



16 December 2024

OIAD-1403

9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your emails of 7 and 24 October 2024 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- *all documents, correspondence, communications or information you hold relating to:*
 - a) the application by Trans-Tasman Resources Limited for inclusion of the Taranaki VTM Project in schedule 2 of the Fast-Track Approvals Bill (the Bill); and*
 - b) the consideration and assessment of the application, including by the Fast-Track Projects Advisory Group, officials and ministers.*

Cabinet has approved the inclusion of 149 projects in Schedule 2 of the Bill. Once the Bill is passed into law, these projects will be required to seek consent through Expert Panels (the Panels).

The fast-track process streamlines multiple approval steps for infrastructure and development projects that provide significant national or regional benefits. This process offers a consolidated, 'one-stop-shop' approach, ensuring more efficient decision-making. The Panels will have the authority to make final decisions on approvals for these projects and can impose conditions, including to manage environmental impacts.

The Ministry for the Environment is responsible for the Bill, while the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) will provide secretariat and administrative support to the Panels. Further information on the projects in the process of going through the Panels will be made available in due course on the EPA's website: <https://www.epa.govt.nz/fast-track-consenting/>.

Request for documents

As per our letter of 27 November 2024, your request for documents has been refused under section 18(d) of the Act as the information will soon be publicly available.

The Ministry has recently proactively released the applications for the 149 projects that Cabinet has approved for inclusion within Schedule 2 of the Bill. This material, including the application for Trans-Tasman Resources, can now be found at:

https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals-bill/fast-track-projects/?limit_41330=150.

The Ministry intends to release the applications for the remaining projects, alongside officials' advice to Ministers and the Advisory Group, by the end of the year. Once published, you will be able to navigate to this information at: <https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals-bill/>.

All material proactively released by the Ministry is carefully considered under the provisions of the Act. In some cases, information may be withheld under section 9 of the Act, but only where necessary and where the public interest in disclosure does not outweigh the need to withhold, as outlined in section 9(1).

Request for correspondence

We have interpreted your request for correspondence [and] communications relating to the application for the Taranaki VTM Project (the project) and the consideration and assessment of the application for that project by officials as being for correspondence directly and substantively related to that project. This excludes administrative emails, such as routine sign-out messages or emails discussing multiple applications where the project is mentioned only briefly and without meaningful detail.

We have identified 11 emails in scope of your request, as outlined in the below document table. I am releasing one document to you in full, and six documents to you in part, with some information withheld in accordance with the following sections of the Act:

- 9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons.
- 9(2)(ba)(i) to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.
- 9(2)(h) to maintain legal professional privilege.

The remaining four documents are being withheld in full, in accordance with the sections of the Act detailed in the below document table.

In terms of section 9(1) of the Act, I am satisfied that, in the circumstances, the withholding of this information is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable to make the information available in the public interest.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decisions relating to this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Please note that due to the public interest in our work the Ministry for the Environment publishes responses to requests for official information on our [OIA responses page](#) shortly after the response has been sent. If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Ministerial Services team: ministerials@mfe.govt.nz.

Nāku noa, nā



Ray Salter

Acting Manager – Fast Track Projects
Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao

Document table

No.	Date	Content	Decision	OIA Section/s applied
1	29 May 2024	[withheld under section 9(2)(h)]	Withhold in full	9(2)(h)
2	06 June 2024	Conflicts of Interest - decisions ahead of applications being loaded onto Diligent	Release in part	Some information has been redacted as out of scope
3	05 July 2024	[withheld under section 9(2)(h)]	Withhold in full	9(2)(h)
4	24 July 2024	Environmental Consents Information	Release as an excerpt, in part	9(2)(a), 16(e)
5	08 August 2024	Public release of Listed Projects application- 008	Release in part	9(2)(a), 18(d)
6	13 August 2024	Te Korowai o Ngāruahine Trust - Fast Track Approvals Bill - Listed Projects	Release in part	9(2)(a)
7	14 August 2024	Response Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Ruanui - Fast Track Approvals Bill - Listed Projects	Release in full	
8	15 August 2024	Fast Track Approvals Bill - Listed Projects	Release in part	9(2)(a)
9	23 September 2024	[withheld under section 9(2)(h)]	Withhold in full	9(2)(h)
10	05 October 2024	Fast-track Approvals Bill Listed Projects update	Release in part	9(2)(a)
11	16 October 2024	As requested	Withhold in full	9(2)(ba)(i)