



23 February 2024

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Ref: OIA-2023/24-0428

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act request for advice and decision making about setting up the Covid-19 website.

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, which was transferred from the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) on 17 January 2024. You requested:

Please provide information under the OIA to show all advice and decision making about the setting up of the COVID-19 webpage on what is understood from the attached screenshot to be 15 March 2020.

Please include information to show which Minister government department and officials requested this website, it's stated purpose and who was responsible for it's content.

I am advised Te Whatu Ora also received a partial transfer in relation to this request and you will hear from them directly.

The time frame for responding to your request was extended under section 15A of the Act by 10 working days because consultations were needed before a decision could be made on the request. Following this extension, I am now in a position to respond.

A thorough search of our electronic database has been undertaken to locate documents within scope of your request however no documents have been located. Therefore, your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, that the documents alleged to contain the information requested do not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

The attachment sent through with your request is the domain name registration for the covid19.govt.nz website. The government Domain Name System (DNS) service provides for registration and management of ".govt.nz" domain names across the public sector. The DNS service offers government agencies domain name registration, secure name server hosting, and a web portal that enables agencies to self-manage their DNS data. DIA is noted in the registration, as DIA is the sole registrar for ".govt.nz" domain names. The covid19.govt.nz website was not set up or run by DIA.

The Public Information campaign run by the Ministry of Health was replaced by a new campaign developed by the National Crisis Management Centre, Public Information Management team. The campaign used the new tagline: "Unite Against COVID-19" and a new website was launched in March 2020 as part of the campaign: www.covid19.govt.nz

Its purpose was to provide official information and updates from the New Zealand Government about COVID-19. The website was a trusted source of politically neutral information to support New Zealanders to stay safe and healthy during the pandemic and provided the latest updates. The website is still live today for people to access up to date information regarding COVID-19.

The following publicly available document may be of use to you, which sets out the all of government system and structure that was activated on 6 March 2020 in response to COVID-19. www.dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-01/All-of-Government-System.pdf

In December 2020 the COVID-19 Group was established as a business unit of the DPMC, continuing the work of the National Crisis Management Centre following the centre's deactivation on 30 June 2020. www.dpmc.govt.nz/our-business-units/covid-19-group

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Clare Ward
Executive Director
Strategy, Governance and Engagement