



6 July 2017

Ben  
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Dear Ben

**Official information request for information relating to Official Information Act 1982 policies and processes**

**Our ref: 2017/0071**

I refer to your official information request received on 23 June 2017 for:

- Copies of the current policy, procedure, manual or other process document that records the State Services Commission's (SSC) process or processes for handling and deciding requests under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA)
- Any diagram or flowchart of SSC's process or processes (if any have been created)
- Copies of any template response letters that form part of SSC's process or processes (if any have been created).

You may be interested to know that prior to July 2016, SSC followed a decentralised model for Ministerial Services, which relied on a Ministerial Co-ordinator logging official correspondence for response by other SSC staff, and a Senior Advisor, Ministerial Servicing, reviewing selected responses and providing advice as required.

In July 2016, SSC established a fully centralised Ministerial Services unit located within Corporate Services. By February 2017, Ministerial Services had its full capacity of staff, which is a Managing Principal, a Senior Advisor, an Advisor, and a Ministerial Co-ordinator.

Under this model, incoming SSC and Ministerial OIAs are logged by Ministerial Services (using an electronic workflow tool called Moto). In most cases, Ministerial Services prepares the draft response in consultation with relevant teams in SSC, manages any necessary consultation, and prepares documents for release. SSC's OIA responses are, however, signed out by the relevant subject matter manager. In the case of Ministerial OIAs, the relevant manager approves the draft response before it is sent to the Minister's office.

As part of their induction, staff are made aware of SSC's OIA processes and responsibilities, SSC's own OIA guidance, as well as the material available from the Office of the Ombudsman's website and the Public Service Intranet. Staff who are seeking to learn more about the OIA, or to undertake a refresher course, for example, are invited to come to Ministerial Services to find the appropriate course. SSC also encourages staff to attend the OIA Introductory Workshop held by the Treasury for central agencies several times per year.

The change to a fully centralised Ministerial Services Unit has meant that, for OIAs:

- We are developing a centre of expertise in SSC, with staff who have an in-depth understanding of the OIA and SSC's obligations in relation to that Act, and who can effectively manage the response process, including ensuring that there is adequate consultation
- There is a single place for OIAs to be logged and tracked, and to obtain statistics, particularly for external (e.g. select committee purposes). OIA templates can easily be added and maintained, and are based on the Office of the Ombudsman's guides where possible
- SSC's standards are being raised relating to process, the quality of responses, timeliness, and the way that SSC contacts and consults requestors – and this can be monitored
- There is a consistency of approach being applied in responding to OIAs, particularly in tone and style
- SSC staff know where to go for advice and who can answer their questions about the OIA and related processes.

Ministerial Services also co-ordinates the public release of OIAs, and other proactive releases of information as required. SSC's public releases of OIAs are located on a separate page on its website, which also provides information to requestors on making a request (<http://www.ssc.govt.nz/official-information-act-requests>). This page links to two other pages on SSC's website that provide tips on how to request official information, and guidance on how agencies will respond: <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/tips-requesting-official-information>, <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/how-agencies-will-respond-information-requests>).

### Information being released

Please find enclosed the most recent versions of the following documents:

Item	Document Description	Decision
1	SSC Guidelines: Official Information Act 1982	Release in full
2	Publishing Responses to Official Information Act 1982 Requests on the State Services Commission's Website	Release in full
3	SSC Moto Process Overview: SSC OIAs	Release in full
4	SSC Moto Process Overview: MIN OIAs	Release in full
5	SSC Moto Template SSC OIA Acknowledgement	Release in full
6	SSC Moto Template SSC OIA Transfer to Department	Release in full
7	SSC Moto Template SSC OIA Transfer to Minister	Release in full
8	SSC Moto Template SSC OIA Substantial Collation and Research	Release in full
9	SSC Moto Template SSC OIA Extension	Release in full
10	SSC Moto Template SSC OIA Progress Update	Release in full
11	SSC Moto Template SSC OIA Consultation Text	Release in full
12	SSC Moto Template SSC OIA Consult Report	Release in full
13	SSC Moto Template SSC OIA Text for Moto When Minister's Office Informed of SSC's Decision on Request	Release in full

14	SSC Moto Template SSC OIA Reply	Release in full
15	SSC Moto Template MIN OIA Transfer to Department	Release in full
16	SSC Moto Template MIN OIA Transfer to Minister	Release in full
17	SSC Moto Template MIN OIA Extension	Release in full
18	SSC Moto Template MIN OIA Reply	Release in full
19	Redaction Software Short Guide	Release in full
20	Ministerial Services (intranet page)	Release in full
21	Information about Ministerials, SSC Correspondence, Parliamentary Questions and Official Information Act Requests (intranet page)	Release in part
22	General Process (intranet page)	Release in full

Some information has been redacted from document 21 as it is not within the scope of your request.

You note that you are conducting research into OIA policies and practices adopted by government agencies, with a view to identifying best practice approaches. SSC would welcome seeing any of your findings if you are comfortable sharing them at the conclusion of your research.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact [Ministerial.Services@ssc.govt.nz](mailto:Ministerial.Services@ssc.govt.nz).

Please note that we intend to publish this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents on SSC's website.

Yours sincerely



Rachel Bruce  
Deputy Commissioner, Corporate Services