

17 July 2024

James

By email to: fyi-request-27276-de53f859@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear James

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2024/43

On Tuesday 18 June 2024 you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA) for the following information:

Under the OIA I would like to request the following:

Please detail any "Activations" that were approved by the Electoral Commission in an effort to improve voter turnout. This should include activity, location, approval, running of the activity, possible issues, conflicts, risk assessments.

Please detail all complaints involving Marae in the 2023 election campaign.

Manurewa Marae ran 12 "Activations" in the lead up to the 2023 election. Please provide all communications relating to these activations.

Please provide the total number of people if any, who changed from the general to the Māori roll and also voted at Manurewa Marae.

Please provide all communications to Manurewa Marae and Takutai Tarsh Kemp outlining the parameters and rules she was expected to follow as part of the conditions of the Marae being used as a place of voting. This should include all emails, texts, formal letters etc.

Please provide all communications if any around dealing with the issues of census form collection and campaigning at Manurewa Marae.

Did the Electoral Commission provide any compensation in any shape or form to Manurewa Marae in exchange for it being used as a place of voting? If yes, please provide all details including a copy of the agreement and all related communications.

Answers to your questions follow

1. *Please detail any "Activations" that were approved by the Electoral Commission in an effort to improve voter turnout. This should include activity, location, approval, running of the activity, possible issues, conflicts, risk assessments.*

The Electoral Commission did not approve the Marae's activations. In our discussions with the Marae about using an area of the marae complex as a voting place, it was mentioned that they might provide kai and or activities to create a family friendly environment around the voting place. We were clear that the opportunity to receive kai or participate in the activities must be available to anyone coming to the marae and could not be dependent on people voting. It is not uncommon for schools or other community organisations to host activities around voting places.

2. *Please detail all complaints involving Marae in the 2023 election campaign.*

The Electoral Commission received complaints alleging breaches of the Electoral Act at Manurewa Marae, which was a voting place for the 2023 General Election. Copies of complaints are attached.

The Commission received one complaint regarding Makaurau Marae at Ihumatao and another complaint at Kirikiriroa Marae, both of which were also voting places for the 2023 General Election. Copies of these complaints are attached.

No further complaints about any other marae were received by the Commission.

3. *Manurewa Marae ran 12 "Activations" in the lead up to the 2023 election. Please provide all communications relating to these activations.*

As noted above in the response to question 1, the Electoral Commission did not approve the activations. Copies of Electoral Commission correspondence with Marae staff prior to and during the voting period about use of the Marae as a voting place are attached.

4. *Please provide the total number of people if any, who changed from the general to the Māori roll and also voted at Manurewa Marae.*

In November 2022, legislative changes to the Māori Electoral Option were introduced that came into effect on 31 March 2023 which mean that Māori can choose which roll to be on when they first enrol and then change rolls at any time except:

- in the 3 months before a general election
- in the 3 months before local elections, which are held every 3 years
- before a parliamentary by-election if the change would move the elector into the electorate where the by-election is being held.

For the 2023 General Election, people could only change rolls up to 13 July 2023 and could not change roll type during the voting period. Any applications to do so could only be processed from after the return of the writ for the General Election.

From 31 March to 13 July 2023, 1,351 people changed from the general roll to the Māori roll for Tāmaki Makaurau and 768 changed from the Māori roll for Tāmaki Makaurau to the general roll. The Electoral Commission does not hold information about the total number of people who changed rolls and who also voted at Manurewa Marae. We cannot link applications to change roll type to voting and voting at a particular voting place. On this basis your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act.

5. *Please provide all communications to Manurewa Marae and Takutai Tarsh Kemp outlining the parameters and rules she was expected to follow as part of the conditions of the Marae being used as a place of voting. This should include all emails, texts, formal letters etc.*

See response to question 3 above.

6. *Please provide all communications if any around dealing with the issues of census form collection and campaigning at Manurewa Marae.*

The Electoral Commission does not have communications with Manurewa Marae regarding Census forms collection, as the Census is administered by StatsNZ not the Electoral Commission. Copies of complaints and other communications regarding census forms and campaigning at Manurewa Marae are attached or outlined in the response to question 2.

7. *Did the Electoral Commission provide any compensation in any shape or form to Manurewa Marae in exchange for it being used as a place of voting? Is yes, please provide all details including a copy of the agreement and all related communications.*

The Electoral Commission did not provide any compensation to Manurewa Marae in exchange for it being used as a place of voting.

We have only included material within documents that are in scope of your request, we have redacted parts that are out of scope. Some contact details, such as phone numbers, email addresses and some names have been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA which relates to the privacy of natural persons.

In each case where redactions have been made under section 9(2)(a), consideration has been given to and I am satisfied that the reasons for withholding of the information are not outweighed by other considerations which render it desirable, in the public interest to make that information available.

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



Kristina Temel
Manager, Legal and Policy