

Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall

Minister of Health
Minister of Research, Science and Innovation



24 APR 2023

James

Email: fyi-request-21500-1f3b4585@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: AVOIA308

Tēnā koe James

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the office of the former Minister of Health, Hon Andrew Little on 31 December 2022 for:

“...all communications including but not limited to emails, texts and phone calls involving or concerning Matthew Tukaki and yourself or your office in relation to his appointment as director for the Suicide Prevention Office.”

Thank you also for your email to me on 27 March 2023 regarding communications that I have had regarding Matthew Tukaki’s appointment. Specifically, you requested:

“copies of any communications including but not limited to texts, emails and phone calls concerning or involving yourself or your office and Matthew Tukaki.

Please state if you have been briefed under the ‘No surprises policy’ concerning Mr Tukaki, or Mr Tukaki’s CV, previous work history or his stated Tertiary qualifications, a complaint laid with NZ police or any other matter involving Mr Tukaki. If yes, please provide all communications including but not limited to texts, emails, phone calls of the briefing, any meetings, initial concerns, PR advice etc”.

Firstly, I apologise for the delay in communicating a decision on your initial request as a result of administrative issues. Your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as no information has been identified within scope of your request.

As you are aware, employment of the Director of the Suicide Prevention Office is a matter for the Director-General of Health. It is not appropriate for me as Minister of Health to become involved in this matter.

Although not in the nature of the information you have requested, you might be interested to know that, in accordance with the no surprises policy, my office has been copied in on Manatū Hauora’s recent media replies. Discussions will have occurred as part of this that canvassed the background and the public interest in the matter. However, as it was a general matter and no decisions were taken, staff are unable to recall specifics such as the dates of any conversations and no records are held.

Additionally, my office has received one item of correspondence that refers to Matthew Tukaki's role, but it was not the purpose of the correspondence, and it was transferred to Manatū Hauora for response.

Under section 28(3) of the Act you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Naku noā, na



Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall
Minister of Health