



25 June 2021

Alan Thompson
fyi-request-15397-ee7bcd5a@requests.fyi.org.nz

Reference: OIA-2020/21-0577

Dear Alan Thompson

Official Information Act request relating to Feedback on the Application of the Coordinated Incident Management System: Whakaari Event

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 8 May 2021. You requested:

"[A] copy of the "feedback" (as a communication, debrief notes, record of a meeting or other notes) provided to the authors of the report that supports the statement made in Insights e) on Page 19 that "CIMS worked well" along with the name of the organisation(s) who provided the feedback."

The time frame for responding to your request was extended under section 15A of the Act by 20 working days because it necessitated consultations to be undertaken before a decision could be made on the request. Following this extension, I am now able to respond.

At the request of the Office of the Official Information Commissioner for Domestic and External Security Coordination (ODESC), members of the LessoNZ community of practice collated and assessed key overarching themes and lessons identified during the National Security System activation for Whakaari White Island eruption (the Whakaari event). The report: *Whakaari/White Island Volcanic Eruption*, dated November 2020, was released in full under the Act to you on 6 May 2021.

We have interpreted your request to be for the feedback gathered from agencies for the purposes of the report that related to the application of the Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) for response and recovery relating to the Whakaari event.

The approach taken to gathering feedback for this report was to do so within a "no blame" or "just culture" environment, to ensure that authentic learnings from the Whakaari event could be identified and shared with the relevant agencies.

To support the preparation of the report, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) held debrief sessions on 25 and 27 February 2020 with agencies involved in response and recovery relating to the Whakaari event. Debrief sessions are a core part of supporting the approach to continuous improvement. DPMC invited a range of agencies to attend the debrief session, including:

1. Accident Compensation Corporation
2. Crown Law Office
3. Department of Conservation
4. Department of Internal Affairs
5. Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

6. Fire and Emergency New Zealand
7. Ministry of Health
8. Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (Immigration New Zealand)
9. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
10. Ministry for the Environment
11. Ministry of Justice
12. Ministry of Transport
13. Ministry for Primary Industries
14. Ministry of Social Development
15. National Emergency Management Agency
16. New Zealand Customs Service
17. New Zealand Defence Force
18. New Zealand Police
19. Public Services Commission
20. Te Puni Kōkiri
21. Tourism New Zealand
22. WorkSafe New Zealand

The purpose of the debrief was, *inter alia*, to gather feedback from these agencies on the application of CIMS. The debrief provided an opportunity for officials to discuss and share learnings from the event in an atmosphere of confidence. Therefore, no formal minutes were taken. The facilitator gathered and collated feedback from the contributing agencies, provided through informal notes and group discussions.

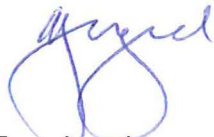
Some agencies also provided the authors of the report with their internal “after action” reviews (or similar), which were drafted to capture lessons and observations in the immediate aftermath of the Whakaari event.

I have decided to withhold these records in full under section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion.

In making my decision, I have taken the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act into account.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

Yours sincerely



Tony Lynch
Deputy Chief Executive, National Security Group