

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



John Christie

fyi-request-18620-ea2bbe0f@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: PMO 2022-051

Tēnā koe John Christie

Official Information Act request relating to the report 'Fluoridation: an update on evidence'

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, received on 21 February 2022. You requested:

I am therefore concerned to know what the peer reviewers of the [fluoridation] report had to say, in particular any comments they may have had about the recent evidence and on what mechanisms exist for the Ministry to keep abreast of new developments as they occur.

We have been informed by the Office of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor (PMCSA) that this report underwent an extensive peer review process, as is standard when publishing academic reports. You can find a full list of peer reviewers on the PMCSA website (<https://www.pmcsa.ac.nz/topics/fluoridation-an-update-on-evidence/>).

Peer review comments are regularly provided to a report's author under a duty of confidence. This is to ensure that the peer reviewers can provide critical feedback on academic works as openly and honestly as is required. Releasing these comments could prejudice the future supply of this feedback and negatively impact the academic community.

Accordingly, I have decided to withhold the requested information in full under the following sections of the Act:

- Section 9(2)(ba)(i) – to protect the supply of similar information in the future; and
- Section 9(2)(g)(i) – to maintain the free and frank expression of opinions.

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

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act. You might also want to consider approaching the peer reviewers directly to see whether they would be willing to share their thinking with you.

Ngā mihi nui,

Raj Nahna
Chief of Staff