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James

No address provided

Via email: James <fyi-request-27532-edc95d92@requests.fyi.org.nz>

3 September 2024

Kia ora James

Official Information Act request dated 21 August 2024

We refer to your email dated 21 August 2024 requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the **Act**). The answers to your specific questions are set out below.

Your request does not specify which of TVNZ's X accounts you mean to refer to. We have therefore taken this request to refer to our two main X accounts: @TVNZ and @1NewsNZ.

Request 1: From March 1st through to August 21st this year, the total number of social media posts on the platform X where the comments function has been disabled under TVNZ's "house rules". Please provide this information by each month.

Response 1: TVNZ does not keep a record of what comments have been disabled. However, this is publicly available information – X users can see themselves if comments have been disabled. We note that the comments function has not been disabled for any @TVNZ post on X between the specified dates. Section 18(d) of the Act therefore applies and this request is declined.

Request 2: Please provide the number of social media posts each month where the comments function has been disabled NOT including the posts where the function has been disabled for legal reasons (before the courts/ongoing investigation)

Response 2: TVNZ disables comments in accordance with its House Rules, which include comment disablement for legal reasons. It does not keep a record of whether comments have been disabled for legal reasons, or for another reason within the House Rules. Section 18(e) applies to this request in that the information you are seeking does not exist, and the request is therefore declined.

Request 3: Please provide the headlines of these social media posts.

Response 3: Social media posts for which comments have been disabled are, with their headlines, publicly available and this request is therefore declined in accordance with section 18(d) of the Act.

Request 4: Please provide the oversight process if any, for disabling comments on TVNZ social media posts.

Response 4: Comments are disabled in line with our Social House Rules, More information is publicly available at <https://www.1news.co.nz/2024/08/26/how-1news-moderates-social-media-comments/>

Request 5: Please provide the number of people responsible for moderating comments on the X platform and the team in which these roles sit e.g. social media team.

Response 5: As at the date of this letter, there are 10 individuals who have, as part of their role, responsibility for moderating comments on X. (To be clear, there are not 10 FTE roles solely responsible for comment moderation). They sit within the *Digital News and Content* and *Digital Experience* teams.

Request 6: Please provide the gender and ethnicity of the person/people responsible for moderating comments on X. (Please do not provide names or job titles)

Response 6: Due to the small number of roles within these teams and ease of identifying relevant team members, this information has been withheld in accordance with section 9(2)(a) and 9(2)(g)(ii): to protect the privacy of those individuals, and to protect them from harassment,

Request 7: Please provide any correspondence including but not limited to texts, emails, meeting notes relating to the moderating and restriction of comments on X.

Responses 7: This request is declined for the following reasons:

- Decisions to disable comments on particular posts are made by the team member responsible, or if consultation is needed that consultation is undertaken directly between team members in person, or during regular meetings. It is therefore very unlikely that any responsive information exists, and section 18(e) of the Act applies;
- If there is responsive information (i.e. teams chats between team members relating to a particular post) then both section 18(d) and 9(2)(g)(i) apply: it would require substantial research and collation just to be able to locate any such comments (if they exist); and any in event, were they to exist, it would be necessary to be able to withhold any such comments in order to allow the comment moderators free and frank expression in the course of their duties and
- Information about the moderation and restriction of comments in general is publicly available per the link set out in Response 4 above.



Please note that section 28 of the Act sets out the circumstances in which you may make a complaint to the Ombudsman in order to seek an investigation and review of this decision.

Yours sincerely,

Official Information Requests Team
TVNZ