

File No: P/019/TP009/003

19 June 2012

Paul McMahon
fyi-request-187-fc9563c5@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr McMahon

I refer to your request of 25 April 2012, refined on 10 May 2012, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) for "any reports and exploration results regarding permits 52614, 52605 and 38264 since 1 January 2009" and "all reports regarding (or containing information regarding) hydraulic fracturing and/or Coal Seam Gas/Shale Gas in Canterbury" within the same time frame.

Permit 52614 has not been granted and is still being assessed. Therefore no reports or exploration results exist for this permit.

Permit 52605 was awarded in September 2011. One half yearly report exists and is attached.

Permit 38264 was awarded in 2006 and thereby work in the permit area is at a more developed stage than that in permit 52605. Section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA allows information to be withheld if it "would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information". Reports and exploration results for this permit in the time frame requested have been withheld under this section of the Act. The release of this information would prejudice the supply of similar information which can reasonably be withheld under grounds laid out above (section 9(2)(b)(ii)). For this reason, we are also withholding it under section 9(2)(ba)(i). I must stress here that reports and exploration results are almost invariably withheld under this section of the OIA and that the release of the half yearly report for permit 52605 is an anomaly.

As requested, I attach copies of all reports regarding hydraulic fracturing, coal seam gas and shale gas in Canterbury from within the specified time frame. There are no reports on coal seam gas or shale gas in Canterbury. There are two documents attached pertaining to hydraulic fracturing in Canterbury:

1. A briefing dated 20 December 2011 titled, 'Background Information and Recent Issues Regarding Hydraulic Fracturing (Fracking)'; and
2. A briefing from 2 March 2012 titled 'Hydraulic Fracturing'.

Section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA stipulates that material may be withheld if it is necessary to "maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty." Some material in the second document has been withheld under this section of the Act.

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I trust these documents meet the requirements of your request. You have the right to make a complaint to an Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the OIA if you think there is a problem with the way your request has been handled.

Yours faithfully



Simon Lawrence
Acting Manager, Resources Team
Energy and Communication Branch