

21 December 2023

Stephen Prendergast

fyi-request-24609-d37df375@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Stephen

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation, received on 28 November 2023, in which you asked:

In response to OIA 3528 you supplied a letter to MBIEs preferred operators which includes the text ".. we have been asked by the Voluntary Administrators to commence processing a concession for the ski area's currently known as Whakapapa and Turoa Skifields."

Can you please advise why this request was not considered an application, as you advised no applications had been received?

Please note, we have not considered this to be a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), as it is a question about a document rather than a request seeking information. However, we consider this matter can be easily clarified and have provided comment below.

The extract you have included above is not the correct quote from that letter. The full relevant quote from letter in question, sent to Pure Tūroa Limited (PTL) in June 2023, states:

*...we have been asked by the Voluntary Administrators for Ruapehu Alpine Lifts to **commence the process of processing** a concession for the ski area's currently known as Whakapapa and Turoa skifields on Mt Ruapehu. While a formal decision cannot be undertaken until we have completed iwi consultation, there is information we can start to compile to assist this process. [my emphasis added].*

This language reflects that no application had been received from PTL at that time, but that the Department had instead been asked by the Voluntary Administrators to engage with PTL to begin to prepare for a possible concession application being submitted in future. This type of 'pre-engagement' is common for concession applications and helps to improve the likelihood that any application, once submitted, will meet the relevant requirements of the Conservation Act 1987.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the OIA. Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Department's website.

If you would like to discuss this response with us, please contact governmentservices@doc.govt.nz

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RJ' followed by a horizontal line.

Rachael Jordan
Principal Advisor, Regulatory Services
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai