



12 June 2023

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Tēnā koe Cody

Your Official Information Act 1982 request, reference OIA 2223-0853

I am responding to your email of 14 May 2023 to Te Tari Taiwhenua | the Department of Internal Affairs requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982:

- 1. What actions is DIA taking to reduce the propagation of electronic spam in NZ (if any)? For example, enforcement, regulation. How successful has this been?*
- 2. What happens following a spam report to DIA? Please provide any relevant processes.*
- 3. Please provide a summary of spam reports over the past 5 years, or less if the reporting has not existed that long, by month.*
- 4. Has DIA considered introducing legislation that would mandate telcos implement protocols such as STIR/SHAKEN that would authenticate Caller IDs (similar to FCC in USA)? If not, why?*

Response to your request

Please note that questions one to three are addressed by the Digital Messaging Transparency Report (the Transparency Report). This is the first of our annual transparency reports for digital messaging, that provides insights into trends and themes, how we recognise spam and scams, our regulatory framework, reporting, and processes that may be of interest to you.

The Transparency Report can be found with the following prompt: [transparency report \(www.dia.govt.nz\)](https://www.dia.govt.nz).

Question one, reducing the propagation of electronic spam

Within the Transparency Report, we demonstrate proactive and reactive actions to different types of electronic spam. We also work within a wide network of organisations who play different roles within the digital messaging working environment. This is outlined in *Image 8* on page 14.

We also send out 'education activities' which show the sender or company who are in breach of the Unsolicited Electronic Messaging Act 2007 (the Act) how they have breached the Act, and how to remedy this.

Question 2, spam report processes

Please note *Image 5* and *Image 6* on page 12 of the Transparency Report. These show the two different investigative processes in detail and explain the processes for the Short Message Service and email.

Question 3, spam report summary

The Transparency Report provides the summary you are seeking for spam reports. However, we do not hold information that encompasses the entire five year period you seek as our summary is limited to a two year period.

As noted on page six of the Transparency Report, “DIA does not record the specific nature of each harmful link contained within reports received of harmful spam and scams as the scope of our mahi only requires us to recognise messages as nuisance or harmful (see the section How we categorise unsolicited electronic messages below for an explanation of these terms)”.

Question 4, introducing legislation

Te Tari Taiwhenua has considered using STIR/SHAKEN to authenticate caller ID. In early May 2023, we met with New Zealand telecommunication companies to discuss the possible use of STIR/SHAKEN. However, results from other countries indicate that the protocol has not had the impact that was initially anticipated.

We have also viewed material from Neustar, who developed the protocol, sharing insights regarding the deployment of STIR/SHAKEN in the North American region. The lessons learned supported the results mentioned above.

Other information

You have the right, under section 28 of the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), to seek a review of my decision by the Office of the Ombudsman. The postal address of the Office of the Ombudsman is PO Box 10152, Wellington. Alternatively, you can phone 0800 802 602 or email info@ombudsman.parliament.govt.nz.

We intend to publish our response to your request on www.dia.govt.nz. This letter, with your personal details removed, will be published in its entirety. Publishing responses increases the availability of information to the public and is consistent with the Act’s purpose of enabling effective participation in the making and administration of laws and policies and promoting the accountability of Ministers and officials.

Nāku noa, nā



Anita Balakrishnan | PP Jean Houlihan
Tumuaki | Director Ministerial, Monitoring, and Capability