

14 June 2021

Hiria Te Rangi
fyi-request-15477-b91e8ee9@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Ms Te Rangi

Thank you for your email of 17 May 2021 via the FYI website, requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) on the Smart Homes project. I have interpreted your request as relating to the Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities Indoor Environmental Quality project (formerly known as Smart Homes).

In November 2019 Kāinga Ora issued a request for proposals to supply sensors for a project to assess the performance of our homes, and the benefits to customers of the upgrades we are making. Subsequent to the contract being awarded, the scope and timing of the project altered due to the impact and uncertainty created by COVID-19. Kāinga Ora took this opportunity to review the project, and reframe it to be smaller and more focussed.

Kāinga Ora is currently developing its research design for the project, and decisions on the processes that will be used for data collection are still being finalised. However, maintaining our customers' privacy and protecting their personal information is a key priority for Kāinga Ora, and will remain so during the evaluation of the performance of their homes. The project will be opt-in, with customers invited to participate by way of an informed consent process.

The information collected will be used to help Kāinga Ora evaluate the effectiveness of the high performance upgrades we are making to our homes, so that we can better understand what we should be prioritising to deliver warm, dry, and healthy homes for our customers.

Your full request and my response are below.

'Kāinga Ora ran a project on smart homes,

*<https://www.gets.govt.nz/HNZC/ExternalTenderDetails.htm?id=21951931>
Tether.io was awarded this contract.*

- 1. How does a family living in a Kainga Ora home with sensors access the data collected about them? What is the process?*
- 2. What data or information does a family living in a Kainga Ora home with sensors see?*

I am declining parts 1 and 2 of your request under section 18(g)(i) of the OIA *'the information requested is not held'*. Kāinga Ora is still working through the details of how our customers will access the data that will be collected. However, under the Privacy Act 2020 tenants are entitled to access any personal information held about them, and customers who participate in the project will have the opportunity to access all data collected about their home. Kāinga Ora will also look to share insights gained from the project with tenants.

- 3. What is the data structure of the database connected to the sensors - ie what data does the sensors collect, how often.*

The sensors Kāinga Ora has purchased can monitor temperature (both ambient and dew point), humidity, CO₂, luminance, electricity use, and air pressure. We are in the process of developing our research design and have yet to finalise which of these measurements we will enable, and the monitoring intervals.

4. *Has the sensor data been shared with any other organisations? If yes, who?*

No information has been collected or shared with other organisations. The sensors will download data via processes developed by our supplier. Prior to installation, a data agreement with the supplier will be put in place. All data downloaded and stored will be anonymised.

5. *Are there any Privacy impact assessments for this project? Please include a copy.*

I am declining your request for this information under section 18(e) of the OIA, '*the document alleged to contain the information does not exist or cannot be found*'. To date, no privacy impact assessments have been carried out for this project. A privacy impact assessment will be carried out prior to installing the sensors, as part of our standard ethics approval process.

6. *Any information outlining how consent is obtained from residents of homes in the project and extended rollout for adding sensors to homes, and gathering and storing data obtained from sensors, including the consent form, and how many homes in the project received and returned the consent form.*

I am declining this part of your request under section 18(g)(i) of the OIA. As with any monitoring study run by Kāinga Ora, the project will require consent from all residents of the home. Consent forms, together with a decision on the exact number of homes we aim to monitor, will be part of the detailed research design for the project. While this is yet to be finalised, the consent form will make it clear that participants are able to withdraw from the monitoring project at any time.

7. *Any information outlining potential penalties or negative outcomes imposed on people who refuse sensors, including but not limited to how this impacts improvements to their Housing New Zealand homes.*

Participation in the project will be voluntary. No penalties will be applied to tenants who decline to take part.

8. *Any information about ownership of the data collected.*

Kāinga Ora will own the data with permission from the households living in the homes monitored.

9. *Any information pertaining to the sharing, use, or potential use of data from the following sensor types: temperature, humidity, CO₂, light, motion detectors, power use monitors.*

The data will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the upgrades Kāinga Ora makes to its properties. By monitoring the internal environments of our homes and understanding the benefits of our upgrades, we will be better able to channel investment into the upgrades that work for our customers.

10. *Any information pertaining to how sensors are connected to the Internet to transmit information, including whether that Internet connection is available to household tenants.*

The sensors used in our Indoor Environmental Quality project will not be connected to the internet. Data will be transmitted using the LPWAN and LoRaWAN networks.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or Freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rachel Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rachel Kelly
Manager Government Relations