



29 June 2022

Harold
fyi-request-19522-09380686@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: OIA-2021/22-1386

Dear Harold

Official Information Act request relating to COVID-19 false information reporting cell

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 31 May 2022. You requested:

“ A report recently proactively released on the Unite Against COVID-19 website refers to an inter-agency group providing reporting on COVID-19 false information:

“DPMC has brought together the National Assessments Bureau, the Ministry of Health’s Disinformation Assessment and Response Team (DART)... into a virtual triaging and reporting cell for false information regarding COVID-19. Its purpose will be to provide a structure for collating, synthesising and reporting information to the Prime Minister, other relevant Ministers and senior officials on the impact of false information on public safety and the associated effect of COVID-19 response measures on social cohesion. The first report to Ministers is expected before Christmas and will likely become fortnightly from February 2022... The cell will report to the Interagency Coordination Group, which is convened by DPMC to support efforts to build resilience to false information.”

On the topic of this “cell” I would like to request the following:

- 1) A copy of all of the “ first report to Ministers” referred to above*
- 2) Copies of all subsequent reports to Ministers in this series*
- 3) If the cell has a set of terms of reference and/or an operating model, I would like to request copies of them ”*

I have decided under section 15A of the Act to extend the time limits for deciding on your request by an additional 20 working days. Consequently, the extended due date for your response will be 28 July 2022

The extension is required because of the consultations needed to make a decision on your request. Despite the extension, a response will be sent to you as soon as possible.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Corbett
Manager, Ministerial and Business Services