



24 March 2026

Ref: OIA-2025/26-0574

Robert Perham
fyi-request-34031-973e0776@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Robert,

Official Information Act request relating to email sent by a former Te Whatu Ora employee

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, which was received by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) on 11 March 2026. You requested:

“Under the Official Information Act 1982, I am requesting information regarding the internal administrative handling, triage, and policy advice generated by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) and/or the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) in relation to an email sent by former Te Whatu Ora employee Barry Young on or around October 30, 2023.

I am aware that previous requests regarding this matter were refused under Section 2 of the Act, on the grounds that Members of Parliament are excluded from the definition of a department or Minister. To be absolutely clear: I am not requesting the correspondence sent to, or held by, Members of Parliament in their capacity as MPs. Instead, I am requesting the internal departmental records held by the DPMC or PMO about this event. Specifically, between the dates of October 30, 2023, and December 4, 2023, I request:

- 1. Any internal DPMC or PMO emails, memos, briefing notes, or triage directives discussing the existence of Barry Young’s October 30th email, the data he claimed to possess, or the “safety signals” he alleged.*
- 2. Any communications between the DPMC/PMO and Te Whatu Ora (Health New Zealand), the Ministry of Health, or the New Zealand Police regarding how to respond to, investigate, or manage the claims made by Barry Young in his October 30th email.*
- 3. Any advisory documents, talking points, or directives prepared by the DPMC or PMO for any Minister of the Crown instructing them on how to handle, filter, or respond to Barry Young’s correspondence.”*

Your request is for relevant information held either by DPMC or by the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO). The timeframe of your request is from 30 October 2023 and 4 December 2023.

DPMC can only respond in relation to information held by DPMC. We have undertaken searches of our document management system for any relevant communications or documents between 30 October 2023 and 4 December 2023. No information has been identified relevant to your request and your request, as it relates to any information held by DPMC, is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, on the basis the information does not exist.

As you noted, information held as a Member of Parliament is not deemed to be official information under the Act. Accordingly, the timeframe of your request for the current Prime Minister and his office is from 27 November 2023 (the date the Prime Minister came to office) and 4 December 2023.

We consulted with the current PMO on a possible transfer to the Prime Minister for any information in scope of your request held by PMO. They confirmed that the current PMO held no information relevant to your request. On the basis of this advice, your request as it relates to any information held by the current PMO is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist.

The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) holds email correspondence for former Prime Ministers. Accordingly, I am transferring your request as it relates to any relevant emails held by the former Prime Minister, Rt Hon Chris Hipkins, from 30 October 2023 to 26 November 2023 inclusive to DIA under section 14(b)(i) of the Act.

DIA has the usual timeframes under the Act from receipt of this transfer to make a decision on this part of your request.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

We do not intend to publish this response on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alan Cassidy', is positioned above the typed name and title.

Alan Cassidy
Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate