

Office of the Prime Minister

Prime Minister

Minister for National Security and Intelligence

Minister for Child Poverty Reduction

Minister Responsible for Ministerial Services

Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage



Matthew Hooton

fyi-request-18103-c5122a71@requests.fyi.org.nz

15 FEB 2022

Ref: PMO 2021-393

Dear Matthew Hooton

Official Information Act request relating to requests for Experts to Provide Public Commentary on Covid-19

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 5 January 2022. You requested:

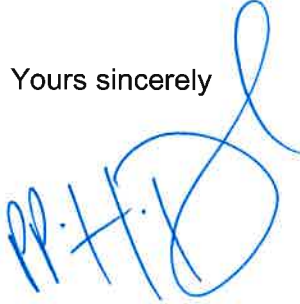
- "1) Is there any formal or informal policy or generally understood position on whether you or your office staff should ever directly request an employee of an independent Crown entity such as a TEI (as opposed to a department) to provide public commentary in their roles as employees of that entity, rather than to make any such a request through the Chief Executive (in this case the Vice Chancellor)? If so, what is it?*
- 2) Do you or your office staff recall ever directly requesting that the applicants in the determination referred to above provide public commentary on Covid-19 in their role as employees of the respondent?*
- 3) Do you or your office staff recall ever directly requesting that the applicants in the determination referred to above provide public commentary on Covid-19 in any other role? If so, what was that role, if any?*
- 4) If the answer to 2 and 3 is "yes", I make a further request for:*
- i) the criteria under which the applicants were chosen to be the experts approached to provide public commentary*
 - ii) the dates (exactly or roughly) on which the requests were made*
 - iii) any written documentation of the requests*
 - iv) information on why the requests were made, and what sort of commentary was requested*
- 5) Do you or your office staff recall ever directly requesting that anyone other than the applicants in the determination referred to above provide public commentary on Covid-19 in their role as employees of a Crown entity?*
- 6) Do you or your office staff recall ever directly requesting that anyone other than the applicants in the determination referred to above provide public commentary on Covid-19 in any other role? If so, what was that role, if any?*
- 7) If the answer to 5 and 6 is "yes", I make a further request for:*
- i) who was approached, and the criteria under which they were chosen to be asked to provide public commentary*
 - ii) the dates (exactly or roughly) on which the requests were made*
 - iii) any written documentation of the requests*
 - iv) information on why the requests were made, and what sort of commentary was requested"*

I have decided under section 15A of the Act to extend the time limit for deciding on your request by an additional 20 working days. Consequently, the extended due date for your response will be 14 March 2022.

The extension is required because of the consultations needed to make a decision on your request. Despite the extension, a response will be sent to you as soon as possible.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Raj Nahna', written in a cursive style.

Raj Nahna
Chief of Staff