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9 August 2024

Wendy McGuinness

By email: wmcg@mcguinnessinstitute.org

Ref: H2024046386

Tēnā koe Wendy

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health – Manatū Hauora (the Ministry) on 15 July 2024 for information regarding the Ministry's COVID-19 Situation Reports (SitRep). Please find a response to each part of your request below.

Could you please list all of the government officials and/or departments (including Crown entities) that the MOH COVID-19 situation reports were distributed to? Positions rather than names are fine.

Were the MOH COVID-19 situation reports distributed to non-governmental entities? If yes, please list.

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolved, the initial response activity was completed within the usual response capacity (including the National Health and Coordination Centre being stood up). The response progressed to the establishment of the COVID-19 Response Directorate within the Ministry as the response to the pandemic continued to require intensive resource above business-as-usual limits.

As with the nature of the evolving pandemic response, those who required situational awareness and updates via a regularly completed SitRep also evolved – both in the distribution of reporting and the frequency of the updates. The primary audience for the Ministry's SitRep was for the Director-General of Health, the Minister of Health and those involved in the Ministry of Health response.

The SitRep was also distributed to other government and non-government agencies. A list of those included on the distribution list is not readily available due to changing IT systems and changing teams and personnel involved in the response. However, we can advise that the distribution list did include members from other government agencies and crown entities such as:

- Civil Aviation Authority (including Aviation Security)
- Fire and Emergency New Zealand

- New Zealand Customs Service
- Department of Corrections
- Department of Internal Affairs
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- District Health Boards
- Inland Revenue
- Institute of Environmental Science and Research
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Transport
- Ministry of Social Development
- New Zealand Defence Force
- New Zealand Police
- The Treasury

And non-government agencies such as:

- Air New Zealand
- Ambulance Services (including St John's and Wellington Free Ambulance)

The information in the SitRep was also used by Ministry staff to inform public media statements and advice to the wider health sector.

Were COVID-19 situation reports used beyond 20 November 2020? If yes, please clarify the time periods and who these reports were prepared by and who they were distributed to. If no, were they replaced by any other means of communicating the same content? Please clarify.

The Ministry can confirm the SitReps were used beyond 20 November 2020. These were completed by the intelligence and analytics function of the COVID-19 Directorate within the Ministry and distributed to the same list as noted above until 6 March 2023 – with the addition of Health New Zealand - Te Whatu Ora and the Māori Health Authority - Te Aka Whai Ora which were established in July 2022.

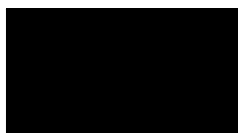
On 6 March 2023 the intelligence and analytics function transferred to Health New Zealand's National Public Health Service as part of the health reform, who became responsible for ongoing COVID-19 reporting at that point. You may wish to contact Health New Zealand for further information relating to this part of your request at: [REDACTED]

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us, including this decision, please feel free to contact the OIA Services Team on: [REDACTED]

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Manatū Hauora website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā



**Deputy Director-General
Public Health Agency | Te Pou Hauora Tūmatanui**