



OIAD-750

Debbie Leota

fyi-request-23863-59c9734e@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Debbie Leota

Thank you for your email of 16 August 2023 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*I made an OIA request (your handle OIAD-662) in May 2023 which MfE responded to after 60 working days (20 working days plus a 40 working day extension). MfE stated in its reply: "I can assure you that the Ministry asks each supplier undertaking contract work with us to declare any conflict of interest in providing goods and/or services or entering into a contract with us. The Ministry informs all suppliers that they must do their best to avoid situations that may lead to conflicts of interest arising. Suppliers must inform the Ministry immediately if any conflicts of interest arise."*

*Please provide copies of all correspondence, documents, reports that:*

- 1. MfE generated and, received from third parties, in responding to the OIAD-662 to evidence that assurance; and*
- 2. outline MfE's policies and information about what constitutes a conflict of interest, that was provided to those contractors and consultants in order for them to make a proper declaration of a conflict of interest.*

*I would also be grateful if you could provide all relevant emails and documents that contain MfE's reasons that 60 working days were required to respond to that request.*

In relation to parts one and two of your request, third party consultation is required to make a decision on this request and the Ministry has been unable to conduct these consultations in the original timeframe. Therefore, the Ministry is extending the timeframe for its response to parts one and two of your request under section 15A(1)(b) of the Act, as consultations necessary to make a decision on the request are such that a proper response cannot reasonably be made within the original timeframe. We will now respond to your request on, if not before, 29 September 2023, which is an extension of 12 working days. This extension timeframe is as short as possible to complete the necessary consultations while providing a response as soon as practicable.

In response to your request for “all relevant emails and documents that contain MfE’s reasons that 60 working days were required to respond to that request” the Ministry has identified four documents in scope, or partially in scope of your request. Where a document is partially in scope of your request, the in-scope information has been provided to you as an extract in accordance with section 16(1)(e) of the Act. Fully in scope documents have been released to you in full. These documents are summarised in the attached document schedule.

As you are aware, the Act enables agencies to extend the timeframe for responding to a request under certain circumstances. In the case of OIAD-622, due to the two-year time period covered by your request and nature of the information in scope, significant consultation with several teams within the Ministry was required in order to make a decision on your request. When determining the timeframe for extending an OIA request, the Ministry also considers the resources and capacity available to undertake the necessary activities, as these affect the time needed to provide a response. At the time of preparing a response to OIAD-622, the teams working on your response were at a reduced capacity. This, in combination with the two-year time period of your request and nature of the information requested, meant that a 40-day extension was necessary in order to provide you with a response to your request.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decision relating to this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on their website at: [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Please note that due to the public interest in our work the Ministry publishes responses to requests for official information on our [OIA responses page](#) shortly after the response has been sent. If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Ministerial Services team: [ministerials@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:ministerials@mfe.govt.nz).

Ngā mihi



**Jonathan Ryan**  
Acting Director – Ministerial Services  
Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao

### Document schedule

Document no.	Document date	Content	Decisions	OIA sections applied
1	23 May 2023	Re: OIAD-662: Consultant spend on ETS-related projects	Released in full	N/A
2	1 June 2023	OIAD-662 Scoping meeting	Released in full	N/A
3	6 June 2023	OIAD-662 Scoping meeting notes	In scope information released as an extract	S16(1)(e)
4	14 August 2023	OIAD-662 Memo	In scope information released as an extract	S16(1)(e)