

Hon Chris Bishop

Minister of Housing
Minister for Infrastructure
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform
Minister for Sport and Recreation
Leader of the House
Associate Minister of Finance



23 APR 2024

OIA24-CB074

Suze Keith

By email: fyi-request-26204-7c17cb4f@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Suze

Thank you for your email of 22 March 2024 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

1. *Could you please tell me the names of the expert panel members who are assessing the applications for developments under the Fast Track Consenting Bill?*
2. *Could you also please provide me the list of applicants and their projects that have been sent to you between January 1, 2024 and March 22, 2024.*

The first part of your request could be interpreted as being for information related to one of two groups:

- the Fast-track Advisory Group, who are responsible for assessing applications to be included in Schedule 2A & 2B of the Fast Track Approvals Bill (the Bill), or
- the Expert Panel (EP), who once the Bill passes into law, will receive referrals either via Schedules 2A & 2B or from the Ministers for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development (Joint Ministers) and apply relevant consent and permit conditions before referring each project and its conditions back to the Joint Ministers for decision.

The members of the Fast-track Advisory Group have been announced. You can see the members at: <https://tinyurl.com/6spf2fsm>. As this information is already publicly available, I must refuse this part of your request under section 18(d) of the Act.

If the first part of your request was referring to the Expert Panel under the Bill, these will not be established until the Bill passes into law, an application has been made to the Environmental Protection Authority and appointments to the Expert Panel have been made. The Bill is currently before the Environment Select Committee for consideration. As such, I am refusing part 1 of your request as it may relate to an Expert Panel under section 18(e), as the information requested does not yet exist.

In response to part 2 of your request, the formal applications process for projects to be included in the Bill was opened on 3 April 2024 and closes on 3 May 2024. Applicants can now access and fill out an application form on the Ministry's website at: <https://tinyurl.com/m5pxhmy>.

As a result, I have not received any applications or projects between the dates you have requested, and must therefore refuse part 2 of your request under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information requested is not held by myself and there are no grounds for believing

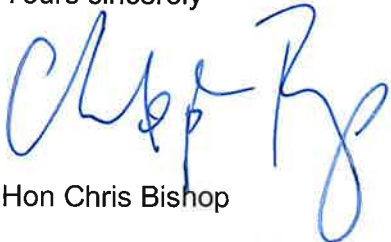
that the information is either held by, or more closely related to the functions of, another department subject to the Act.

However, I have recently made available a list of organisations that were recipients of two letters sent on 3 April 2024 as a courtesy directing organisations towards the Ministry for the Environment's online application form. This information is available at <https://tinyurl.com/5yw5msjw> and includes those who had proactively put their projects forward for possible inclusion in the Bill.

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

Please contact my office if you have any queries about this response.

Yours sincerely



Hon Chris Bishop

Minister Responsible for RMA Reform