



OIA16-0460

20 OCT 2016

Graham Carter
C/- fyi.org.nz

Dear Graham Carter

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your official information request received by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) on 16 August 2016 regarding *all information, copies of emails from the Minister and MPI fisheries management on the use of square mesh netting versus diamond mesh netting.*

MPI has identified multiple references to each type of netting in various reports, briefings and aide memoires. However, the majority of these references do not refer to both square mesh and diamond mesh netting together, and therefore, are out of scope of your request as they do not provide a direct comparison of the two netting designs.

One comparison between both netting types was identified to be within the scope of your request.

An extract from briefing **B14-463: Fisheries Management Quarterly Update – 1st Quarter 2015** is released to you under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). This extract has been identified and released as it directly compares square and diamond mesh netting. Personal identifiers have been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA to protect the privacy of natural persons. The remainder of this document is out of scope of your request.

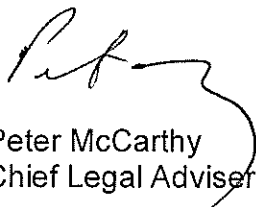
Your request for emails from the Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries Management regarding square mesh versus diamond mesh netting requires searching through multiple years' worth of internal emails that mention either "diamond mesh netting" or "square mesh netting", and identifying whether the emails directly compare the netting styles. Therefore your request is refused pursuant to section 18(f) of the OIA, as your request would require substantial collation and research.

In making the decision to refuse part of your the request pursuant to section 18(f) of the OIA on the grounds that the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research, we considered this request together with your other requests relating to fisheries management issues. We also considered whether fixing a charge would enable us to grant your request. Given the considerable amount of information requested, we have decided that charging would not be appropriate. The diversion of resources required to meet your requests would unreasonably interfere with the operations of MPI.

Secondly, pursuant to section 18B, we considered consulting you about revising the scope of the requests. Given the substantial amount of information requested, we do not see that entering into correspondence on this issue is likely to refocus the requests down to a manageable scale.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the OIA to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of our decision to refuse information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right and then loops back down towards the typed name below.

Peter McCarthy
Chief Legal Adviser

Excerpt from B14-463

89. MPI is also supporting work being undertaken by [withheld under s9(2)(a)] to reduce unwanted bycatch from trawl nets. [withheld under s9(2)(a)] has been working on net gear development in the Hawke Bay for some time. The technology [withheld under s9(2)(a)] is developing revolves around using diamond shape rather than square shaped mesh in the trawl net. [withheld under s9(2)(a)] claims that the technology reduces bycatch significantly. Overseas this type of net has been proven to reduce capture of elongate species such as gurnard but less effective in preventing bycatch of diamond shaped fish such as snapper, tarakihi and trevally. Field work is currently underway to test these claims. MPI is supporting this work through a special permit to allow testing of the gear and limited direct funding in partnership with other industry groups.