



6 June 2024

Reference 2324-2487

Paul White

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Tēnā koe Paul

Thank you for writing to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment on 9 May 2024, to request the following, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA):

- Information on the use of Cobwebs that involved two Facebook Groups, as follows;
 1. *ACC Exposed*
 2. *ACC Claimants Help and Support*.
- I want to know for each year from 2019 onwards, how many times the Cobwebs service (flagged, identified, investigated) either a Post or Comment within each group.
- Please also advise for each year 2019 onwards, the amount of times action was taken ie removed the Post or Comment.

I am refusing your request in full under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information you have requested does not exist. MBIE's sole use of the Cobwebs tools is for the detection and prevention of maritime mass arrivals.

MBIE only has access to Cobwebs tools that allow for collection of information from publicly available online sources and anonymous browsing of publicly available online sources for the purpose of prevention of a maritime mass arrival.

All of MBIE's activities, including the use of the Cobwebs tools, must be conducted in line with the New Zealand law. This includes being subject to the Privacy Act and the Privacy Commissioner, the Auditor-General, the Ombudsman under the Official Information Act 1982, and the Ombudsmen Act 1975.

MBIE also carries out regular audits of Cobwebs use, and these confirm that Cobwebs has not been used for any other purpose other than that for which it has been approved, and that all cases of use have met the required threshold and scope.

Thank you again for writing to MBIE. Under section 28 of the OIA, you have the right to refer our response to an Ombudsman for review. You can find more about how to do this by calling 0800 802 602, or by emailing info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Nāku noa, nā

Jacqui Ellis

General Manager, Data, Insights and Intelligence
Digital, Data and Insights

