

Hon David Parker BCom, LLB

Attorney-General

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Oceans and Fisheries

Minister of Revenue

Associate Minister of Finance



OIA 719-21
OIAM-62

22 July 2021

Matthew Hooton
fyi-request-15868-fe694472@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Matthew Hooton

Thank you for your email of 22 June 2021 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Under the OIA, I request all written advice you have received as Minister for the Environment since 1 January 2021 on:

- 1) human rights, labour standards and environmental issues associated with the mining of cobalt, lithium, nickel and other rare earth metals required for the batteries of electric vehicles*
- 2) how batteries required for electric vehicles will be recycled or disposed of in New Zealand over the next 30 years, and in what volumes, and how any disposal sites will be kept safe.*

I have not received any written advice on these issues from the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) since 1 January 2021 therefore, I am refusing your request under section 18(e) of the Act as this information does not exist.

In 2020, the Government announced that e-waste, including electric vehicle (EV) batteries, will be one of six products declared 'priority products' for regulated product stewardship under the Waste Minimisation Act 2008. Regulated product stewardship helps put the responsibility for a product's life-cycle and waste management on manufacturers, imports, retailers and users, rather than on communities, council, neighbours and nature.

Declaring a priority product means a product stewardship scheme must be developed and accredited for the product as soon as practicable, and a regulation can be made requiring producer/seller participation in the accredited priority scheme.

A co-design process to develop a proposed scheme for large batteries (including EV batteries) has been completed, and its scheme proposal report has been presented to the Ministry for the Environment for consideration. More information on the co-design process on large batteries (including EV batteries) can be found on the Battery Industry Group website www.big.org.nz.

You can find more information on regulated product stewardship on the Ministry's website at environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/waste/product-stewardship/regulated-product-stewardship/.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decision to withhold information relating to this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on their website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Please contact my office if you have any queries about this response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Parker', written in a cursive style.

Hon David Parker
Minister for the Environment