

3 November 2020

George Block  
Reporter  
Stuff.co.nz  
[george.block@stuff.co.nz](mailto:george.block@stuff.co.nz)

REF: OIA-7179

Dear George

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

Thank you for your email of 22 September 2020 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- *Details of all plans, contingencies etc the NZTA had in place in the event of traffic damaging a structural support member on the Auckland Harbour Bridge, prior to this happening on September 18, 2020.*
- *All communications between Transport Services general manager Brett Gliddon and the NZTA media and communications team following the bridge incident on September 18.*
- *Whether anyone in the NZTA raised concerns in the five years before the crash as to the possibility of damage to a structural support member by traffic, and if so, details of those concerns (including emails and meeting minutes).*
- *All internal emails discussing or mentioning the possibility of the bridge collapsing due to the damage to the steel support member.*
- *The NZTA's current estimate as to the lifespan of the bridge's clip-on lanes;*
- *The NZTA's current estimate as to the lifespan of the original bridge structure (and the current estimated lifespan of the box truss, if different).*
- *All emails between Auckland Transport and the NZTA regarding the bridge closure, from 18 September 2020 to 22 September 2020 inclusive.*
- *All emails between Auckland Council and the NZTA regarding the bridge closure, from 18 September 2020 to 22 September 2020 inclusive.*
- *All minutes from meetings between Auckland Council and NZTA regarding the bridge closure.*
- *How much the NZTA has spent on the proposed temporary fix to the damaged structural support member on the Auckland Harbour Bridge following the truck crash on Friday September 18, broadly broken down by where the money went (e.g. materials, consultants, peer review etc).*
- *How much the NZTA has spent on the permanent fix to the damaged structural support member on the Auckland Harbour Bridge following the truck crash on Friday September 18?*

On 20 October 2020, Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency wrote to you to advise you of an extension of 10 working days for response to your request. We undertook to provide you with a response by 4 November 2020.

Each part of your request is addressed in turn below.

**1. *Details of all plans, contingencies etc ... in the event of traffic damaging a structural support member on the Auckland Harbour Bridge..***

Excerpts from three documents have been identified as within scope of your request and are enclosed. Please refer to the document schedule at Appendix A for details of these documents (**Attachments 1-3**). Certain information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons.

**2. *All communications between Transport Services general manager Brett Gliddon and the NZTA media and communications team following the bridge incident on September 18.***

A total of 25 email threads have been identified as within scope of this part of your request. Eight email threads are enclosed as **Attachment 4**. Certain information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons.

Seventeen email threads are withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act. This section allows for the withholding of information to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty.

**3. *Whether anyone in the NZTA raised concerns in the five years before the crash as to the possibility of damage to a structural support member by traffic, and if so, details of those concerns (including emails and meeting minutes).***

We have not identified any record of any Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency staff members raising concerns about the possibility of damage to a structural support member by traffic in the previous five years. Damage to the bridge is identified in the Emergency Management Plan, with the relevant excerpts provided in response to part 1 of your request (**Attachment 1**).

**4. *All internal emails discussing or mentioning the possibility of the bridge collapsing due to the damage to the steel support member.***

I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act because the documents alleged to contain the information requested do not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate them, cannot be found.

Soon after the damage occurred on 18 September 2020, engineers established that there was no risk to the structural integrity of the Bridge. The Bridge has been designed so that the load can be supported by the other struts should one of the struts be damaged/taken out of action.

**5. *The NZTA's current estimate as to the lifespan of the bridge's clip-on lanes; and original bridge structure***

The Auckland Harbour Bridge is a critical asset to the Auckland motorway network and carries a number of utilities across the Waitemata Harbour. Given its strategic importance, we currently inspect, monitor and maintain the Bridge so that it will last indefinitely.

Waka Kotahi has a team of engineering specialists that undertakes a wide range of activities to ensure the safe and reliable operation of the Bridge. These activities are regularly tested and challenged to ensure they are consistent with international best practice for significant bridges and appropriate for the safe-guarding of the Bridge.

**6. All emails between Auckland Transport and the NZTA regarding the bridge closure, from 18 September 2020 to 22 September 2020 inclusive.**

A total of 22 email threads have been identified as within scope of this part of your request. Thirteen email threads are enclosed as **Attachment 5**. Certain information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons.

Nine email threads are withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act. This section allows for the withholding of information to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty.

**7. All emails between Auckland Council and the NZTA regarding the bridge closure, from 18 September 2020 to 22 September 2020 inclusive.**

Three email threads have been identified as within scope of this part of your request. One email thread is enclosed as **Attachment 6**. Certain information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons. The emails in the thread enclosed have also been sent to Auckland Councillor Chris Darby, Deputy Mayor Bill Cashmore and Mayor Phil Goff (via his Chief of Staff). As that thread is a duplicate, it is not enclosed.

One email thread is withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act. This section allows for the withholding of information 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.

**8. All minutes from meetings between Auckland Council and NZTA regarding the bridge closure.**

I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act because the documents alleged to contain the information requested do not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate them, cannot be found.

**9. How much the NZTA has spent on the proposed temporary fix to the damaged structural support member on the Auckland Harbour Bridge...**

I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(g) of the Act because the information is not held by Waka Kotahi. The information is not held because the work undertaken to repair the bridge has not yet been invoiced. We expect our suppliers to invoice for their work by mid-November 2020.

**10. How much the NZTA has spent on the permanent fix to the damaged structural support member on the Auckland Harbour Bridge following the truck crash on Friday September 18**

I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(g) of the Act because the information is not held by Waka Kotahi. The information is not held because the work undertaken to repair the

bridge has not yet been invoiced. We expect our suppliers to invoice for their work by mid-November 2020.

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 on this request. 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 Waka Kotahi, please contact Andy Knackstedt, by email to [andrew.knackstedt@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:andrew.knackstedt@nzta.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Wayne Oldfield', written in a cursive style.

**Wayne Oldfield**  
Senior Manager, System Management

## Appendix A – OIA-7179 Document Schedule

Ref	Document	Date	For release?	Information being withheld/reason for withholding
1.	<p>ASM - Emergency Management Plan</p> <p>Excerpts from Appendix G:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G7 – Bridge Strike Incidents</li> <li>• G13 – Breakdowns on Auckland Harbour Bridge</li> <li>• G14 - Serious Incidents requiring closure of the Auckland Harbour Bridge</li> </ul>	16 March 2020	Yes	Released in full.
2.	<p>Total Bridge Services – Work Instruction Manual WP-1502:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excerpt – Call-out Scenario Flow Chart – Bridge Impact</li> </ul>	20 October 2011	Yes, with redactions	Certain information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.
3.	<p>AHB Risk Register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excerpt – I3 Truck Strike</li> </ul>	July 2020	Yes	Released in full.
4.	Brett Gliddon emails	18-22 September 2020	Yes, with redactions	<p>Eight email threads are enclosed.</p> <p>Certain information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.</p> <p>Seventeen email threads are withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act.</p>
5.	Auckland Transport emails	18-22 September 2020	Yes, with redactions	<p>Thirteen email threads are enclosed.</p> <p>Certain information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.</p> <p>Nine email threads are withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act.</p>
6.	Auckland Council emails	18-22 September 2020	Yes, with redactions	<p>One email thread is enclosed.</p> <p>Certain information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.</p> <p>One email thread is withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act.</p>