

20 June 2022

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§ 9(2)(a)

By email: § 9(2)(a)
Ref: H202207533

Tēnā koe § 9(2)(a)

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 (the Ministry) on 8 June 2022 for information regarding 1080, fluorocitrate and fluoroacetate.

To begin, the Ministry understands your confusion. When Epro referred to “required consents from Ministry of Health” he is in fact referring to the permission issued by an officer appointed under the Hazardous Substances and New Organism Act. I reiterate that the Ministry does not issue permissions for the use of Vertebrate Toxic Agent (VTAs) and other hazardous substances.

Please find a respond to each part of your request below.

1. The consent you gave for Aorangi aerial 1080 Operation

The Ministry does not issue permissions “consents” for the use of VTAs and other hazardous substances. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information requested does not exist. I suggest you contact Epro for a copy of the permission that has been issued.

2. The peer reviewed scientific papers outlining the risk to human health of exposure to 1080, fluorocitrate and fluoroacetate during and post areal 1080 operations, where public water supply is coming from: a) collection from roofs; b) from the river that has a similar catchment area (e.g. 36000 ha) where 1080 was administered aerially;

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) assesses the risks from hazardous substances, including public health risks. Information about the EPA’s assessment of risks from exposures to 1080 can be found on their website at: www.epa.govt.nz/everyday-environment/animals-and-insects/1080/.

In addition, in the Drinking-water Standards for New Zealand, maximum acceptable values (MAVs) are set to ensure no significant risk to health. The Drinking-water Standards for New Zealand can be found here at: www.taumataarowai.govt.nz/for-water-suppliers/current-drinking-water-standards/. and the proposed revised drinking-water standards may be found here at: www.taumataarowai.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Acceptable-Solutions-etc/Drinking-Water-Standards.pdf.

Please note, the Ministry of Health does not conduct scientific research or studies. Please refer to the online scientific studies for further information: www.pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/.

3. *Measured concentrations of 1080, fluorocitrate and fluoroacetate during and post areal 1080 operations in rivers; and water tanks where water was collected from the roofs*

1080 is dissolved very quickly in water and therefore does not stay in waterways. The Fisher and Eason (2003) study reported that water monitoring programmes carried out in New Zealand between 1990 and 2003 after 1080 aerial applications showed that 1080 concentrations complied with the 2-ppb recommended by the Ministry as suitable for human consumption. No detectable levels of 1080 were found in reticulated water while significant and prolonged 1080 contamination was not evident in surface waters. Only five percent of over 1450 water samples tested found 1080 close to the limit of detection and these levels were transient and associated with the visible presence of baits in small streams. The 1080 levels ranged from 0.2 to 9 ug L⁻¹ (Note that it was reported that the water sample with 9.0 micrograms per litre was collected by a worker with 1080 dust on his overalls and hands).

The study I refer to is from: Fisher, P., Eason, C.T. (2003). "Review of the regulatory toxicology of sodium fluoroacetate (1080)". Landcare Research contract report: LC0203/086. Animal Health Board. (unpublished). 114 pp.

While Fisher and Eason (2003) study is unpublished, you may be able to request a copy from Landcare Research Ltd on the following link at: www.landcareresearch.co.nz/contact-us-company/contact-us/official-information-act-oia/. In addition, an online search will provide you with many articles on the toxicology of 1080, for example the following published paper provides a review of the toxicology and ecotoxicology of 1080 in New Zealand including in water bodies. www.newzealandecology.org/system/files/articles/NZJEcol35_1_1.pdf.

I trust this information fulfils your request. 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 Ministry website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā



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