

28 March 2019

Anna Bracewell-Worrall
Politics Reporter
Mediaworks
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REF: OIA-4765

Dear Anna

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 28 February 2019 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Can I please request all communications regarding the delay of the business case for light rail to Auckland Airport via Dominion Road, from July 2018 to the present.

I would expect that to include relevant meeting minutes and reports, and emails sent by NZTA board members to other NZTA employees or board members, and emails sent by NZTA officials to officials from Auckland Transport, Auckland Council or the Transport Minister's office.

On 8 March 2019 we asked you to refine your request as we considered the scope of your request to be very broad. As we advised you, the initial email sweep of the NZ Transport Agency's emails returned over 10,000 emails that would need to be assessed to see if they fall within the scope of your request. This task would place an unreasonable administrative burden on the Transport Agency.

To date, we have not received your refined request. Therefore, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act as the information you have requested cannot be made available without substantial collation and research. Should you wish to provide a refined request, we will be happy to consider it and will process this as a new request under the Act.

However, I am able to make some general comments regarding the status of the business case for light rail.

In May 2018, the Minister of Transport mandated the Transport Agency to lead the delivery of the City Centre to Māngere Light Rail (CC2M) on an accelerated basis. The initial focus was to develop an Indicative Business Case (IBC) by December 2018 in line with the Transport Agency's best practice guidelines to support an accelerated delivery of the project. To meet this timeline, the Transport

Agency and its partners adopted the scheme developed by Auckland Transport within the Auckland Transport Alignment Project (ATAP) and constrained development of the scheme to fit with the mandate of accelerated delivery.

An IBC is being developed and shared with our project partners, including the Ministry of Transport, for review and feedback. However, further work is required to progress the IBC to a Detailed Business Case.

The light rail project team engaged with the Transport Agency's Board while developing the CC2M IBC, including the 16 November 2018 Board meeting. Minutes from that meeting are publicly available online at <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/about-us/about-the-nz-transport-agency/our-board/board-meeting-minutes/>.

NZ Infra, a joint venture of New Zealand Super Fund (NZSF) and CDPQ Infra, has presented an unsolicited alternative approach to fund, design, build and operate light rail in Auckland, based on a public-public investment model. This is currently being reviewed by the Ministry of Transport and Treasury. The light rail project team has been supporting this review.

To provide certainty as soon as possible the Government requested the MOT and Treasury provide their advice on alternative funding, delivery and operating models in March 2019. Market engagement was temporarily deferred during this time. This advice has now been received by the Ministers and is being considered.

Until the Ministry of Transport/Treasury review of the NZ Infra unsolicited proposal is complete, key decisions arising from the IBC cannot be submitted to the Transport Agency's Board for endorsement as it would be inappropriate to consider it in isolation.

For your information, parts of the IBC will soon be publicly available on the CC2M project website at www.nzta.govt.nz/CC2M with some redactions made under the Act.

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to refuse this request. The contact details for the Ombudsman can be located at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

If you would like to discuss this reply with the Transport Agency, please contact Andrew Knackstedt, Senior Manager Media, by email to andrew.knackstedt@nzta.govt.nz or by phone on 04 894 6285.

Yours sincerely



Carl Devlin
Head of Light Rail