



03 October 2024

[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your request made under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), received on 9 September 2024. You requested the following:

A total sum of the income of the sale of hashed IRD user data to Meta and X for the financial years starting 1st April 2021 through current year income.

Inland Revenue takes privacy very seriously. We have not leaked or sold any taxpayer information.

We advertise on social media because it is an effective tool to inform customers of their tax obligations or entitlements like Working for Families and FamilyBoost. Using custom audience lists on social media allows organisations to securely upload de-identified information (referred to as hashed information) for direct marketing purposes. We have used custom audience lists on Meta (Facebook and Instagram), LinkedIn and Google.

On 12 September we paused the use of custom audience lists while we undertake an internal review of this practice (undertaken by our Chief Information Security Office (CISO)). We did this due to public concern and to provide reassurance that we take the public's concerns seriously. We are also working with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner who are assessing whether there are any privacy issues with hashing.

The New Zealand Information Security manual, which is maintained by the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB), has guidelines on information assurance and systems security. Our standards with relation to hashing operate within these guidelines.

More information on our use of custom audience lists, including how this complies with the Privacy Act 2020, is on our website at www.ird.govt.nz/customaudiencelists. This page will be updated when the review has been completed or if we have further information to share.

Information Requested

As Inland Revenue does not sell customer data to social media platforms, your request is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information is not held by Inland Revenue.

Right of review

If you disagree with my decision on your OIA request, you can ask an Inland Revenue review officer to review my decision. To ask for an internal review, please email the Commissioner of Inland Revenue at: commissionerscorrespondence@ird.govt.nz.

Alternatively, under section 28(3) of the OIA, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision. You can contact the office of the Ombudsman by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

If you choose to have an internal review, you can still ask the Ombudsman for a review.

Publishing of OIA response

We intend to publish our response to your request on Inland Revenue's website (ird.govt.nz) as this information may be of interest to other members of the public. This letter, with your personal details removed, may be published in its entirety. Publishing responses increases the availability of information to the public and is consistent with the OIA's purpose of enabling more effective participation in the making and administration of laws and policies and promoting the accountability of officials.

Thank you again for your request.

Yours sincerely



Pip Knight
Service Leader, Marketing & Communications