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25 May 2026

Alan Riley
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Tēnā koe Alan,

Your Official Information Act 1982 request OIA2526-1155

Thank you for your email of 4 May 2026 to the Department of Internal Affairs, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

- *Under the Official Information Act 1982, I request the following information relating to recent decisions by Brooke van Velden regarding the structure of Lottery Distribution Committees:*
- *A copy of the Minister's final decision approving changes to the Lottery Distribution Committees, including any decision papers, briefings, or reports provided to the Minister.*
- *All advice, analysis, or recommendations provided by officials that informed this decision, including options considered.*
- *Any Cabinet papers, Cabinet minutes, or briefings relating to this matter.*
- *Any implementation plans, transition documents, or communications plans relating to the move to fewer Committees.*
- *Any correspondence (including emails, letters, and aide-mémoires) between the Minister and officials relating to this decision, from 1 January 2026 to the date of this request.*

Extension of your request

Under section 15A(1)(b) of the Act, the timeframe to respond to your request has been extended by 10 working days from 2 June 2026 to 16 June 2026. This is because the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request are such that a proper response to the request cannot reasonably be made within the original time limit.

I will endeavour to provide you with a response earlier if possible.



Accessing the Ombudsman

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my decision by the Office of the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

Penny Langley

Director Branch Performance

Partnerships and Commissions - Te Aukaha

Department of Internal Affairs - Te Tari Taiwhenua

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'PL'.



Appendix A

I request the following information under the Official Information Act.

This request is being made to both Lotto New Zealand and the Department of Internal Affairs. Each agency is expected to respond in respect of the information it holds, and its respective role in relation to Powerball design, decision-making, and regulatory oversight.

For clarity, I do not expect this request to be transferred in full between agencies. If any specific part of the request is more closely connected with the functions of the other agency, that part may be transferred under section 14 of the Act. However, the receiving agency should still respond to the remainder of the request. This request has been structured so that each agency holds distinct but complementary information.

This request relates to both:

- *The 2026 Powerball structural changes, and*
- *Any previous structural (“matrix”) changes to Lotto/Powerball since 1 January 2015, including changes to draw frequency*

1. Decision-Level Documents (Primary Focus)

All final Board papers, executive papers, or formal decision documents that:

- *Recommended or approved changes to Powerball structure*
- *Set out the reasons for those changes*

Including any material addressing:

- *Expected changes in ticket sales, revenue, or returns*
- *Expected changes in player behaviour or participation*
- *Any identified or anticipated gambling harm risks*

2. Key Evidence Relied On (Decision-Critical Only)

The core analysis or evidence relied upon by decision-makers (not general background material), including:

- *Any modelling or analysis showing relationships between:*
 - *Jackpot size*
 - *Rollover frequency*
 - *Draw frequency*
 - *Odds of winning*



- *Player spending or ticket sales*
- *Any conclusions drawn that:*
 - *Changes to these features are expected to increase participation or expenditure*

3. Relationship Between Game Design, Spending, and Harm

Any documents provided to, or relied upon by, decision-makers that:

- *Identify or analyse the relationship between:*
 - *Game design features (including jackpot size, rollover frequency, draw frequency, and odds of winning)*
 - *Player spending or participation*

And:

- *Any material that considers or acknowledges that:*
 - *Increased spending or participation may result in increased, or be associated with increased, gambling harm*

Including any documents that:

- *Explicitly or implicitly link:*
 - *Increased revenue or returns*
 - *With increased player expenditure or intensity of play*

4. Harm Awareness and Risk Identification

Any material provided to decision-makers that:

- *Identifies, assesses, or acknowledges risks of gambling harm arising from:*
 - *Increased jackpot sizes*
 - *Increased rollover frequency*
 - *Increased draw frequency*
 - *Reduced odds of winning*

Including any reference to impacts on:

- *Financially vulnerable individuals*
- *High-frequency or high-spend players*

5. Trade-Offs Between Revenue and Harm

Any documents that:

- *Discuss, assess, or acknowledge that:*



- *Changes expected to increase revenue or ticket sales may increase, or be associated with increased, gambling harm*

And:

- *Any material that records how those competing considerations were:*
 - *Weighed*
 - *Balanced*
 - *Or deemed acceptable*

6. Prior Change Reviews (Outcome Evidence)

Any post-implementation reviews or evaluations of previous Powerball changes that assess:

- *Whether those changes resulted in:*
 - *Increased player spending*
 - *Increased frequency of play*
 - *Changes in participation levels*
 - *Any indicators of gambling harm*

7. Frequency of Play (Draw Changes)

Any decision-level documents or key evidence relied upon that assessed or identified the impact of:

- *Increasing draw frequency (including the move to two weekly draws)*

on:

 - *Player participation*
 - *Frequency or intensity of play*
 - *Player expenditure*
 - *Any gambling harm risks*

8. External Expert or Regulatory Input (If Relied Upon)

Any formal expert advice or regulatory input relied upon in decision-making, including:

- *Gambling harm or public health advice*
- *Feedback from relevant government agencies or regulators*

9. Scope Clarification



To ensure focus on substantive material, this request is limited to:

- *Final decision documents*
- *Key supporting evidence relied upon*

This request does not seek:

- *Drafts*
- *Routine operational communications*
- *General background material*

10. Timeframe

1 January 2015 to present

11. Withholding and Public Interest

If any information is withheld, please provide:

- *The specific grounds under the Act, and*
- *The public interest balancing analysis supporting that decision*

There is strong public interest in understanding:

- *Whether structural changes to a government-owned gambling product were designed in a way that:*
- *Increases revenue through increased player spending*
- *While potentially increasing gambling harm*

Recent reporting indicates that the upcoming changes will:

- *Reduce the odds of winning the top prize*
- *Increase jackpot sizes and rollover frequency*

These design changes raise legitimate questions about the relationship between game design, revenue generation, and gambling harm.

My intention is to share the information with the public via the media hence the higher public interest weighing that I ask be applied to this request.