

1 June 2021

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OIA 27499

Tēnā koe Harold

I refer to your email of 4 May 2021 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

"...For the second time, I request copies of all analysis of the WHO Covid-19 origins report, produced by MFAT or on MFAT's behalf.

On April 1st, MFAT told Reuters:

"New Zealand acknowledges that member states have expressed a number of concerns. New Zealand wants to make sure we conduct an independent analysis to ensure we understand the science before making any comment"

and:

"Our scientific experts, who have been fully engaged with the wider COVID response, are analysing the report. When they have done so, we will decide on the most appropriate way to comment on the mission"

For the avoidance of doubt, this is the analysis I'm referring to. The Ministry of Health have told me they hold no such documents, so please don't refer me to them again."

On 28 April 2021, the Ministry responded to your initial request by transferring to the Ministry of Health. This is because any scientific analysis undertaken on this report would fall within the duties of the Ministry of Health. However, given your stated preference, we have not transferred this request. If you are dissatisfied with the response from the Ministry of Health you can contact the Ombudsman.

The Ministry is currently preparing a response to another OIA request related to COVID-19 which contains information you may be interested in. Consultation on this OIA is ongoing and the relevant information is still being collated. Therefore, due to the necessity for further consultation and review, we will need to extend the time limit for responding to you by 30 working days, to 14 July 2021.

If this process is completed and we are able to respond before 14 July 2021, the response will be sent to you as soon as possible.

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at:
DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz.

You also have the right under section 28(3) of the OIA to seek a review of this response by the Ombudsman.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Julie-Anne Lee', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Julie-Anne Lee
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade