

18 May 2026

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-50313

Miss M Quicken

By email: fyi-request-34668-9b1b8149@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Miss Quicken

Request for information 2026-202

I refer to your request for information dated 9 May 2026, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 9 May 2026. You have requested the following:

“Dear Wellington Regional Council,

As part of the procurement strategy, Greater Wellington intends to rollout announcements at other Wellington regional stations

These messages could be anything from next train departures to platform changes to Health and Safety warning messages (e.g. Please stand back from the platform, Freight Train passing through).

Greater Wellington will be leveraging existing suppliers to do this work.

Please provide:

A) Impact assessment on Sensory disabled transport users

It is known that loud announcements can disorient passengers given audio signals cannot be filtered out but can only be added.

How is the council going to manage the unnecessary auditory overload and pointless repetitive announcements that is the experience internationally where the announcements lose value and people start to ignore those announcements in worst case ?

I understand it is to be event based but are you planning on ensuring that no automated

announcements are to drive public transport users unable to use the services due to auditory pollution that cannot be ignored.”

Greater Wellington’s response follows:

Your request has been assessed under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act).

Context for audio announcements at outer stations

The introduction of audio announcements at rail stations is currently under consideration. The availability of funding would influence the scope and extent of any system Metlink might implement.

The introduction of audio announcements at rail stations would form part of Metlink’s wider accessibility programme and is intended to improve access to public transport information for all users, including blind and low vision passengers, people with accessibility needs, and all customers during service disruptions. The system would also improve customer safety and awareness, providing important operational and safety announcements at stations.

Metlink sought advice from an independent audio engineering company to establish audio standards at stations. Any solution would be required to specifically consider the information needs of all customers, including those who may experience stress or sensory overload related to noise exposure. The system would also be required to account for station acoustics, surrounding environments and adjust the volume based on the time of day. For example, midnight to 6am – low volume, 6am to 9am – high volume, 9am to 3pm – medium. Metlink would also be able to change the volume or schedule per site remotely.

Metlink acknowledges excessive or repetitive announcements can negatively affect some passengers. Accordingly, the intention is to provide targeted operational, customer information, and safety messaging where appropriate, instead of constant background announcements. Targeted announcements relate to train arrivals and departures, disruptions, platform changes, and safety notifications.

As part of further work, Metlink would also consider the implementation of an Auracast solution. This would allow passengers to choose how they receive information while using public transport. Customers using headphones/earbuds that are Auracast capable can choose whether or not to listen to announcements and set the volume for their level of comfort.

The project forms part of commitments under the Metlink Public Transport Accessibility Charter 2021 to improve accessibility and customer experience across the rail network.

Impact Assessment

We have not completed any impact assessment for Sensory disabled transport users. We are therefore refusing your request for any impact assessment for sensory disabled transport users in regard to this project under section 17(e) of the Act in that the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

When refusing under this section we are required to consider consulting the requester. We have considered this and do not believe that consulting with you would change our decision to refuse to provide the information to this request.

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Act.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where appropriate. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Samantha Gain

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Waka-ā-atea | Group Manager Metlink