



Te Kawa Mataaho

Public Service Commission

8 June 2021

9(2)(a) privacy

Dear 9(2)(a) privacy

Official Information Request

Our Ref: OIA 2021-0053

I refer to your official information request received on 10 May 2021 for:

“Use of Aotearoa instead of New Zealand

I wish to request under the official information act why Government departments are now naming New Zealand "Aotearoa", formally and only this instead of "New Zealand" and what the rationale is for this. I also request any English and Maori naming conventions and when one should be used over the other in English and Maori text.

New Zealand is the legal name of our country no official name change or referendum has taken place to change this. In English text this should be used accordingly. An Act of Parliament is needed to change the name of New Zealand and this has not occurred.

Aotearoa is also actually one of the Māori names for the North Island of New Zealand, and has never included the South Island of New Zealand. Only after modern revisionism has this occurred. The name change without consulting the public is divisive and exclusionary. The official name New Zealand should be being used by Government departments in English text.

Please provide justification for.”

Our Response

Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission does not hold information in relation to which government departments have chosen to formally replace New Zealand with “Aotearoa” in their communications, or their rationale for doing so. In order to obtain the justification that you have requested, you would need to request this from the specific government department directly.

We are therefore refusing your request under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act 1982 on the grounds the information requested does not exist.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact Ministerial.Services@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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicky Dirks', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nicky Dirks

Managing Principal – Ministerial Services
Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission