

2 May 2018

Tony Randle  
[fyi-request-7507-b2d79433@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-7507-b2d79433@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Ref: OIA-3684

Dear Mr Randle

**Request made under the Official Information Act 1982**

Thank you for your email of 23 March 2018 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*Today the Stuff news site had a story titled "Government-funded report advocated cheaper Wellington rail fares - but it was never published" [www.stuff.co.nz/national/102279167/government-funded-report-advocated-cheaper-wellington-rail-fares-but-it-was-never-published](http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/102279167/government-funded-report-advocated-cheaper-wellington-rail-fares-but-it-was-never-published) This story was based on a NZTA report called "Metropolitan rail: external benefits and optimal funding", The story claimed the report "evaluated optimal subsidies for rail in Wellington and Auckland" and it was "released last month under the Official Information Act".*

*1) Can I have a copy of the Metropolitan rail: external benefits and optimal funding Report referred to in this story ?*

*2) Can I have a copy of the report Terms of Reference and/or letter of engagement and/or other information that outlined the purpose and deliverables of this report when it was commissioned ?*

*3) Can I have a copy of the supporting calculations from the report consultants that "found rail fares in Wellington should be subsidised by between 55 and 100 per cent, and that the "average" fare should be about \$1.70" ?*

*4) Can I have a copy of the "internal peer review" of the report referred to in the story ?*

*If this information is held in electronic form, I would prefer it was provided in its complete and original electronic format.*

The following documents fall within the scope of your request.

- Attachment 1: *Metropolitan rail: external benefits and optimal funding, February 2015* - A research report that considered the optimal level of fare subsidies on metropolitan rail services. Please note that the report was not published.
- Attachment 2: *TAR 12/10 - Schedule 1 - Final and agreed research brief* - This details the research purpose and methodology agreed with Covec.
- Attachment 3: *Caveat for research report RR 552 - Metropolitan rail: external benefits and optimal funding* - The internal advice received from an NZ Transport Agency staff member, referenced as "internal peer review" in the article on Stuff.

In relation to question 3 of your request, the Transport Agency was not provided with the supporting calculations. As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist. For your reference, page 83 of Attachment 1 references the \$1.70 average fare you noted that the consultant's had calculated in relation to rail fares in Wellington.

Certain information in attachment 2 has been withheld under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Act as it would prejudice the commercial position of Covec. Some phone numbers in attachment 2 have been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of the natural person.

Attachment 3 is being withheld in full by the Transport Agency under section 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 department or organisation in the course of their duty. However, in accordance with section 16(1)(e) of the Act, I can provide a comprehensive summary of the document.

With respect to the information that has been withheld, I do not consider there are any other factors which would render it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available.

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to withhold this information. The contact details for the Ombudsman can be located at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

If you would like to discuss this reply with the Transport Agency, please contact Andrew Robertson, Acting Manager Research and Evaluation Programme, by email to [andrew.robertson@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:andrew.robertson@nzta.govt.nz) or by phone on 09 969 9834.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Helen Aki', enclosed in a light blue rectangular border.

**Helen Aki**  
Senior Manager, Research & Analytics