



MP for Wigram

Minister of Energy and Resources

Minister Responsible for the Earthquake Commission

Minister for Greater Christchurch Regeneration

Minister of Research, Science and Innovation

OIA18-113

Ben Moore

fyi-request-7996-ac92324a@requests.fyi.org.nz

02 AUG 2018

Dear Ben

Thank you for your email of 6 June 2018 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I note your release in regards to the cessation of the granting of petroleum exploration permits (accessed by me here:

<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/feature/block-offer-2018-release-information>).

In the preamble, you note that some information within the documents has been withheld subject to various sections of the OIA.

However, I note that large sections of the documents have also been withheld as 'out of scope'. I request the content of these sections, and the rationale for not following the Principle of Availability here.

To clarify, the scope of the public release on 5 June 2018 was: advice and communications provided to me as Minister of Energy and Resources relating to Block Offer 2018 and the decision to stop offering future offshore petroleum exploration permits.

You will have noted that no information in the thirteen briefings released had information redacted as out of scope. This is because briefings from officials are generally provided to me in response to specific requests for advice, which in this instance were within the scope outlined in the paragraph above. Communications and correspondence, however, are received by my office from various agencies, organisations and Ministers' offices, and these communications may touch on any range of current topics across Ministerial and agency portfolios and responsibilities. To have included those parts of the correspondence in the 5 June release would have distracted from the intent of the release, as they in no way informed the Government's decision around Block Offer 2018 or the decision to stop offering future offshore petroleum exploration permits. I therefore made the decision to redact that information as out of scope.

Further to your request, I have identified the 39 pages of the original 251 pages of correspondence and communications released on 5 June that contained out-of-scope information. The contents of this material required reconsideration under the Act, and I am releasing this material (totalling 45 pages, to ensure those 39 pages are released

within the context they were received) with this letter. Some information has been withheld under the following sections of the Act:

- 9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons
- 9(2)(b)(ii) to protect information where the making available of the information would likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information
- 9(2)(f)(iv) to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials
- 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.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of my decision on this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Woods', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Dr Megan Woods
Minister of Energy and Resources