



20 March 2026

Ref: OIA-2025/26-0540

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request relating to Decision to establish a Government inquiry to investigate the causes of the Mount Maunganui and Welcome Bay landslides

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, which was received by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) on 26 February 2026. You requested:

“This is a request under the Official Information Act for information about the decision to establish a Government inquiry to investigate the causes of the Mauao (Mount Maunganui) and Welcome Bay January 2026 landslides, rather than a Royal Commission.

My request is for:

- 1. Copies of the records of all internal and external meetings, correspondence and communications relating to the making of the inquiry decision.*
- 2. Copies of the records of all internal and external meetings, correspondence and communications relating to the decision to prefer a Government inquiry over a Royal Commission.*
- 3. Copies of all documents, created internally or externally, which were used as a basis for making the decision to prefer a Government inquiry over a Royal Commission. Documents includes, but is not limited to, cost estimates, comparative analyses and the possible affect of the findings of the inquiry on government agencies and local authorities.*
- 4. Copies of the records of all internal and external meetings, correspondence, communications, analyses and opinions at which the topics of accountability and legal liability were considered or raised.*
- 5. Copies of the records of all internal and external meetings, correspondence and communications relating to the terms of reference for the inquiry. I recognise that the terms of reference might not have been settled yet but I want this information for the period from the beginning of consideration up to the date of this request.*

The words records, documents, meetings, correspondence and communications where used in this request are to be given the widest possible interpretation. They are to include, for example, but are not limited to, texts, emails and hand-written notes, and committee meetings, workshops and other types of group meetings.”

We have interpreted your request as seeking information held by DPMC directly related to a decision to establish a Government Inquiry instead of a Royal Commission. For context, we note that as DPMC was not the decision-maker, we are unable to confirm whether any information held or created by us informed decisions related to the type of inquiry.

On 6 March 2026, we partially transferred your request to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA). As the Inquiry is more closely connected to the functions of the Associate Minister for Emergency Management, Hon Chris Penk, we also considered transferring your request to his office under section 14(b)(ii) of the Act. However, we understand that you have already made your request to Associate Minister Penk directly and therefore refer you to his office's response.

The present response covers any additional material held by DPMC – that is, material in scope of your request that would not be covered by DIA's or Associate Minister Penk's responses.

Information to be refused

Searches of DPMC's electronic databases for additional information relevant to your request have returned no relevant results. As such, your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as the requested information does not exist.

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.

Nāku noa, nā



Jeremy Clarke-Watson
Deputy Chief Executive, National Security and Resilience