



Wednesday, 22 December 2021

Helen Wallis

By email: fyi-request-17698-692a331b@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Wallis

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST – Closing of 7 regional aerodromes

We refer to your email of 24 November 2021 and your further email of 3 December 2021 in which you have requested information from Airways under the Official Information Act 1982 (“Act”).

Information requested

1. In your initial email of 24 November, you requested the following information:

Can you please provide me with all ‘Official Information’ includes documents and papers but also information in any format, including drafts, videos, recordings, and photos in regards to the risk assessments (clarified below) made before the announcement on 09 April 2020 - Airways reviews air traffic service levels at seven regional aerodromes.

I am interested in the risk assessments relating to the basis of this statement "Any changes would mean aircraft will still be able to fly safely to these locations. This includes freight, medical flights and future passenger services. The locations currently under review are those where air traffic had been low even before the outbreak, Airways CEO Graeme Sumner says."

I am also requesting information relating to the change in intent behind removing the services at these airfields as there is a discrepancy between the fore mentioned media release (summarised: as each airport completes its process Airways will withdraw the air traffic control services from its towers) to the position of the following media release for Rotorua (summarised: The goal has been to make sure that there is an evidence-based service in place at all involved airports).

2. In your further email of 3 December, you clarified the scope of your 24 November request to include:

information as to why and what caused the stance of airways changed between the first release and the last one, i.e from Airways has decided it will remove the services from the aerodromes to we didn't intend to remove them we just wanted to make sure the service we are providing is the correct one.

(the above, taken together, is the “Request”)

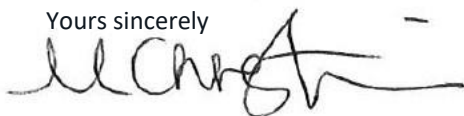
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Airways' response to the Request

3. We have undertaken a search for:
 - a. *risk assessment documents, papers, information in any format, including drafts, videos, recordings, and photos relating to the basis of the statement "Any changes would mean aircraft will still be able to fly safely to these locations"; and*
 - b. *information as to why and what caused the stance of airways changed between the first release and the last one, i.e from Airways has decided it will remove the services from the aerodromes to we didn't intend to remove them we just wanted to make sure the service we are providing is the correct one.*
4. We advise that we are providing 14 documents. Please find these in the zip folder attached to my email.
5. Certain information identified as falling within the scope of the Request is being withheld (in part via redaction) for one or more of the following reasons (under section 9 of the Act):
 - a. **Section 9(2)(b)(ii)**: withholding the information is necessary to protect the information as it would be likely to unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it or who is the subject of the information; and
 - b. **Section 9(2)(i)**: withholding the information is necessary to enable the organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.
6. In order to provide you with further context in terms of the information you have requested, please note that any change to service levels provided by Airways would first have to be approved by the CAA. This process with the CAA would involve rigorous assessment of safety-related issues. Background information on the process has been included in the information provided.
7. In regard to the change of stance/intent, you will see amongst the documents provided that there is correspondence before and shortly after the [09 April 2020 – Airways reviews air traffic service levels at seven regional aerodromes](#) announcement, this correspondence shows that the stance/intent was always to provide safe and appropriate service levels and ensure Airways' service is right-sized to support the future aviation industry.
8. You are entitled to apply to the Ombudsman for a review of this decision pursuant to section 28(3) of the Act.

Yours sincerely



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Senior Legal Counsel

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