

James Lee  
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Our ref: OIA 91446

**27 JAN 2022**

Dear Mr Lee

**Official Information Act request: risks associated with District Court files being paper-based**

Thank you for your email of 14 October 2021, requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*'any documents that relate to assessments that have been undertaken to identify business and/or legal risks associated with District Court files being paper-based.'*

On 8 November 2021, your request was extended under s15A of the Act, due to the need to search through a large quantity of information. A search has been completed through both past and more recent documentation, which has returned four documents within scope of your request.

I have appended to this letter **Table 1** which lists the four documents. Copies of the documents are attached.

Some information has been withheld under the following sections of the Act:

- Document 2: some information withheld under s 9(2)(g)(i).

I am satisfied there are no public interest considerations that render it desirable to make the information withheld under section 9 available.

Some information has also been marked as out of scope. This information relates to, for example, other topics not relevant to this request.

While limited formal assessments have been conducted focussed on the risks associated with paper-based court records, the Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) has been working with the Judiciary and Sector Partners on how to modernise the current case management system. The technology that underpins our courts does not meet the needs and expectations of participants and drives a paper-based, location centric, and reactive way of working.

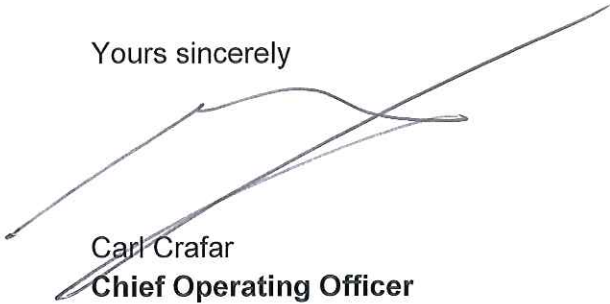
A current state analysis identified multiple operational risks associated with a paper-based system. For example, a victim arrived at court twice to appear as a witness in a serious harm case. The case was adjourned both times because of administrative issues. By the third event, the victim did not appear.

An initiative is progressing to establish an online case management system with digital capabilities to improve the participant experience, the effectiveness of the court system and to digitise the official court record.

The separate and shared responsibilities of the Judiciary and the Ministry are captured in a Memorandum of Understanding (*Principles observed by the Judiciary and the Ministry of Justice in the Administration of Courts*), which includes information about the maintenance of court records. This document is available online at <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/MoU-Statement-of-Principles.pdf>

If you are not satisfied with my response, you have the right to complain to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. The Ombudsman may be contacted by emailing [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carl Crafar', is written over a diagonal line that extends from the bottom left towards the top right of the page.

Carl Crafar  
**Chief Operating Officer**

**Table 1: Documents in scope**

No.	Date	Subject	Notes
1.	24 April 2019	North Shore District Court report on current state of information management	Released in full.
2.	24 May 2019	Memo to OLT (Operational Leadership Team): Improving court paper case file management	Some information withheld under s 9(2)(g)(i). Some information withheld as out of scope.
3.	29 August 2019	Memo to OLT (Operational Leadership Team): Improving District Court physical case file management	Some information withheld as out of scope.
4.	December 2020	South Auckland District Court Physical Records Review Report	Released in full.