

24 February 2025

James

By email to: fyi-request-29896-3898cc36@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear James

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2025/03

On the evening of 27 January 2025, you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA) for the following information:

Was the Electoral Commission aware of the suspension of ARL board member and Electoral Commission contractor Gregory Whaiapu pending an investigation into possible financial irregularities at the organisation prior to the 2023 election?

If yes, please provide all communications relating to this issue.

Given the significant potential conflicts of interest in having a Marae board trustee member working on election day at the Marae, please provide all communications if any, flagging this issue and any steps put in place to mitigate concerns and possible issues.

Was the Electoral Commission aware of the suspension of ARL board member and Electoral Commission contractor Gregory Whaiapu pending an investigation into possible financial irregularities at the organisation prior to the 2023 election?

If yes, please provide all communications relating to this issue.

We were not aware of Gregory's suspension from the ARL board. As such, we hold no communications relating to this matter.

Given the significant potential conflicts of interest in having a Marae board trustee member working on election day at the Marae, please provide all communications if any, flagging this issue and any steps put in place to mitigate concerns and possible issues.

Along with this response letter, I have included the supporting documents PDF, which was provided in our previous response to you regarding this matter.

Gregory declared in writing his political neutrality when signing his employment agreement, which included a code of conduct, and again when he completed his conflict of interest declaration. When asked, his referee was also unaware of any conflicts of interest.

The training module for issuing officers, which he attended the week before election day, emphasised the importance of political neutrality and clearly explained the responsibilities and expectations of the role.

Gregory only worked one day, on October 14, 2023, election day. During election day, he reported to and was supervised by the Voting Place Manager to make sure that processes were strictly followed. Gregory was not involved in any post-election day activities, activities that include the official count, special vote processing or dual vote investigation.

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