



31 March 2022

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Tēnā koe Kevin

### **Your Official Information Act request OIA 2122 - 0472**

I write regarding your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), which was received by the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department) on 14 December 2021. You requested:

*all staff emails and instant messages about the Chief Archivist including, but not limited to, his suitability for the role. I would like this to cover all DIA staff and the Internal Affairs Minister, not just Archives New Zealand. I would like this to include all information from his appointment a year ago until now.*

As advised previously, instant messages and the Department's email systems cannot be centrally searched and instead must be collated by the individual employees themselves. In addition, any central search undertaken of the Department's enterprise content management system would have resulted in thousands of documents that mention the Chief Archivist in passing or as a signatory, but which would not fall within the scope of your request.

Asking the circa 2600 employees of the Department to each undertake a conditional search of their emails, instant messages and all other information holdings would have required substantial collation and research, not only in terms of the number of individuals undertaking complex searches and the volume of queries likely to be raised about whether particular items were in scope; but also in terms of the volume of material likely to need to be subsequently centrally reviewed and assessed and the complexity of consultation that might be necessary with affected parties. This substantial collation and research would have unreasonably impacted the normal operation of the Department.

We considered whether extending the timeframe for response or applying a charge would enable your request to be answered, but neither of these options were deemed to be appropriate as the time needed for the collation could not be accurately estimated.

Having determined that responding to your request would require substantial collation and research and that the remaining option was to refuse your request, we emailed you providing you with the opportunity to refine your request as required under section 18B of the Act. On 28 January 2022 you refined your request to the following:

*"I would like to request emails, instant messages and other information created about the Chief Archivist including, but not limited to, his suitability for the role. I would like this to cover all DIA Chief Executives and Deputy Chief Executives, the Internal Affairs Minister, the Archives New Zealand Leadership group, the Chief Archivist's Executive Assistant, and other members of the Chief Archivist's support team (the Office of the Chief Archivist or equivalent). I would also like this to include the leadership of the National Library and Alexander Turnbull Library and leadership within the Information and Knowledge Services Branch. I would like this to include all information from his appointment a year ago until today.*

*I would also like to request all information created in response to my initial request.*

*I am happy for staff names to be redacted to protect privacy if this is deemed necessary."*

## **Response to your request**

To respond to your request, the 42 senior leaders that came within the revised scope were asked to review their emails, instant messages, and any other information holdings for anything that they had created about the Chief Archivist. As the Minister of Internal Affairs is not an employee of the Department they are not included in scope of your request.

The Department has decided to provide you with the information collated for the period from 30 November 2020 to 28 January 2022 that falls within scope of your request; this being information created about the Chief Archivist role or about the Chief Archivist himself. Information has been excluded where we considered it fell outside the scope of your request. This information consisted of emails, messages or information about items of work under the Chief Archivist (such as regulatory programmes and project updates or administrative activity), meeting requests or emails in which the Chief Archivist was copied into the email.

Within the documents, information that could identify the participants of emails and messages has been redacted under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons. It is important to recognise here that the information released will become generally and permanently publicly accessible on Fyi.org.nz, and that some information falling in scope may be informal comments made by individuals in a personal capacity.

The information created in response to your initial request is also attached. These emails are about determining which part of the Department is best placed to respond to your request. Personal information that could identify the participants of these emails has been redacted under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons.

If you have any feedback or questions about the Department's response, please let us know at [OIA@DIA.govt.nz](mailto:OIA@DIA.govt.nz).

If you have any concerns with the information in this response, you have a right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. Information on how to do this is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802.

Nāku noa



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