

4 August 2020

Ryan Potts

By email: fyi-request-13063-af1f4223@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202004137

Dear Ryan Potts

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 9 June 2020 to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) for:

"In a response to a previous information request, the Minister advised me that he was never briefed on the the contents of a preliminary report titled "Modelled Estimates for the Spread and Health Impact of Covid-19 in New Zealand" (27 February). Please disclose the reason why the Director-General did not brief the Minister on this report.

Based on information released to date, it appears that the Minister and the Prime Minister were not briefed on epidemiological modelling until late March. Therefore please clarify the date or dates on which the Director-General first discussed modelling with the Minister and the Prime Minister. If modelling was not discussed then please provide an explanation."

On 7 July 2020, the due date for responding to this request was extended under section 15A of the Act as further consultation was required.

I believe this report was the draft version of the modelling used as an informative resource for the Cabinet paper 'COVID-19 Giving an Epidemic Notice and Epidemic Management Notices under the Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006'. This paper was presented at Cabinet on 23 March 2020 by the Minister of Health, Hon Dr David Clark.

As you can appreciate, the Director-General discussed a wide range of matters with the Minister of Health during New Zealand's COVID-19 response, including epidemiological modelling. Details of these conversations are not usually held, however it is possible that the document in question was discussed.

Under section 28(3) of the Act you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website.

Yours sincerely



Natalie Richardson
Director
COVID-19 Health System Response