



Level 2
119 Ghuznee Street
P O Box 9744
Wellington 6141
New Zealand

info@nzonair.govt.nz
www.nzonair.govt.nz

Tel: 04 382 9524

20 August 2026

Thank you for your Official Information Act request about NZ On Air funding and broadcasting relating to the Olympics, Paralympics, disability sport, disability representation, grassroots sport and regional broadcasting.

Our response to each part of your request is as follows:

1. What is NZ On Air doing to bridge inequity between Olympics and Paralympics broadcasting hours, reporters and advertising/publicity?

1.a NZ On Air does not hold responsibility for determining the number of broadcasting hours allocated to the Olympics or Paralympics, the number of reporters assigned by broadcasters, nor the level of advertising or publicity undertaken for those events. Those matters are generally determined by broadcasters, rights-holders and sports organisations, rather than NZ On Air. NZ On Air's funding role is to support eligible New Zealand public media content through contestable and platform funding processes. NZ On Air does not have the power to make broadcasters carry any content.

Through that contestable process, we have funded Paralympics coverage since 1992. More recent examples are:

- *Milan Winter Paralympics 2026* - for TVNZ \$400,760
- *Paris 2024 Paralympics* - for TVNZ \$500,000
- *Cool As Ice – Beijing Paralympics Winter Games 2022* – for TVNZ \$318,160
- *Tokyo 2021 Paralympics - We All Participate* for Attitude Pictures \$374,909
- *Tokyo 2021 Paralympics* - for TVNZ \$312,150
- *Slick as ice – Pyeongchang 2018 Winter Paralympics* - for TVNZ \$169,7980
- *Ready, Set ... Rio – Paralympics-* for TVNZ \$372,580

NZ On Air has also supported content that increases the visibility of disabled people and para-athletes. For example:

- *Wheel Blacks: Bodies On The Line*, a three-part documentary series about New Zealand's wheelchair rugby team seeking qualification for the Paris Paralympics. Sweet Productions - funding of up to \$631,838.
- *Attitude 2024 + Grit And Glory*, 30 x 23 minutes, for up to \$2,041,415; *Grit And Glory* followed aspiring Paralympians preparing for and competing in the Paris 2024 Games.

As NZ On Air does not hold comparative data on Olympics versus Paralympics broadcasting hours, number of reporters, or broadcaster advertising/publicity spend, this request is declined under section 18(g) of the OIA.

2. *Is NZ On Air doing anything to make Paralympics broadcasting free-to-air or otherwise equalise the playing field?*

2.a See response 1A for examples of free-to-air Paralympics coverage. NZ On Air funded content is made available on free-to-air or on freely accessible platforms.

3. *What is the specific amount of funding allocated and given to able-bodied sporting events compared with disability sporting events?*

3.a NZ On Air does not categorise funding as “able-bodied sporting events” versus “disability sporting events”. NZ On Air funds public media content, not sporting events, and its funding decisions are categorised by content type, platform, audience, genre and other media-related criteria.

Because NZ On Air does not hold the requested comparison as a formal statistical category, this request is declined under section 18(e) on the basis that the requested document or dataset does not exist.

4. *What are the statistics and proportionality of programmes dedicated to persons with disabilities?*

4.a NZ On Air does not identify or count programmes that are specifically dedicated to persons with disabilities. We do track high-level funding data by target audience for Scripted and Non-fiction funding. The public Funding Data Tracker reports that, after Round Tahī 2026/27, funding by audience was: 67% general audience, 17% children, 10% section 36(a)(iii), and 6% section 36(c). Section 36(c) audiences include children, youth, persons with disabilities and minorities, noting that NZ On Air separates children’s content from other section 36(c) content in that tracker.

NZ On Air does not hold a complete statistical breakdown of “persons with disabilities appearing on air” or every programme that “discusses disability ideas”, as this would require programme-by-programme content analysis and/or metadata not necessarily held by NZ On Air.

