

OIA19-0808

John Fraser
fyi-request-11824-8fa117e8@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear John Fraser

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your official information request on 6 December 2019 relating to conflicts of interest for members of the *Mycoplasma bovis* Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and the *Mycoplasma bovis* Strategic Science Advisory Group (SSAG).

The role of the SSAG is to help identify science priorities and develop a science plan to guide research funding decisions. Members of the SSAG include domestic and international expert scientists, vets and government representatives. For more information please see the below link:

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/protection-and-response/mycoplasma-bovis/strategic-science-advisory-group/>.

The TAG is a group of technical experts to review its response to *Mycoplasma bovis* and provide independent advice on the feasibility of eradicating *Mycoplasma bovis* from New Zealand and other key areas affecting the response. The TAG is made up of New Zealand and international experts that sit outside MPI's *Mycoplasma bovis* response. For more information please visit the below link:

<https://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/protection-and-response/mycoplasma-bovis/resources-for-mycoplasma-bovis/reviews-and-reports-about-m-bovis/>.

A conflict of interest is where a person's interests or obligations conflict with or have the potential to conflict with the responsibilities of their job or position. In order to prevent this, employees, contractors and consultants are required to disclose any conflicts of interest in order to maintain honesty, professionalism and impartiality.

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has identified three members of the Technical Advisory Group and the *Mycoplasma bovis* Strategic Science Advisory Group that have declared a conflict of interest. MPI is satisfied that these particular conflict of interests have been handled appropriately.

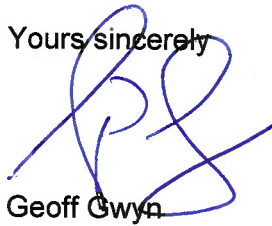


MPI is releasing the three conflict of interest declaration forms to you under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). Some information has been withheld pursuant to the following sections of the OIA:

- Section 9(2)(a) *to protect the privacy of natural persons.*
- Section 9(2)(b)(ii) *to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information*

MPI is satisfied that in the circumstances of this case, the withholding of the information is not outweighed by other considerations which render it desirable in the public interest to make the information available. You have the right under section 28(3) of the OIA to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of our decision to withhold information.

Yours sincerely



Geoff Gwyn
Director, *Mycoplasma bovis* Programme