

Questions over chopper trust

I see Northland Emergency Services Trust's accounts filed with the Charities Commission show trustees have awarded themselves a pay rise from \$88,000 to \$94,600 and overseen a 24 per cent hike in travel expenses to \$56,000 for the year ended March 31, 2010.

I thought this was a charity. Aren't charities driven by people who donate their time and where they can afford it, money?

The Northland Regional Council in its wisdom has donated the trust \$800,000 per annum of ratepayers' money. And the trust is still asking Joe Punter (us) to put some more money in via the public appeal with the main reason given to refurbish the second helicopter which sits in the hangar, using our donated funds.

Oh, and why did one of the largest investment bankers in the world (JP Morgan Chase) give the trust \$40,000 last year? Investment bankers in my limited experience don't give money away without expecting some very good return and publicity (the usual quid pro quo) doesn't seem to be part of the return in this instance.

And while we are on the subject I see two of the trustees earn professional fees from the trust.

Normal listed company practice is for related party fees earned to be published. Why doesn't the trust publish the fees earned?

Joe Punter deserves to know how much "charity" work is really going on.

Maybe it's just an oversight — old Joe Punter is kept in the dark yet again.

No doubt we'll all be enlightened as we have been so many times before — yeah right.

(abridged)
Mike Daniel
Whangarei