



Office of Hon Judith Collins

MP for Papakura
Minister of Corrections
Minister of Police

- 3 NOV 2016

Alex Harris

fyi-request-3655-110994d6@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Alex Harris

I refer to correspondence from the Chief Ombudsman, Judge Peter Boshier, regarding an Official Information Act investigation into your complaint about my earlier response to your request for information dated 19 February 2016. You requested the following information:

- *How often are you informed of MP's visits to prisons, and the basis on which you are informed of them? Are you informed of all visits, only visits to certain prisoners, or only visits by certain MPs? Have you demanded this information from the Department of Corrections, or is it provided automatically under a "no surprise" approach policy.*
- *If you have specifically requested information on visits by MPs, I'd like copies of the request (if you have laid down broad parameters), or the last five requests (if you have requested information on the activities of individual MPs)*
- *Any advice you have received on the consistency of your being informed of prison visits with s161 Corrections Act 2004.*

I have reviewed my response and determined that further explanation is warranted.

How often are you informed of MP's visits to prisons, and the basis on which you are informed of them?

I do not have any documents relating to Members of Parliament (MP's) notifications of visits to prisons. I further note, that the Corrections Private Secretary in my office is advised of MP's intended visits and makes the necessary arrangements with Corrections.

Are you informed of all visits, only visits to certain prisoners, or only visits by certain MPs? Have you demanded this information from the Department of Corrections, or is it provided automatically under a "no surprise" approach policy.

I advised you that "to maintain the safety and security of the prison including the safety of visitors it is appropriate that there are protocols in place to support these visits. Visits to prisoners are arranged by my Office."

I also provided you with a copy of my correspondence to my Parliamentary colleagues reminding them of the expectations and protocols in relation to visiting prisons.

My office is advised of all visits to prisons by MPs for the purpose of allowing arrangements to be made for a safe and secure visit to a prison. These arrangements are made through the Corrections Private Secretary in my office. This information does not come from Corrections, nor have I requested this information from Corrections. This is a convention that has developed to support MPs by ensuring they can safely visit prisons and prisoners as required.

You also asked:

If you have specifically requested information on visits by MPs, I'd like copies of the request (if you have laid down broad parameters), or the last five requests (if you have requested information on the activities of individual MPs)

As stated above, I provided you with correspondence to my Parliamentary colleagues in which I reminded them of the expectations and protocols around visiting prisons. This is the only request I have made to my Parliamentary colleagues.

You also asked for:

Any advice you have received on the consistency of your being informed of prison visits with s161 Corrections Act 2004.

I do not hold any documents relevant to this request. Accordingly, this request was declined in my original response to you under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act (OIA) as the information does not exist.

I trust the above clarifies my response to your request and provides further context to address your queries. I have provided a copy of this correspondence to the Office of the Ombudsman as part of their investigation into your complaint.

Yours sincerely



Hon Judith Collins
Minister of Corrections