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Fire and Emergency New Zealand
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Ref: 21147

Harwood Wilson
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Tēnā koe Harwood

We refer to your request of 12 March 2026 to Fire and Emergency New Zealand requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

- 1. Any communication involving the Executive Leadership Team within the past 3 months regarding any aspect of the government select committee, be that discussing their appearance at, tactics about the meeting or other, include ALL forms of written communication such as messenger, microsoft teams, whatsapp, email or SMS.*
- 2. Any communication, reports or documents within the past 6 months regarding the performance, conduct or concerns of the Executive Leadership Team. I will require information about any communication within FENZ. I do not require communications originating from members of the public. However, if complaints or concerns regarding the Executive Leadership Team have been received from members of the public during this period, please provide the number of such complaints or concerns recorded.*

On 26 March 2026 you agreed to refine your request. Your refined request has been considered under the OIA, and our response is set out below.

In line with our obligations to make and communicate our decision to you within the statutory timeframe, we wrote to you on 12 May providing our decision and outlining that we decided to grant your request and would release the remaining information requested without undue delay. Thank you for your patience and please see our response to your request below.

Part 1

- 1. any issues regarding select committees within the last 60 days (from today), that have been communicated by any written means that have either been received by or sent by the Chief Executive or Deputy Chief Executives, this is critical information for public transparency, if this is not acceptable please advise.*

Please find attached, as **Appendix One** to this response, a copy of the requested information. As outlined in our decision letter, some information has been withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons; and
 - 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any public service agency or organisation in the course of their duty.
2. *I now query who was the person or position that sent 1000 emails within the past 3 months containing the keyword "select committee"?*

We advise that the person referred to was Emma Coats, National Manager Board and Ministerial Services.

Part 2

1. *Any written communication, reports or documents within the past 3 months (from today) on the performance, conduct, or any other centrally recorded information on the Chief Executive or Deputy Chief Executives, In the event that individuals are not legally able to be identifiable, please provide as much information as available. I will still require information within this time period on the total number of issues received regarding the above issues from the public or otherwise. This is critical information for public transparency, if this is not acceptable please advise.*

Correspondence relating to a complaint from the New Zealand Professional Firefighters' Union (NZPFU) is provided as **Appendix Two**. This complaint concerns the conduct of Fire and Emergency leaders and the use of CCTV systems during industrial action. As outlined in our decision letter, some information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA to protect the privacy of natural persons.

Some information contained within **Appendices One** and **Two** falls outside the scope of your request. Where this occurs, the information has been redacted and labelled "out of scope." Duplicate email chains have also been removed.

In relation to the number of issues received from the public, we advise that six complaints have been recorded since 26 December 2025 via phone or Fire and Emergency's online complaints and enquiries forms. These complaints did not identify specific Executive Leadership Team (ELT) members and instead related to senior leadership generally.

Any further information relating to the performance or conduct of ELT members are highly sensitive in nature because they concern allegations raised by, or about internal staff. Information about workplace behaviour carries a high privacy interest for both the complainant and the person complained about.

More broadly, the integrity of Fire and Emergency's complaints management system depends on the confidential handling of allegations and related information. There is an implied obligation of confidence in respect of information provided as part of a complaint process. Personnel have a reasonable expectation that concerns will be treated confidentially and disclosed only to the extent necessary to resolve them.

If information about complaints and conduct were routinely released, personnel would be less likely to engage with the process, and concerning behaviour would be less likely to be reported or addressed. The Ombudsman has recognised that the release of confidential employment information can damage agencies' working relationships with staff, including in relation to employment complaints and investigations. For these reasons, information beyond what is provided in Appendix Two is withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons; and
- 9(2)(ba)(i), to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.

In accordance with section 9(1) of the OIA, we have considered the public interest in release. While we have withheld specific information, we acknowledge the public interest in accountability for executive public sector roles. We can therefore advise that we are aware of one further centrally recorded issue relating to conduct involving one of the Deputy Chief Executives. That matter is currently under investigation.

2. ** Further I ask, what is the process for staff to report issues regarding the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executives?*

Fire and Emergency partners with Fair Way Resolution Limited (Fair Way), an independent external provider specialising in dispute resolution. Fair Way offers an avenue for personnel to raise concerns, including at an early stage before matters escalate to formal complaints.

Where a respondent is a member of the ELT and/or has a direct connection to the Fair Way contract, the Fair Way client manager will advise the relevant relationship manager (without disclosing personal investigation details) or liaise directly with the respondent's one-up manager before investigation documentation is submitted.

Conflicts of interest are managed through immediate notification processes. Responsibility for appointing investigation decision makers rests with the Workplace Relations Manager. If the Chief Executive is the respondent, the Board Chair is notified.

We trust that the information being provided is of assistance. If you require further information, please email officialinformationrequests@fireandemergency.nz

Please note that because of the identified public interest in the information that you have requested, we intend to publish this response (with your personal details removed) on our website.

Nāku noa, nā



Aidan Saunders
Manager, Information Requests