



21 June 2024

Ombudsman Ref: 587371
DPMC Ref: OIA-2021/22-1310

Ryan Bullock
fyi-request-19264-cf1d63f9@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ryan Bullock

**Official Information Act request relating to details of the role of Senior Analyst,
Disinformation and related information**

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

“In your response you say that you have no affiliation with media, internet providers either directly or via 3rd parties. If this is the case how does the program of work undertaken by the organisation acquire data?”

It has been reported in the media that the DPMC has working relationships with 3rd parties that function exactly as described such as Annalect. Do you still standby your answer?

<https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nzherald.co.nz%2Fbusiness%2Fsocial-media-surveillance-included-kiwis-private-messages-sent-to-government%2F6YG3KCJJYPMOQF5HHHPEY6R5TI%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cinformation%40dpmc.govt.nz%7Cd3d9f003df484b6f1d0508da4e4cdeeb%7Ceea6053309ef4b7a94060f38551cc613%7C0%7C0%7C637908389765494602%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoImC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTil6lk1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C2000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=%2Bx5glo6Q1qOU8DP26XtlBiZ%2FaAcsrfGEIDBMsWtjk%3D&reserved=0>

Can you please cite all of the methods that are used to acquire data for analysis by the DPMC and affiliates with regards to social media, websites, blogs, cellphone messaging applications (for example, telegram, signal, whatsapp, instagram, facebook messenger, but not limited to)

If any can you please cite any surveillance laws used to acquire these datasets.

If your response to the above questions is that this information was in the public domain and not privileged and private data, please publish the datasets in full.”

You asked the Ombudsman to investigate our response to your request and, in particular the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) refusing your request for information about the methodology used and original datasets on the basis that DPMC did not hold that information.

In the light of your complaint, DPMC has sought any information in scope of this part of your request that was held by OMD NZ, from whom DPMC commissioned the relevant reports. OMD NZ has confirmed the following:

The *Unite Against Covid 19 Campaign Sentiment Tracking Reports* compiled by OMD NZ for DPMC were structured around four sections using three software tools.

1.&2. Social listening & Categories of Conversation sections.

Tool used: *Brandwatch Consumer Research* : an online analytics subscription-based software.

Information accessed: Publicly viewable Facebook posts and comments, X posts, Reddit threads, blog, and forum posts as well as digital news stories and websites.

3. Covid 19 News interest section.

Tool used: *BuzzSumo*: online subscription-based software.

Information accessed: Engagement data on publicly viewable news articles along with links to those articles.

4. FAQ about Covid 19 section.

Tool used: *Sprinklr* – OMD NZ analysts were granted access to this online tool managed and subscribed to by the governments Covid Comms Team.

Information accessed: All publicly viewable questions posted on the Unite Against Covid social media channels, campaign posts & direct messages to UAC19 social media channels.

OMD NZ analysts then manually compiled each report using this information and segmented these findings as per the methodology referenced in the reports subsequently produced.

OMD NZ provided a copy of the report “*Unite Against COVID-19: Social Conversation Analysis: April 13 – 19, 2021, New Zealand*” as an example, drawing attention to pages 11 and 12 of the report as an example of the how the findings were segmented. These are under the headings “*Vaccine Attitudinal segmentation*” and “*Vaccine conversation summary*”. Please find a copy of the report **attached** for ease of reference.

This report is also available on DPMC’s website at:

www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-01/UAC-Social-Conversation-Analysis-Part-9-April-13-19-to-April-27-May-3-2021-release-document.pdf. The report is on pages 4-18.

Additional related reports are also available on the DPMC website at:

www.dPMC.govt.nz/publications/covid-19-insights-reports-and-research.

OMD NZ has confirmed that that no information from the above tools used as part of producing the commissioned reports were retained by OMD NZ and that OMZ NZ no longer have access to Sprinklr.

This is the only additional information relevant to this part of your request held by OMD NZ. To the extent that OMD never held the information you are seeking we refuse your request under section 18(e) in that the documents that would have contained the information do not exist, or despite the reasonable efforts to locate it as outlined above, cannot be found. To the extent that the information deemed to be held by DPMC no longer exists we therefore refuse your request under section 18(g) in that it is now no longer held by DPMC and there are no grounds for believe that the information is held by anyone else subject to the Act.

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

This response may be published on DPMC's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Clare Ward".

Clare Ward
Executive Director
Strategy, Governance and Engagement Group