



19 February 2024

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your email of 12 February 2024, requesting information on any instructions to, or from, the Ministry regarding the processing of OIA requests issued since 27 November 2023.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on your request set out below.

Please refer to the attached Official Information Act intranet page which was last updated on 23 January 2024. Minor process improvements have recently been made, including updating template documents used by staff when preparing responses to requests under the Act.

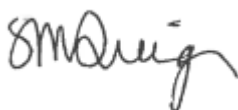
If you would like to request any of the information linked on the page, please contact the Ministry again.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

pp. 

Magnus O'Neill
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services

The Official Information (OI) Team

The Official Information team is part of Ministerial and Executive Services (MaES). It manages all of the Ministry's Official Information Act requests.

On this Page:

What we do

The Official Information Team is responsible for managing all the Ministry's OIA requests.

Official Information Act requests can be made by anyone that lives in New Zealand. Official information is any information held by the Ministry. This information can be in many forms such as reports, memorandum, briefings, meeting minutes, emails, phone call transcripts and policy advice.

The Ministry is committed to the principles of [The Official Information Act 1982](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1982/0156/latest/DLM64785.html) (OIA), and seeks to make information readily available to the public through proactive release.

If you receive a request for information or are unsure about whether an information request should be managed as an OIA, contact the Official Information team at OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

Management of OIAs

We must respond to an OIA request as soon as reasonably practicable, and within 20 working days unless we can extend the timeframe for one of the limited reasons in the OIA. The aim is to get information out to the requestor as soon as possible.

The three key steps in responding to a request are set out below. We will advise you how much time is available at each step when commissioning this work.

Step 1: Scope

The Official Information team will contact the relevant business units to refine the request if necessary; identify and bring together the information; and complete a [risk assessment template](http://doogle/documents/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/01-business-unit-risk-assessment.docx).

Step 2: Assess

Once the information has been collated, the Official Information team will assess the information for release against the tests set out in the OIA. The Official Information team will then put together the record of decision and response letter, which will be checked by Manager Official Information.

Step 3: Endorse

The relevant business units will be asked to endorse the response letter in line with the MaES authorisation framework. This step is to ensure that the decision letter is accurate and appropriate (see decision letter content below), that all relevant risks are identified, and any suitable mitigations are in place. It is generally not intended that significant changes are made to the response letter at this step.

Step 4: Approve

Once steps 1 to 3 have been completed, the Manager Official Information or General Manager MaES will finalise the decision-record and make and communicate the decision to the requestor, along with communicating the decision as needed on an FYI basis.

[Authorisations Framework](https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/maes-authorisations-framework.html) [https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/maes-authorisations-framework.html]

[Official Information Act requests - FAQs](https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/helping-you/information-hub/managing-ministry-information/releasing-information.htm) [https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/helping-you/information-hub/managing-ministry-information/releasing-information.htm]

[Process for managing information requests from current or former Ministry staff](https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/staff-information-requests.html) [https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/staff-information-requests.html]

[Public Service Commission guidance on OIA](https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/guidance/official-information/) [https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/guidance/official-information/]

[Consultation with other agencies](http://doogle/documents/business-groups/organisational-assurance-and-communications/ministerial-and-executive-services/230320-incoming-consultation-process.docx) (Word 54.94KB) [http://doogle/documents/business-groups/organisational-assurance-and-communications/ministerial-and-executive-services/230320-incoming-consultation-process.docx]

Decision letter content

The purpose of a decision letter is to tell the requestor whether their request has been granted or refused, and if applicable, the reasons for the refusal along with explaining their right of complaint to the Ombudsman.

Generally, additional content or information in decision letters will not be included unless:

The subject of the request is technical or complex, and further explanation would assist with understanding the information being released.

The information being released is inaccurate or incomplete, and further explanation is necessary to prevent misunderstanding.

There is a clearly identified risk in the decision-record, and further explanation is necessary to mitigate that risk.

The Official Information team otherwise consider it necessary.

Where additional content of information is considered necessary to include in a decision-letter, then information which is publicly available will be utilised.

[Contact the Official Information team \[mailto:oa_requests@msd.govt.nz\]](mailto:oa_requests@msd.govt.nz)

[Template - Decision Record \(PDF 203.51KB\) \[http://doogie/documents/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/draft-oia-decision-record.pdf\]](http://doogie/documents/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/draft-oia-decision-record.pdf)

[Template - Decision Letter \(PDF 110.52KB\) \[http://doogie/documents/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/draft-decision-letter-template.pdf\]](http://doogie/documents/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/draft-decision-letter-template.pdf)

Official Information Act Workshops

MaES delivers an Official Information Act workshop that is open to all staff. The workshop covers the main aspects of the Official Information Act and how we apply these to our work at the Ministry. If you are interested in attending a workshop, please register for either our *Introduction to MaES* or *A deep dive into the OIA* session (or both!) at the following link: [Upcoming training: MaES \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/ministerial-and-executive-services-training-suite.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/ministerial-and-executive-services-training-suite.html).

Resources for Official Information Act requests

Below are some resources and tools relating to the processing and assessment of Official Information Act requests within the Ministry. We'll continue to post updates on this page for any new or improved tools relating to the assessment and processing of OIAs.

[OIA one-pager \(PDF 580.48KB\) \[http://doogie/documents/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/oia-regional-a3.pdf\]](http://doogie/documents/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/oia-regional-a3.pdf)

[Guideline - Framework for managing complex or frequent official information requests \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/documents/resources/helping-staff/procedures-manuals/ministerial-parliament-government/framework-for-managing-complex-and-frequent-official-information-requests-sept2023.pdf\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/documents/resources/helping-staff/procedures-manuals/ministerial-parliament-government/framework-for-managing-complex-and-frequent-official-information-requests-sept2023.pdf)

[Ombudsman Guide: Common withholding grounds \[pp 28-30\] \[https://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/sites/default/files/2019-08/The%20OIA%20for%20agencies%20August%202019.pdf\]](https://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/sites/default/files/2019-08/The%20OIA%20for%20agencies%20August%202019.pdf)

[OIA - Business Unit Risk Assessment \[template\] \(Word 56.58KB\) \[http://doogie/documents/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/01-business-unit-risk-assessment.docx\]](http://doogie/documents/business-groups/people-culture-strategy/maes/01-business-unit-risk-assessment.docx)

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