



30 September 2020

DOIA 2021-0120

Kiat Bazin

Email: fyi-request-13228-d8fb4f0b@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Kiat Bazin

Thank you for your email received by Ministry of Health (MoH) on 3 July 2020 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Please provide the following information relating to the use of the Pullman Hotel and the Stamford Plaza Hotel as Covid-19 Managed Isolation Facilities:

- 1. all internal rules, guidelines and processes followed for selecting the above-named hotels as Managed Isolation Facilities.*
- 2. all communications with the above-named hotels relating to their use as Managed Isolation Facilities, including but not limited to their health and safety plans.*
- 3. any enquires and complaints you received with regards to health and safety of using the above-named hotels as Covid-19 Managed Isolation Facilities, and your responses to these enquires and complaints.*

Your request was transferred to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) on 15 July 2020 to respond to. On 11 August, MBIE extended the time to respond to your request.

This is a partial response to your OIA. MBIE will respond to parts two and three of your request without undue delay.

Please note that MBIE took over management of Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) on 13 July 2020; however, clinical matters within the MIQ facilities are still managed by the MoH and the relevant District Health Boards (DHB). The hotels that are currently being used as MIQ facilities were initially contracted by MoH, including the Pullman Hotel and the Stamford Plaza Hotel, and these contracts set out the agreed services, terms and conditions. Please note that while these contracts were originally established by MoH with each hotel, MBIE is in the process of transitioning these contracts to be between MBIE and individual hotels.

As such, MBIE does not necessarily hold information that relates to decisions made prior to that time when MIQ was managed by the MoH as part of an All-of-Government National Crisis Management Centre response. We are currently in the process of gathering the information in scope of your request where possible.

With respect to question one, for all internal rules, guidelines and processes followed for selecting hotels as Managed Isolation Facilities (MIFs); MIFs, including the Pullman Hotel and Stamford Plaza Hotel in Auckland, are chosen based on the suitability of the property itself; not only with respect to a hotel's capacity to house people for managed isolation or quarantine purposes, but also the hotel's and Government's joint ability to put in place appropriate mitigations to protect returnees and members of the public from the spread of COVID-19.



Before any MIF or quarantine facility can be used for the purposes of managed isolation or quarantine, a detailed site assessment must be completed. This includes ensuring appropriate safety measures are put in place; for example, a hotel's proximity to suitable public hospitals to manage any outbreak of cases. These are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure they are fit for purpose.

The attached *Hotel Selection Criteria* and *Site Assessment Check List* set out in detail the list of requirements that each MIQ facility needs to meet to qualify as a suitable facility. The selection criteria was developed by MoH, and subsequently provided to MBIE. Please note, not all agencies listed in the Site Assessment Check List necessarily conduct each site assessment; however a full site assessment is always conducted by the appropriate officials.

In the cases of hotels that also house permanent residents, when MIQ officials source and assess each hotel to check for its suitability to be used as a facility a key criteria is that there can be no residents located on the same floor as any managed isolation guests. In the case of the Pullman Hotel and Stamford Plaza, the residents are located, and live, in separate towers or on dedicated floors, with their own lift access; hence why they were confidently selected as suitable locations.

Our Regional Isolation Quarantine teams work closely with each facility, including the Pullman Hotel and Stamford Plaza Hotel, to ensure that all risks are mitigated.

For example, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, owners of the locations used for MIQ facilities are obligated to conduct a risk assessment prior to accepting a contract with MBIE to provide this service and accommodate arrivals.

Several onsite assessments are completed by Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ), the applicable DHB, MoH and MIQ officials, covering a range of issues including emergency evacuations. Arrivals must be able to evacuate safely without mingling with members of the public or staff that they would not otherwise be in close proximity with.

MIQ facilities also need to have an approved and tailored evacuation plan based on infrastructure and resourcing. It is a requirement under the Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fire Safety, Evacuations Procedures and Evacuation Schemes) Regulations 2018 for building owners to have an evacuation procedure in place that allows for the safe, prompt and efficient evacuation of a building's occupants, and building owners are required to maintain a means of escape. This will vary from site to site across the facilities currently operating.

Each facility is adequately inspected by FENZ before they are approved to be used and each hotel has a suitable and approved evacuation plan in place, with rehearsed evacuation procedures that are clearly conveyed to arrivals.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of our response to your request. Information about how to contact the Ombudsman's office is available at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone: 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Webb', written over a horizontal line.

Air Commodore Darryn Webb
Head of Managed Isolation and Quarantine
COVID-19 All of Government Response Group