NZ On Air’s public records do identify a number of disability-focused programmes, including:

- *Attitude* – a long running programme NZ On Air has been funding for over 20 years, described as empowering stories reflecting the lives of people in Aotearoa living with disability or chronic ill health. Some specific examples include:
 - *Attitude 2023*, 20 x 23 minutes plus 10 re-versioned episodes, up to \$1,675,050.
 - *Attitude 2019* and *Attitude Awards*, up to 30 x 29 minutes plus 1 x 59 minutes, received up to \$1,935,900.
- *Down For Love* – a feel-good reality show following people with Down syndrome as they navigate the trials and triumphs of dating, in the hopes of finding love. NZ On Air has to date funded four seasons of this programme.
- *Unbreakable*, 7 x 44 minutes, up to \$768,424, and *Living With Tourettes 2*, 6 x 44 minutes, up to \$511,000, were funded in 2018 as part of non-fiction content creating wider understanding of life with disabilities.
- *Unbreakable 3*, 6 x 44 minutes, up to \$727,870, following contributors with disabilities and focusing on their hurdles, dreams and successes.
- *Four Go Flattening*, 5 x 44 minutes, up to \$586,770, following four young adults with intellectual disability experiencing flattening.
- *This is Wheel Life with Sophia & Indy*, 12 x 8 minutes, up to \$199,490, documenting the lives of Sophia and Indy, one living with quadriplegia and the other her carer.

Because NZ On Air does not hold the requested comparison as a formal statistical category, this request is declined under section 18(e) on the basis that the requested document or dataset does not exist.

5. What level of broadcasting funding is allocated to grassroots level sports, able-bodied and disability, and what is the statistical breakdown?

- 5.a As per answer 1- 2, NZ On Air does not have a specific funding category for “grassroots sport”, “able-bodied grassroots sport” or “disability grassroots sport”. NZ On Air’s public funding categories are media-content categories, such as Scripted, Non-fiction, Music, Platform Funding, Sector Support, Discoverability and related categories. Generally speaking, to date, sports coverage has been commercially funded and has not required public funding (apart from the examples given).

Some funded content may feature grassroots sport, community sport, youth sport or disabled athletes, but NZ On Air does not hold a statistical breakdown in the form requested.

Because NZ On Air does not hold the requested comparison as a formal statistical category, this request is declined under section 18(e) on the basis that the requested document or dataset does not exist.

6. What actions has NZ On Air taken to improve standards and levels of broadcasting of persons with disabilities in general media?

- 6.a NZ On Air’s statutory functions include ensuring a range of broadcasts are available to provide for the interests of persons with disabilities. NZ On Air has supported disability-focused content over many years, including the long-running show *Attitude*, along with programmes such as *Unbreakable*, *Living With Tourettes*, *Four Go Flatting*, *This is Wheel Life with Sophia & Indy*, *Wheel Blacks: Bodies On The Line*, *Grit And Glory*, and *Sight Unseen*. We have also funded NZSL Interpreting of (General Election) Leaders Debates for Deaf Aotearoa in 2026 and 2023.

In addition, NZ On Air provides annual operational funding to Able, Aotearoa New Zealand’s leading provider of media accessibility services, supporting d/Deaf, hard-of-hearing, blind and low vision audiences to access content that informs, entertains and connects the nation.

NZ On Air has also commissioned accessibility-related research. In 2024, NZ On Air commissioned Massey University to research barriers to access for tāngata whaikaha Māori, d/Deaf and disabled music-makers, and in 2026 published a response paper identifying recommendations within NZ On Air’s remit for further consideration or implementation.

NZ On Air has now established an Accessibility Strategy which sets out goals that include “*To use our influence to encourage accessibility consideration where possible in funded activity and in the Sectors we work with.*” The strategy is provided here: [Accessibility_Strategy_Final.docx](#).

Additionally, NZ On Air’s [Equity and Representation Strategy](#) aims to ensure all who engage with NZ On Air feel seen, heard and respected regardless of race, religion, gender, disability or age.

7. What level of broadcasting is provided to each region in New Zealand, and what is the breakdown of funding to these regions?

7.a NZ On Air does not allocate funding on a regional broadcasting-hours basis. Most funded programmes are distributed nationally or online, and NZ On Air's public funding data is primarily reported by funding round, platform, content type and target audience rather than by region of broadcast.

Because NZ On Air does not hold a regional broadcasting-hours and regional funding breakdown, this request is declined under section 18(e) on the basis that the requested document or dataset does not exist.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at <https://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz> or by calling 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Raewyn Rasch'.

Raewyn Rasch

Head of Operations, Partnerships and Culture

Attachments: OIA Enterprise Systems Return NZ On Air