

30 November 2023

Hemant

By email to: fyi-request-24646-1baa8d04@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Hemant

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2022/97

Thank you for your request of 3 November 2023 under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) regarding the 2023 election results. Specifically, you have asked for:

Can I please get a copy of all correspondence, internal and external that discusses returning the 2023 election results in faster than the maximum allowed time under law.

My understanding is that the latest that the results can be released is 2pm today, but there is nothing stopping you releasing the results earlier.

The Electoral Commission does not hold any correspondence about releasing the 2023 election results earlier than the maximum time allowed under the law. On this basis your request is refused under 18(e) of the Act.

The Electoral Commission starts the official count the day after election day and the Chief Electoral Officer declares the official results 20 days after election day.

The law makes it clear that the official results can only be released when all the ballot papers for an electorate have been processed, including special votes. The deadline for returning special votes to the correct electorate for counting is 10 days after election day, and the Commission must then check every special vote to make sure each person is enrolled and eligible to vote.

At the 2017 General Election, it took two weeks for special votes to be counted because eligible electors couldn't enrol to vote on election day. After the 2017 General Election, the timeframe that the Commission uses to deliver the official count for future general elections was extended by a week, to allow for additional checks to be undertaken due to an [amendment](#) to the Electoral Act 1993, which allows eligible electors to enrol to vote on election day.

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every 3 months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Martin Rodgers
Director Voting Services