



Te Kawa Mataaho

Public Service Commission

14 April 2025

9(2)(a) privacy

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Official Information Request

Our Ref: PSCR 2025-0248

I refer to your official information request received on 3 March 2025 for:

1. *Copies of any emails, letters, and other forms of correspondence sent or received by the Minister for Health / his office, Ministry of Health officials, or Health New Zealand officials, regarding the resignations of the Chief Executive of Health New Zealand (Margie Apa) and the Director-General of Health (Dr Diana Sarfati).*
2. *Copies of any internal discussions, including notes from meetings or written records, discussing potential candidates for replacement, transition plans, or recommendations for the future leadership of Health New Zealand and the Ministry of Health.*
3. *Copies of any other documents or information that are deemed relevant or related to the resignations of the Chief Executive of Health New Zealand and the Director-General of Health*

On 31 March 2025 we notified you of our need to extend the timeframe for our response to 14 April 2025 because consultations needed to make a decision on your request were such that a proper response could not reasonably be made within the original time limit.

Publicly available

Under the Public Service Act 2020 (the Act), the Public Service Commissioner is responsible for appointing and employing the chief executives who head the departments of the Public Service. The quality of the chief executive of any department is critical to its success. Public Service chief executive positions are difficult and demanding. They call for a broad range of skills, qualifications and experience.

Appointments to these roles are made under the provisions of the Act and any candidates for appointment have an expectation that they will not be publicly scrutinised and their details kept in the strictest confidence.

On 21 February 2025, Deputy Public Service Commissioner Heather Baggott announced the appointment of Ms Audrey Sonerson to the role of Acting Director-General of Health. On 1 April 2025, Ms Baggott announced that the Governor-General had agreed to the transfer of Ms Sonerson into the substantive role, effective 7 April 2025. Prior to this role, Ms Sonerson served as Secretary of Transport and Chief Executive, Ministry of Transport.

The Deputy Public Service Commissioner assessed Ms Sonerson's transfer in the public interest as it ensured a speedy appointment that would bring stability and effective leadership for the Ministry of Health at this critical time.

The following information is also covered by your request and is publicly available on the Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission website at the link provided for in the table below.

Item	Date	Document Description	Website Address
1	March 2025	APPOINTMENT PAPERS - Director-General of Health and Chief Executive of the Ministry of Health	Appointment-Director-General-of-Health-and-Chief-Executive-Ministry-of-Health-v2.pdf

Dr Dale Bramley has been appointed to the role of interim Chief Executive of Health New Zealand until a substantive appointment has been made.

Information not released

There are documents covered by parts one and three of your request that I have decided to withhold in full under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the OIA and do not consider the public interest outweighs the need to withhold the information.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact Enquiries@publicservice.govt.nz.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that we intend to publish this letter (with your personal details removed) on the Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission's website.

Yours sincerely



Nicky Dirks
Manager – Ministerial and Executive Services
Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission