

By email

26 August 2019

File Ref: OIAP-12424

Hugh Davenport

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Dear Mr Davenport

Request for information 2019-256

I refer to your request for information dated 29 July, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council on 29 July 2019. You have requested the following information:

“I would like to request the following information relating to footage acquired from a report produced by Jacobs titled “Safety Assessment of Chews Lane Pedestrian Crossing”, dated 30 May 2019. This report was provided to me by Matthew Lear (Manager Bus and Ferry Operations, previously Health and Safety Manager) on 21 June 2019...

[I would first like to give a bit of context around this report and my request for information will follow.

This report outlined the outcome of recording the Chews Lane crossing on Willis Street between 6am and 9am from 2 May 2019 to 7 May 2019, and also 9 May 2019. This report was in response to the thousands of red light running incidents reported to Metlink (including Bruce Horsefield (then Manager Customer Contact)) since 25 Oct 2018 on that intersection. Video footage was provided for all these incidents. The footage was gathered using artificial intelligence techniques to determine whether a bus is running a red light, and found on average at least 50 buses ran red lights on this intersection every day. This report appears to be the only tangible outcome from the 9 months of reporting safety issues.

The results of the report showed that Jacob’s believed that a total of 3 buses entered the intersection on a red light during the recorded times. After receiving the report, I reviewed the footage I had and found that during the same recording times for the days of 2 May 2019 and 3 May 2019 there were 38 instances of red light running, which is significantly higher than 3 for the entire week. Again, there is video footage of these incidents.



This raised the concern about the reliability of the report supplied by Jacob's, as it was potentially not reporting on other incidents during the same time period which skews the results of the report to appear more favourable for GWRC.

I emailed my concern, along with the videos the artificial intelligence produced and the times of the incidents, to Lisa Colebrooke (Business Advisor, PT). This prompted a response from GWRC: "Jacobs have provided us with an independent expert report and we hope you benefited from the briefing Matthew organised for you with <redacted> from Jacobs. The report gives a clear methodology and practical examples of buses travelling through the Chews Lane crossing giving us assurance that there is not systemic red light running on this pedestrian crossing. As it was stated in the meeting with Matthew and <redacted>, the reason for the report was to get an independent expert view, not to prove or disprove your observations. We recognise you may have a different view to this and acknowledge you have asked for further work to be undertaken. We are considering our position on this and will be in touch shortly. "

I responded reiterating that I wasn't asking for further work to be undertaken, rather that the footage was reviewed for the times I provided. In the follow up email, I provided one instance that I had video of a bus entering a red light during the time Jacob's was recording, but was not present in the Jacob's report. The details of this bus were:

- Route 24
- 2 May 2019, around 7:55am
- Northbound
- The video footage I have for this is at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o7wfY1pq8Ggqdync4DNbg1nP44NjiaY/view>

I received a response from Greg Pollock (General Manager, PT):

"I am aware of your concerns relating to the Chew's Lane Pedestrian Crossing report recently provided to you. We have watched the footage you noted as 'entered on red' and compared this with the time and date stamped footage from Jacobs, taking into consideration possible timing issues for your footage. We see nothing in the footage from Jacobs that would cause us to question their findings, or that supports the assertions in your email. We do realise that Jacobs had access to better camera citing as well as high definition cameras which record each frame. We acknowledge the camera position you have in your office window is dictated by your workplace, and that you have mentioned to us that every second frame is not recorded which makes your footage appear to speed up moving objects. However, as previously advised, our ongoing discussions with bus operators will focus on the promoting good driving practices, of which traffic light adherence is one."

From this, I'm a bit concerned at the meaning of "We see nothing in the footage from Jacobs that would cause us to question their findings", which seems to imply that the footage I have was simply created out of thin air.]

My request is as follows:

In order to make sure that we are both on the same page, and that there is confirmation about the reliability of Jacob's report which was funded by tax payer money, I am requesting information from the footage provided by Jacob's for the morning of 2 May 2019.

I would like to know:

- 1) When each route 24 bus was seen going northbound for the morning of 2 May 2019, between 7:30am and 8:30am.
- 2) For each route 24 bus viewed on the footage, either (in order of preference):
 - a) A video of the bus going through the intersection from both cameras of Jacob's
 - b) A still photo of the bus going through the intersection at the moment it crosses the intersection line (the end of the advanced cycle box) from both cameras of Jacob's. Blurs can be applied quite easily for these still images to protect Privacy.
 - c) A description of whether the light was green, amber, or red at the time the bus crosses the intersection line. Please note that I would expect either a or b to be provided instead of this. A very good reason for refusing a or b would be required.
- 3) In order to correlate with actual traffic and to make sure that GWRC is not purposefully withholding results that show safety concerns, I would like to get the actual times that each route 24 was in that area during that time period by using the real time information.
- 4) If there are any buses shown as travelling in the area on the real time information, but were not found in the footage provided by Jacob's, then I would like:
 - a) a photo of the rear advertisement on all the missing buses that were not found on video. The point of this is to match it with the video I have
 - b) I would also like a brief explanation on why the bus was shown to be travelling on real time information, but was not found on the high definition camera feed that Jacob's had used for the report.
- 5) If any of the route 24's in 2) were found to be crossing the intersection line on a red light, then:
 - a) An explanation of why the Jacob's report did not contain that incident in their report
 - b) An explanation of why both the General Manager of Public Transport (Greg Pollock) and the Manager of Bus Operations (Matthew Lear, previously Health and Safety Manager) did not find this when requested earlier and both responded that there was nothing of concern with the report.
 - c) An explanation of why multiple managers (Bruce Horsefield, Greg Pollock and Matthew Lear) have insisted there is no concern for safety after a large amount of evidence to the contrary.
 - d) What actions GWRC will take to ensure the reliability of the Jacob's report
 - e) What actions GWRC will take to ensure that their Management team take safety reports seriously in the future.
 - f) What actions GWRC will take to ensure that their Management team react quickly to safety reports in the future."

Greater Wellington Regional Council's response follows.

It is necessary for Greater Wellington Regional Council to extend the time available to it to answer your request to 10 October 2019. This decision is made pursuant to section 14 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act) on the basis that consultations necessary to make a decision on your request are such that a proper response to your request cannot be reasonably made within the original 20 working day time limit.

You have the right, under section 27(3) of the Act, to make a complaint about this extension to the Ombudsman.

Yours sincerely



Greg Pollock
General Manager, Public Transport