



# Te Kawa Mataaho

Public Service Commission

13 July 2021

Mr Terry Thomas  
[fyi-request-15886-19366c20@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-15886-19366c20@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Mr Thomas

**Official Information Request**  
**Our Ref: OIA 2021-0078**

I refer to your official information request received on 23 June 2021 for:

*“all guidance and advice provided by you to any agency, department, ministry or Crown entity, or other organisation/entity funded by government, and any advice to ministers, on naming conventions, particularly the adoption and use of Maori names for those entities and for staff titles and documents/reports created by those entities.*

*Also any guidance and advice to the entities described above on the use of Aotearoa instead of, or as a supplement to, the use of New Zealand in documents and communications.*

*Please also provide any guidance, direction or expectation provided to you by any minister on these subjects.*

*This request includes formal guidance to/ from the commission as well as informal, such as that provided in emails or minuted/recorded/noted in meetings.*

*Please limit this request to information created since the 2017 election.”*

All government departments including Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission (the Commission) are covered by the Crown’s commitment to [Maihi Karauna](#), the Crown’s Strategy for Māori Language Revitalisation 2019 – 2023, that among other things requires departments to develop and implement their own Māori language plans.

After Parliament agreed in the Māori Language Act 1987 to recognise Māori as an official language of New Zealand, use of te reo Māori language has increasingly become more common in wider New Zealand society. In line with this shift, most government agencies have taken steps to adopt te reo Māori, including acquiring Māori names to use at their discretion alongside their English name.

Government agency use of other Māori terms, such as referring to the country as Aotearoa or Aotearoa/New Zealand, has also been increasing in line with this broader use in society. However, there is no specific government directive to use ‘Aotearoa’.

**Information being released.**

Please find enclosed and listed in the table below a letter that was emailed to Public Service chief executives on behalf of the Public Service Commissioner as part of the Public Service Act implementation, which included advice on the use of the te reo job title in signatures.

Item	Date	Document Description	Decision
1	10 September 2020	Letter from the Public Service Commissioner to Chief Executive (includes attachment)	Released in Part

We have decided to release the relevant parts of the document listed above, subject to information being withheld under section 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people.

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

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that we intend to publish this letter (with your personal details removed) on the Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission’s website.

Yours sincerely



Nicky Dirks  
**Manager – Ministerial and Executive Services**  
**Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission**