

15 December 2020

Ryan

[fyi-request-14166-db411d45@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-14166-db411d45@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Ryan

**OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2020/57**

Thank you for your request of 19 November 2020 under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) regarding the Electoral Commission's communication and collaboration with Smartmatic and a breakdown of financial interests in selected campaigns. Specifically, you have asked:

*Can you please provide all information relating to the Commission's communication and collaboration with Smartmatic, including but not limited to; Any and all approaches and proposals from Smartmatic to the Electoral Commission and or it's third party affiliates or contractors. Any and all approaches and or proposals to Smartmatic from the Electoral Commission and or it's third party affiliates or contractors acting on behalf or in conjunction with.*

*Additionally, please provide a full breakdown of all financial interests, both national and international behind the following campaigns, including but not limited to, government and affiliates, corporate sponsors, individuals, not for profit groups, companies, politically affiliated organisations and or academics that added meaningful contribution by way of material input and or donation;*

*1. Vote local NZ, 2. On the fence*

*Please provide information on any other campaigns authored or approved by the Electoral Commission for both the 2017 and 2020 NZ election including all associates and complete with the same corresponding information as requested herein.*

*Democracy & Design - Please provide a comprehensive breakdown on all engagements of this group by any and all govt agencies. I realise this will extend beyond the scope of your Commission however please forward as appropriate to facilitate the answer alongside that to be provided by the Electoral Commission - I trust my queries are clear however please advise at your earliest convenience should any aspect require clarification - time being of the essence.*

The Electoral Commission has not had any involvement or communication with Smartmatic, nor any approaches from Smartmatic.

For the 2017 and 2020 General Elections, the Commission supported On the Fence, as well as two other voter information tools – 'Vote Compass' and 'Policy' – through our advertising relationship with them. The overall amount the Commission spent on advertising with these three voter information tools for the 2020 General Election was \$242,000. While the Commission gave support to these initiatives, they were independently authored and approved.

There are no other campaigns that the Commission supported, other than those noted above. We have interpreted your request as relating to third party voter information campaigns, rather than the Commission's own enrolment and voter participation campaigns, or neutral campaigns using Electoral Commission resources.

The Commission does not hold information about which other financial interests, bodies or academics contributed to the campaigns which you mention. The Commission did not support "Vote Local NZ", which we understand is the local election version of On the Fence. The Commission does not run local elections.

You have further asked about Massey University's Democracy and Design Project. The Commission's interaction with this project involved the advertising relationship covered above.

The aspects of your request which relate to Democracy and Design's engagement with other agencies, and other contributions or interests in Vote Local or On the Fence, do not concern information held by the Electoral Commission and are connected with the functions of other agencies. We will update regarding the transfer of that aspect of your request by 17 December 2020.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your requests.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K Temel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Kristina Temel  
Manager Legal & Policy  
Electoral Commission