

9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe 9(2)(a)

I refer to your request received on 16 October 2022, which has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), for the following information:

Firstly, is the 2018 report referred to in this article <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/125664886/3300-kiwi-tangata-discovered-in-new-zealand-cultural-institutions> available publicly yet? If so, may I please have a copy?? If not, do you have an idea of when it may be available? Jamie mentioned that it's in the process of becoming available.

Secondly, is there any further information you can provide me with about the formation of Ngākahu and the genesis of the project to identify Kōiwi tangata in museums? My interviewees have provided me with a great deal of useful information and I would like to supplement it with government material to build a full picture.

Information being released

Manatū Taonga is in the process of publicly releasing the Ministry's 2018 report 'Human Remains in New Zealand Museums – Report on the survey of ancestral human remains held by New Zealand museums.' This report is expected to be released in late November/ early December 2022 and a copy will be made available on the Ministry's website. Therefore, I am declining your request to obtain a copy of this report at this stage as this information will be available publicly soon.

Regarding your second request on the formation of Ngākahu and the genesis of the report, in January 2018 Te Papa supported the return of Rapanui remains to a Rapanui/Chilean delegation by Otago and Canterbury Museums. Following this, Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, asked the Ministry to investigate how many human remains were held by New Zealand museums and the potential for return. Subsequently, from October to November 2018 the Ministry undertook a nation-wide survey of museums and produced the report you have referenced.

This survey and report identified some issues that museums faced in enabling repatriation. The Ministry consulted with the museum sector on these issues and identified the need for government guidance on the repatriation process as well as the need for a national coordinator. In 2019 the Ngākahu National Repatriation Partnership was established by Manatū Taonga to support domestic cultural institutions, museums, galleries, and Iwi in returning ancestral remains back to source communities.

It is also important to note that repatriation back to Aotearoa started with the efforts of the late Maui Pomare in the 1970s to establish a wāhi tapu at the National Museum and repatriate tūpuna (ancestors) from overseas. The Karanga Aotearoa Programme was established in 2003 as a result of his work. Ngākahu works alongside Karanga Aotearoa as part of the broader movement to repatriate tūpuna and karapuna to their communities of origin.

I invite you to lodge a follow up request for more specific information if required.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

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