



Te Tari Taiwhenua Internal Affairs

Private and Confidential

20 February 2018

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Suite 7.4
Executive Wing
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

Ministerial and Secretariat Services

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Dear Minister,

Re: Overpayment of Continuous Wellington Accommodation Allowance

The Department has determined an overpayment has been made to you relating to your Continuous Wellington Accommodation (CWA) Allowance. This error was identified as part of the standard quarterly proactive release of Ministers' expenses, due to be made public on Thursday, 22 February.

The overpayment is for the period 23 November 2017 to 4 February 2018 (74 days). We acknowledge that you did not seek to claim the CWA allowance, and it is due to an administration error that occurred during the change of Executive transition period, where payment of the allowance was carried over incorrectly after the date you moved into an Official Ministerial Residence. You had previously been entitled to receive the CWA allowance as an out-of-town Member of Parliament, and we did not request the appropriate update to payroll following your change of residence.

I apologise for this oversight, and acknowledge this is an administrative error on behalf of the Department of Internal Affairs.

As a result of this, we are seeking reimbursement to the Department for the total of \$9,123.29

Repayment options:

We'd like to work with you to arrange the most convenient way for you to repay the funds owing. The options for your consideration are:

- € Paying the overpayment back in full by direct credit or cheque; or
- € Paying a set amount each fortnight/month into the Department of Internal Affairs bank account.

Account name:

Account number:

Reference to include with payment(s):

Code:

Please advise me how you would like to proceed and we will work with your office to action immediately.



Quarterly release of Ministers' expenses:

As noted above, the Department will be making the standard quarterly proactive release of Ministers' expenses this week. As the overpayment occurred during the quarter being published, we have included an explanatory note against your Wellington Accommodation expenses for the release period October-December 2017:

For this quarter, \$3,945 of costs were paid as part of an administration error and will be corrected to Rt Hon Winston Peters' office next quarter.

As the matter will be settled prior to the end of this current quarter, the expected release of the January-March 2018 expenses (May 2018), will show the correction.

Assurance:

We take our role administering the Executive's salaries and allowances very seriously, and expect the highest levels of rigour and accuracy to ensure we can provide transparency for the use of public money. Our own standards were not met this time.

Yesterday afternoon, the Department's Internal Audit group was commissioned to undertake a formal review of our processes and systems supporting the salaries and allowances paid to Executive members. With both the above error, and indeed the overall scale of the recent change of Executive, this is an opportune time for the Department to do so. This is in order to provide assurance to yourself and Ministers that these processes and systems are effective and operating as expected.

Minister, once again I apologise for the error. If you have any questions relating to this letter, please feel free to contact me directly on _____ or _____

Ngā mihi,



Morag Ingram
Acting General Manager
Ministerial Services and Secretariat Support