details and asked to receive confirmation via email instead of a physical letter. I was informed that the Electoral Commission is legislatively bound to send physical confirmation letters.

[Electoral Act 1993 No 87 \(as at 01 July 2025\), Public Act 94A Confirmation of change of name, address, or other particulars – New Zealand Legislation](#)

OIA Request:

Please provide the following data:

Annual cost in NZD for the Electoral Commission to send physical letters for each of the past 30 years?

Clarifying Instructions:

This includes domestic and international letters;

I am primarily interested in more recent information, at least the last 3 election cycles would be greatly appreciated.

I am primarily interested in instances where the sending of physical letters could have been replaced by other means (i.e. text message or email); and

If specific figures are not kept, a reasonable 'best guess' will suffice.

While digital enrolment transactions are increasingly becoming the channel of choice, the law requires enrolment correspondence from the Commission to be sent by post or personally served.

As eligibility to enrol is partly based on where a voter lives, we are required to verify voters' addresses by sending a letter when a person enrolls or updates their enrolment details¹. If the correspondence cannot be delivered or is returned 'gone no address', the Commission is required to investigate further to obtain correct details or remove the elector from the roll.

Postal costs have increased significantly and are projected to continue to increase with changes to postal services. The total postage cost for the 2023 General Election was \$7.86 million compared

¹ Sections 89A, 89B, 89C, and 94A of the [Electoral Act 1993](#). See also sections 78, 87, 95A, 96, and 99 of the Electoral Act 1993.

with \$4.78 million in 2020. The costs of paper, printing (including ballot papers), and postage were \$16.820m in 2023. [In our report to Parliament on the 2023 General Election](#), the Electoral Commission recommended the Commission be allowed to communicate enrolment information to overseas electors digitally. We also noted that multiple mail outs of enrolment updates for local body elections, the Māori Electoral Option, and general elections are not financially sustainable. More cost-effective and timely ways are needed to ensure voters get the information they need, and to enrol or update their details.

The Electoral Commission made a number of recommendations for legislative change to enable alternative ways of communicating with electors, data-matching and confirming enrolment transactions (see recommendations 5, 6).

A bill ([the Electoral Amendment Bill](#)) is currently before Parliament which will enable electronic methods to be used for all enrolment correspondence as an alternative to post to enable the Electoral Commission to provide more efficient and increasingly digital enrolment services. The bill is currently before the Justice Select Committee and you can follow the progress of the bill [here](#).

I have provided postal costs for the last two elections. We would need additional time to provide more historic postage cost information. Let us know if you would like that or if you are happy with the response.

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every 3 months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Kristina Temel
Manager, Legal Regulation and Policy