

26 July 2023



REF: OIA-13138

Dear 

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

Thank you for your email of 19 July 2023 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*[...] a copy of the independent review into the Auckland Harbour Bridge wind speed restrictions completed in March 2023, as mentioned in reply to Written Question 20375 (2023).*

Following an incident in September 2020 when strong wind gusts blew a truck against the overarch of the Auckland Harbour Bridge (AHB) and damaged the structure, the bridge was closed for two and a half weeks with a five-day full bridge closure required to replace a damaged bridge strut. These closures and lane restrictions caused significant disruptions for Aucklanders, and a major loss of productivity for businesses in the region.

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency has a responsibility to protect public safety and to protect the structural integrity of the AHB. Following the 2020 bridge strike, Waka Kotahi reviewed and revised the high wind intervention thresholds for travel restrictions on the bridge in order to protect road users and the bridge structure and prevent a recurrence of the serious disruption Aucklanders experienced at the time. The protocols in place for bridge use during high winds range from reduced speed and detours for certain vehicles, to lane closures or full closures of the bridge, depending on wind speed thresholds.

The current thresholds are evidence-based and in line with international best practice, based on recommendations from international operators of structures with similar vulnerability to wind as the AHB. Our current thresholds and alert system for bridge operations were independently reviewed by Aurecon in 2023 and found to be appropriate and robust. This report is available at: [www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/projects/auckland-harbour-bridge/AHB-desktop-risk-assessment-of-wind-related-vehicle-incidents-report.pdf](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/projects/auckland-harbour-bridge/AHB-desktop-risk-assessment-of-wind-related-vehicle-incidents-report.pdf).

I am therefore refusing your request for this information under section 18(d) of the Act, as the information you have requested is publicly available.

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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

In line with Waka Kotahi policy, this response will soon be published on our website, with personal information removed.

If you would like to discuss this reply with Waka Kotahi, please contact Ministerial Services by email to [official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Peter Brown', with a stylized, cursive script.

**Peter Brown**  
National Manager Maintenance and Operations