

8 November 2022

9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe 9(2)(a)

I refer to your request received on 21 October 2022, which has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), for the following information:

Can you please forward any communications between 1 September 2022 and 19 October 2022:

- 1) Between your chief executive or other executive manager and your communications/media staff regarding how media queries are dealt with.*
- 2) From the office of your relevant minister regarding how media queries are dealt with.*

We have interpreted this to relate to how media requests are dealt with in general, rather than discussions or considerations on individual media requests.

In this instance, we have not identified any documentation relevant to your request. As such this request is refused under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information you have requested does not exist, or despite reasonable efforts, cannot be found.

I understand that in January, we supplied you with some information on how the Ministry treats media requests and believe that it's useful to restate this information in this response to provide context as to how the Ministry operates, in particular how media queries are treated and how this relates to our responsibilities under the OIA.

Every media query and OIA request is considered on a case-by-case basis. Some media requests would not be considered as requests under the OIA. For example, requests for comment, opinion, or requests for interviews. As such, Manatū Taonga does not treat all media queries as requests under the OIA.

For context, we also keep records of all media queries and responses. This is helpful when we may need to review or further consider any media responses under the OIA in the case of query, complaint or Ombudsman investigation.

In some cases, the request may ask for data, documentation or information the Ministry may hold, and it may take time to search for or collate the information requested. In these instances, we will advise the journalist that their request is being treated as a request for information under the OIA. It is therefore recorded as such (including in the recording data provided to the Public Service Commission) and responded to as soon as practicable. When a response to this OIA request is provided, the requestor is given reasons for any withholding or refusal, as well as advised of their right to seek a review from an Ombudsman.

We always endeavour to meet the timeframe or deadline of the media request whenever possible, including when the request is being considered under the OIA.

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.

Please note that we intend to publish this letter (with your personal details removed) on the Ministry's website.

Nāku noa, nā

9(2)(a)

Matthew Oliver
Pou Mataaho o Te Iho
Deputy Chief Executive, Organisational Performance

PROACTIVELY RELEASED