

27 May 2024

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

REF: OIA-15239

Dear [REDACTED]

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

Thank you for your email of 29 April 2024 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

1. *Information on the use of the SIMARD MD test in New Zealand, including:*
  - a. *whether the test is used in some parts of New Zealand but not others*
  - b. *whether NZTA recommends the use of the SIMARD MD test*
  
2. *Any advice received by NZTA, any internal briefing papers or other information relating to the SIMARD MD test having been discredited by the US National Institute of Health in 2021.*

I will address each part your request in turn.

1. ***Information on the use of the SIMARD MD test in New Zealand, including:***
  - a. ***whether the test is used in some parts of New Zealand but not others***
  - b. ***whether NZTA recommends the use of the SIMARD MD test***

There is no requirement by NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) for SIMARD MD tests to be used. Health practitioners will use their professional judgement on which test is required as part of a medical examination to determine fitness to drive. Health practitioners are not required to advise which test, if any, they have used.

NZTA provides general advice on cognitive function in chapter nine of the Medical Aspects of Fitness to Drive which is available online at: [www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/medical-aspects/Medical-aspects-of-fitness-to-drive-a-guide-for-health-practitioners.pdf](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/medical-aspects/Medical-aspects-of-fitness-to-drive-a-guide-for-health-practitioners.pdf).

**2. Any advice received by NZTA, any internal briefing papers or other information relating to the SIMARD MD test having been discredited by the US National Institute of Health in 2021.**

There has been no advice received by NZTA regarding the SIMARD MD test having been discredited by the US National Institute of Health in 2021. I am therefore refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist.

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

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 us by email to [official.correspondenc@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:official.correspondenc@nzta.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sue Hardiman', written in a cursive style.

**Sue Hardiman**  
Senior Manager Safer Drivers