



DEPARTMENT  
OF CORRECTIONS

2 November 2007

Stephen Church  
National Parliamentary Research Unit  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

Dear Mr Church

**Official Information Act Request**

I refer to your request of 20 July 2007 in which you ask for information regarding prisoner Graeme Burton.

The reason prisoner Graeme Burton was moved from Rimutaka Prison to Auckland Prison was because he is classified as a maximum security prisoner. The only maximum security facility in the country is at Auckland Prison.

The safety of the public is the Department's first priority and, as it has become unfortunately evident, Mr Burton is an extremely dangerous individual. It was essential that Mr Burton was held in the most secure facility available.

It was necessary for Mr Burton to travel to Wellington to attend Court and be present at sentencing. The Department has an obligation to transport prisoners for attendance at Court.

Prisoners are transported in accordance with their risk profile, security classification and health needs. The decision was made to transport Mr Burton, by road with the appropriate level of staff, with regard to ensuring the safety of both staff and the public. Transportation costs are generally not itemised for individual prisoners.

- 1. Was Burton transferred from Rimutaka to Paremoremo (Auckland) Prison following his involvement in a disorderly incident in March 2007; is so, when was the incident, when was he transferred, how was he transported, with how many other inmates, how many guards accompanied him, and what was the estimated cost?**

Yes.

The details of when he was transferred, how was he transported, with how many other inmates, how many guards accompanied him and the estimated costs are being withheld under section 9 (2)(c) of the Official Information Act.

**Chief Executive's  
Office**

Mayfair House  
44-52 The Terrace  
Private Box 1206  
Wellington  
New Zealand  
Telephone 64-4-474 8840  
Facsimile 64-4-460 3207

- 2. Was Burton transferred from Paremoremo (Auckland) to Rimutaka for his sentencing on murder charges in the Wellington High Court on 3 April 2007; if so, when was he transferred, how was he transported, with how many other inmates, how many guards accompanied him, and what was the estimated cost?**

Yes.

The details of when he was transferred, how was he transported, with how many other inmates, how many guards accompanied him and the estimated costs are being withheld under section 9 (2)(c) of the Official Information Act.

- 3. Was Burton transferred from Rimutaka to Paremoremo following his sentencing on murder charges in the Wellington High Court on 3 April; if so, when was he transferred, how was he transported, with how many other inmates, how many guards accompanied him, and what was the estimated cost?**

Yes.

The details of when he was transferred, how was he transported, with how many other inmates, how many guards accompanied him and the estimated costs are being withheld under section 9 (2)(c) of the Official Information Act.

- 4. Was Burton transferred from Paremoremo (Auckland) to Rimutaka to face charges of aggravated robbery and burglary in the Wellington District Court on 11 April; if so, when was he transferred, how was he transported, with how many inmates, how many guards accompanied him, and what was the estimated cost?**

Yes.

The details of when he was transferred, how was he transported, with how many other inmates, how many guards accompanied him and the estimated costs are being withheld under section 9 (2)(c) of the Official Information Act.

- 5. Was Burton transferred from Rimutaka to Paremoremo following his appearance in the Wellington District Court on 11 April; if so, when was he transferred, how was he transported, with how many other inmates, how many guards accompanied him, and what was the estimated cost?**

Yes.

The details of when he was transferred, how was he transported, with how many other inmates, how many guards accompanied him and the estimated costs are being withheld under section 9 (2)(c) of the Official Information Act.

18 March 2008

Stephen Church  
National Party Research Unit  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

Dear Mr Church

**Official Information Act Complaint**

Please find enclosed the transport costs relating to prisoner Graeme Burton's transfer from Rimutaka to Auckland Prison.

I need to preface all of my comments by saying that in transporting prisoners the primary concern must be the safety of the public and of staff. The decision to withhold the cost of transfers was formed in order to maintain the Department's security measures, with the concern that the number of staff could be discerned by releasing this information and if made public could be used to undermine security operations.

However, I have reviewed the security risk in relation to cost, and have agreed to release the information that you sought.

The reason prisoner Graeme Burton was moved from Rimutaka Prison to Auckland Prison was because he is classified as a maximum security prisoner. The only maximum security facility in the country is at Auckland Prison. The safety of the public is the Department's first priority and it was essential that Mr Burton was held in the most secure facility available.

There were several transfers involved as it was necessary for Mr Burton to travel to Wellington to attend Court and be present at sentencing. The Department is obligated to transport prisoners for attendance at Court.

Prisoners are transported in accordance with their risk profile, security classification and health needs. The decision was made to transport Mr Burton, by road with the appropriate level of staff, with regard to ensuring the safety of both staff and the public.

Mr Burton was transported a total of five times between Rimutaka Prison and Auckland Prison. The cost of these transfers was \$19,501.69. The details of each of these transports is provided in the table below.

Reason	Journey	Cost
To be moved to maximum security facility	Rimutaka to Auckland Prison	\$3549.47
To appear at Wellington High Court	Auckland to Rimutaka Prison	\$4112.90
To be transferred back to Auckland after Court appearance	Rimutaka to Auckland Prison	\$4112.90
To appear at Wellington District Court	Auckland to Rimutaka Prison	\$4031.24
To be transferred back to Auckland after Court appearance	Rimutaka to Auckland Prison	\$3695.18

Yours sincerely



Barry Matthews  
Chief Executive

Cc Quenten Ford, Deputy Assistant Ombudsman

**Answer to parliamentary question 7051 (2007)**

**Simon Power to the Minister of Corrections (24 Apr 2007):** Is there a maximum security unit at Rimutaka prison; if so, what is it called and what is its capacity?

**Corrections Minister Damien O'Connor** replied: There is no maximum security unit at Rimutaka Prison. Rimutaka Prison is only permitted to hold prisoners with a security classification of maximum on a temporary basis. Any prisoners with a maximum security classification are housed in a 30-bed Management Unit pending transfer to Auckland Prison.