

13 October 2022

Scott

fyi-request-19739-ab4d311d@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Scott,

Your Official Information Act request, reference: H2022012935

Thank you for your email of 19 September 2022, regarding your previous official information act response, ref: H2022010649.

As part of the health and disability system reforms, as of 1 July 2022 the functions previously under the Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) Office of the Director, Outbreak Response have transferred to Te Whatu Ora. As the matters you have raised now fall under the functions of Te Whatu Ora, our agency will respond to your request which has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). I shall quote and respond to each part of your request below.

Thank you for your reply. On the point of parts One, Two and Four of my request that you have rejected citing 9(2)(f)(iv), I intend to ask the office of the Ombudsman to review your decision. There is clearly an overriding public interest in the publication of these documents which I don't believe you properly considered.

Please note, there are no surge plans in response to our setting for Omicron and the documents you seek are examples and not plans.

Therefore, Te Whatu Ora confirms the previous advice provided in your previous request for this information.

On the point of part Three of my request, for a copy of the vaccine strategy referred to in this passage of the COVID-19 Variants of Concern framework summary:

"Work continues on... developing a vaccine strategy that will support rapid supply and roll-out of any new vaccines."

Unfortunately your response shows that you have misinterpreted my request. As the passage I cited when I submitted my request makes clear, the "vaccine strategy" I have requested a copy of was part of the Ministry's Variants of Concern response, and was still in development as at the time the Variants of Concern Strategic Framework was released (i.e. as at May or June this year). The Cabinet paper you have sent me a link to is dated May 2020 - clearly this is a different "vaccine strategy".

Please kindly provide me a response for my request for a copy of the specific vaccine strategy that I requested. As this was an error on your end - I think I made it perfectly clear what vaccine strategy I was after - I would appreciate if you provided me with your response on this promptly.

The vaccine strategy paper you seek is still being considered by Ministers and is withheld in full under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act to maintain the constitutional conventions that protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials. I have considered the countervailing public interest in release in making this decision and consider that it does not outweigh the need to withhold at this time.

You are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman.
Information about how to do this is available at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning
0800 802 602.

Nāku iti noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachael Hopkins', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rachael Hopkins
Group Manager
Office of the Director Outbreak Response