

20 March 2023

[REDACTED]

REF: OIA-12115

Dear [REDACTED]

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

Thank you for your email of 25 February 2023 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) regarding the Kōpū Hill Road repair options:

1. *Who makes up the 'committee' managing this process?*
2. *What are their qualifications and experience?*
3. *What private sector contractors have been involved to date and what are their recommendations or input?*
4. *What is the weekly economic cost to the Coro while the road is closed?*
5. *What is the additional cost and emissions for transport and commuters having to take the longer routes?*

For the sake of clarity, I will respond to each of your questions in turn.

1. *Who makes up the 'committee' managing this process?*

A project team has been established and is focussing on developing and assessing the options for the rebuild of State Highway 25A (SH25A). This includes a Waka Kotahi Senior Project Manager, consultants Beca (who will prepare the detailed options assessment report) and the contractor Higgins (who is currently managing the closure and constructing the access tracks for the drilling rigs).

Other companies involved include Monocle, an environmental consultancy who will also manage the resource consenting required, and Align Group, who will manage land access outside the road reserve, if required.

2. *What are their qualifications and experience?*

Management of the SH25A slip remediation sits with the Waka Kotahi Capital Projects team within Transport Services, as it is a large project with many complex facets to consider. Waka Kotahi employs and contracts qualified staff and contractors who have a proven track record and experience delivering large scale delivery projects.

Your request for the project team's qualifications and experience is refused under section 18(g) of the Act, as information about each individual contractors' qualifications and experience is not held by Waka Kotahi.

3. *What private sector contractors have been involved to date and what are their recommendations or input?*

As noted above, Beca and Higgins are working on this project, as well as Monocle and Align Group.

Several options have been identified so far and they fit into three broad categories:

- Retreat north and construct a bypass around the site
- Replace the lost section of road with a bridge
- Rebuild the supporting ground with retaining walls

To determine the best option, we first need to complete geotechnical investigations which are currently underway. This information will help inform the options assessment report. Each option has its own challenges, but the ground conditions will be a significant factor in determining the preferred option as well as the time required to get materials and resources to complete the construction.

4. *What is the weekly economic cost to the Coro while the road is closed?*

5. *What is the additional cost and emissions for transport and commuters having to take the longer routes?*

This aspect of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act as the information you have requested is not held by Waka Kotahi and we have no grounds to believe it is held by another agency or organisation.

We appreciate that this closure impacts the local economy and everyday users. We don't have data around the economic cost to the Coromandel while this road is closed. At present, our efforts are focussed on rebuilding SH25A.

We acknowledge that this closure is adding extra traffic on the detour routes, as well as adding time and cost to journeys, and a plan has been developed to work on the Coromandel network which includes:

- An assessment of how traffic and truck volumes will change around the Peninsula.
- Prioritising the clearing of drains and culverts.
- Destination signage changes to help visitors find the best way to their destination.
- Assessment of safety and capacity of one-lane bridges and critical intersections.
- Prioritised vegetation clearance to maintain a clear space for heavy vehicles.
- Careful planning of the timing and type of maintenance work such as chip sealing and resurfacing to minimise impacts on road users and adjacent landowners and communities.
- Monitoring travel times around the Peninsula to ensure that any causes of significant delay are identified and quickly acted on.

Our current priorities are the safety of our people, and getting highways open as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, there is no short-term fix for SH25A. A number of options are being explored and we're committed to determining the best long-term solution.

You can stay updated on progress by subscribing to updates at the following link:  
<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/sh25-sh25a-thames-coromandel/sh25a-rebuild/>

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision on your 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 at [official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Kinvig', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

**Mark Kinvig**  
National Manager Infrastructure Delivery

