

Ref: 216017

19 April 2022

Jonathan Brown  
Via fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Jonathan,

### **Response to your request for Official Information**

On 23 February 2022, you requested the following information from the Human Rights Commission (“the Commission”) under the Official Information Act 1982 (“OIA”):

1. *Any information that supports Chief Human Rights Commissioner Paul Hunt's statement that “These are people who have lost loved ones, who have suffered severe side-effects of vaccination, and lost jobs”.*
2. *Any documents relating to the meeting with “representatives from Voices for Freedom and the Human Rights Commission. Others represented included the Police, Freedom and Rights Coalition and independents” as described in said statement.*
3. *Under section 23 of the Act a statement of reasons concerning Commissioner Hunt's aforementioned statement.*
4. *Following the amendment of your statement from “These are people who have lost loved ones, who have suffered severe side-effects of vaccination, and lost jobs” to “These are people who [have told us they] have lost loved ones, who [say they] have suffered severe side-effects of vaccination and lost jobs.” I request any documentation (including but not limited to emails and text messages) related to this amended wording.*

### **Requests 1 and 4 – Information related to Chief's Commissioner public statement and amendment**

As stated in the Chief Commissioner's public statement, he met with a group of people in relation to the Parliament protest on 22 February 2022. It was agreed between all involved that this engagement would proceed on a confidential basis.

The statements to which this aspect of your request relates were conveyed to the Chief Commissioner orally at this meeting. The Chief Commissioner obtained consent from those present at the meeting to share these statements in the Commission's press release.

As you are aware, the Chief Commissioner's public statement was updated on 23 February 2022 to clarify that he was sharing statements that had been made to him at the 22 February meeting, i.e.

"These are people who have told us they have lost loved ones, who say they have suffered severe side-effects of vaccination and lost jobs."

Written records of the oral statements made during the 22 February meeting are held by the Commission in confidence. The Commission considers it is in the public interest that any written records of oral statements made at this meeting remain confidential.

### **Request 2 – Documents relation to the Parliament protest conciliation meetings**

On 21 March 2022, the Commission notified you that your request 2 above, involving internal and external correspondence and documentation regarding the Parliament protest conciliation meetings, would be very difficult to meet without substantial collation or research that would unduly interfere with the Commission's operations.

In light of this, we have decided to meet the internal correspondence and documentation aspect of this request by providing the **attached** summary of the Parliament protest conciliation process held by the Commission, in preference to providing copies of the full information you have requested. We are permitted to do this under section 16(2) of the OIA because otherwise it would impair the efficient administration of the Commission. This summary includes an overview of the conciliation process and the Commission's role including the workstreams that have arisen from this process.

In response to the external correspondence and documentation aspect of this request, we will provide a bundle of documents encompassing the Commission's communications with third parties in relation to the protest outside Parliament from 6 February 2022 to 2 March 2022 and the Commission's protest conciliation process (including the 22 February meeting and subsequent meetings).

Some documents have been withheld in their entirety, and redactions have been applied to some of the documents that are included in the bundle. The reasons for withholding and redacting some documents are explained in the summary document.

We are waiting to finalise one aspect of our consultation with third parties, and expect to release the bundle to you tomorrow.

### **Request 3 – Statement of reasons**

Under s 23(1) of the OIA, you are entitled to request a written statement of reasons in relation to any decision or recommendation a representative of the Commission has made in respect of you personally.

As the conciliation process held by the Commission, and its related decisions, did not concern you specifically, we are refusing the aspect of your request that relates to s 23(1) of the OIA.

## **Alternative avenues**

If you are not satisfied with this response, under the Official Information Act you are entitled to complain to the Ombudsman's Office. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or on freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Moran', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

### **Philippa Moran**

Legal Advisor | Kaitohu Ture

New Zealand Human Rights Commission | Te Kāhui Tika Tangata

Encl Summary document – Parliament protest conciliation process  
Bundle of external communications and documents for release