



# Te Kawa Mataaho

Public Service Commission

2 October 2023

Grace Haden

[fyi-request-23804-63b3cbc3@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-23804-63b3cbc3@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Grace

## Official Information Request Our Ref: OIA 2023-0228

I refer to your official information request received on 22 September 2023 where you have asked:

*"You state "departments are able to use a trading name other than their legal name" could you please by way of oia advise of the statutory basis for this statemnt As it was written by an anomomous person with no accountability it appears that it is a totally BS statement as much as many of the so called translations are fictional as well e.g. how can waka Kotahi possibbly translate to the new zealand transport agency One vehicle is the translation I have one vehicle I must be the the NZ transport agency then .*

*The Public service has an obligation to comply with the rule of law .*

*The New Zealand parliament which makes our laws was set up in 1852 "New Zealand Constitution Act 1852" there is no refence to Aotearoa , this became an adopted name after was used in an anthem in 1878 by an irish man who arrived in New Zealand in 1869 .pre-European era, Māori did not have one name for the country as a whole there appears to be no legislative definition or official translation that supports Aotearoa as the Maori name for New Zealand please provide the legislative evidence on which you rely which allows for the substitution of a legal name for a trading name either registerd or unregisterd based on an allegation that it is a " maori name".*

## Information being released

There is no legislation that specifically supports the use of government agencies using a Māori name alongside their English name, as we have noted in our previous responses to you dated 29 August 2023 and 15 September 2023, departments are able to use trading names other than their legal names. We are therefore refusing your request under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act 1982, on the grounds the information does not exist.

## Supporting information

[Section 5 of the Maori Language Act 2006](#) outlines the recognition of Māori Language to be an official language of New Zealand. [Section 14 of the Public Service Act 2020](#) outlines Crown's relationship with Māori and the role of the public service supporting the Crown in its relationships with Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi. Whether to have a Māori name or a te reo Māori translation and how to use it has been a matter for individual agencies. Government departments typically have senior Māori leaders or external cultural advisers who assist in developing appropriate naming. Sometimes a name is

gifted by an iwi or group of iwi. On other occasions consultation with iwi leaders results in a name being agreed upon.

Te reo Māori is one of our two official languages in Aotearoa New Zealand and Government is actively committed to working in partnership with iwi and Māori to continue to protect and promote the language. Government agencies aim to promote te reo Māori in an inclusive way and impose any barriers to participate. The use of te reo Māori in resources and signs is part of the strategy to help Aotearoa New Zealand revitalise the language.

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**