

13 February 2024

[REDACTED]

REF: OIA-14259

Dear [REDACTED]

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 11 December 2023 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Any official internal communication to staff that Waka Kotahi has sent regarding any update, removal, amendment or addition to its name, made since 13 October 2023.

Any internal policies, principles, rules or guidelines pertaining to either the name or branding of "Waka Kotahi" or "New Zealand Transport Agency" that have been added, amended, updated or deleted, since 13 October 2023.

Meeting agendas and minutes, including those not open to the public as the Official Information Act permits, pertaining to the name or branding of "Waka Kotahi" or "New Zealand Transport Agency", created, filed, modified or deleted since 13 October 2023.

Internal correspondence of all electronic means,

pertaining to the name or branding of "Waka Kotahi" or "New Zealand Transport Agency", sent or received since 13 October 2023.

Each part of your request is addressed in turn below.

Any official internal communication to staff that Waka Kotahi has sent regarding any update, removal, amendment or addition to its name, made since 13 October 2023.

The following documents fall within the scope of this part of your request and are enclosed:

- OIA-14259 – Attachment 1 - People Leader Slides.pdf
- OIA-14259 – Attachment 2 - Onramp Excerpt.pdf
- OIA-14259 – Attachment 3 - CE Update Email.pdf
- OIA-14259 – Attachment 4 - CE Update Excerpt.mp4

Any internal policies, principles, rules or guidelines pertaining to either the name or branding of "Waka Kotahi" or "New Zealand Transport Agency" that have been added, amended,

The only change made in this regard is a note added to the 'our name' section of our internal brand guidelines. This was updated on 29 November 2023 and an excerpt is provided below:

Our name

We're reviewing how we say our name, to give effect to the policy of the new government that public service organisations should have their primary name in English. We'll let everyone know when we've updated this advice.

Our full name is **Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency**.

Use our full name 'Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency' when you first mention our organisation in a document. Shorten our name to 'Waka Kotahi' every other time you use it in the communication.

'Waka' means 'vessel' and 'kotahi' means 'one' so our Māori name conveys the concept of 'travelling together as one' and embraces integration, affordability, safety, responsiveness and sustainability.

The organisation is a single entity and so takes a singular verb, eg 'Waka Kotahi **is** a Crown entity' – not 'Waka Kotahi are a Crown entity'.

Don't use these abbreviations: WK, NZTA or the agency.

With the exception of the above, NZTA has not updated any internal policies, principles, rules or guidelines pertaining to its rebranding.

For context, the Minister of Transport has requested NZTA plan to give effect to the National and New Zealand First Coalition Agreement to ensure all public service departments have their primary name in English, except for those related to Māori. Changes to the likes of policies and guidelines will be made once all-of-government guidance is received to fully understand the extent of the requirements.

As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as the document alleged to contain this information does not exist.

Meeting agendas and minutes, including those not open to the public as the Official Information Act permits, pertaining to the name or branding of "Waka Kotahi" or "New Zealand Transport Agency", created, filed, modified or deleted since 13 October 2023.

The following documents fall within the scope of this part of your request and are enclosed. Please note that as the papers contain a significant amount of out-of-scope information, we have provided excerpts of the relevant information:

- OIA-14259 – Attachment 5 - ELT Paper Excerpt – 30 November 2023 meeting.pdf

Certain information within this document has been withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act 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 public service agency or organisation in the course of their duty.

- OIA-14259 – Attachment 6 - Board Paper Excerpt – 12 December 2023 meeting.pdf

The minutes for the Board meeting held on 12 December 2023 are still being prepared, however, they are expected to be published by the end of March 2024 as per our proactive release policy. The minutes will be available online at: www.nzta.govt.nz/about-us/about-waka-kotahi-nz-transport-agency/our-board/board-meeting-minutes/

Therefore, your request for meeting minutes is refused under section 18(d) of the Act as this information will soon be publicly available.

Internal correspondence of all electronic means, pertaining to the name or branding of "Waka Kotahi" or "New Zealand Transport Agency", sent or received since 13 October 2023.

On 13 December 2023, we emailed you to advise that an agency-wide email sweep had been carried out in an effort to locate all emails within the scope of this part of your request. You were advised that the sweep returned over 200,000 items and in order to determine which of these are in scope, each item would need to be manually reviewed which would take a considerable amount of time. As such, unless your request could be refined to limit the scope, this part of your request would be refused under section 18(f) of the Act as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation and research.

On 13 December 2023, you refined your request to just electronic communications within the NZTA Executive/Senior Leadership team and our branding/marketing/communications team.

This part of your request is partially refused under section 18(d) of the Act as the information requested will soon be publicly available.

For context, communications within the Executive Leadership Team and our design/branding/communications teams have been collated in response to an earlier request for all correspondence regarding the NZTA rebrand. In line with NZTA's proactive release policy, this response will soon be published online at: www.nzta.govt.nz/about-us/official-information-act/official-information-act-responses/.

The documents are still being finalised for publication; however, they will be available at the above website link under the heading '*Name change correspondence*' within the next two weeks.

Please note that certain information in the content soon to be published has been withheld for the following reasons:

- Section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of individuals.
- Section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act 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 public service agency or organisation in the course of their duty.

In addition to the information that will soon be publicly available, additional documents have been located that fall within the scope of your request. These are enclosed in the following attachment:

- OIA-14259 – Attachment 7 – Correspondence.pdf

Certain information within the enclosed documents has been withheld under both sections 9(2)(a) and 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act.

Further information has also been withheld under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Act so as to not unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.

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 both refuse parts of your request and withhold certain information. The contact details for the Ombudsman can be located at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

As noted in our acknowledgement email of 11 December 2023, the information requested contains names of NZTA staff. As we have not received a response as to whether the inclusion of names is required, we have deemed these to be out of scope of your request, with the exception of the Chief Executive and members of the Executive Leadership Team as these are publicly available.

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

If you would like to discuss this reply with NZTA, please contact Ministerial Services by email at official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Jones', written in a cursive style.

Karen Jones

Group General Manager – Engagement and Partnership