DEPARTMENT OF THE
PRIME MINISTER AND **CABINET**
TE TARI O TE PIRIMIA ME TE KOMITI MATUA

29 November 2019

Reference: OIA-2019/20-0277

Dear

Official Information Act request relating to the process for sending emergency alerts

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 25 November 2019. You requested:

Can you please confirm the process used for sending Emergency Alerts to recipients.

I do not need detailed technical information, I just need to know the reason why some people receive alerts some minutes before others, even though they might be in the same physical location and on the same network.

I assume the alerts are sent in batches or similar, and if yes I would like to know how those batches are created (eg random selections, numerical order of receiving device ID, alphabetical order of device account holder etc).

Emergency Mobile Alerts are sent as a repeated broadcast, approximately every two minutes, which is the optimum value for successful operation of the system; they are not sent in batches. On Sunday, 24 November 2019, the system broadcast between 18:07 and 18:45.

Once a phone has successfully received the alert, it will display the message and sound the tone. Due to the performance and design of each device, the successful reception of the message can be delayed, in particular by what the phone's operating system is doing at the time it is received. So it may not be until a later iteration of the broadcast that a given phone will receive and display the message.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Stuart-Black
Director Civil Defence Emergency Management

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