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23 November 2023

s 9(2)(a)

Ref: H2023032643

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

### Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) on 27 October 2023 for:

*“Has the agency or any staff received external or internal instruction, direction or guidance, written or oral, to prepare, develop, review or edit briefings to incoming ministers with a view to removing the use of the word ‘Aotearoa’ or other te Reo Māori? If so, what was the instruction received (either copies of meeting minutes/emails/other document or via a summary of the memory of staff involved in the discussion(s).”*

As a public service department, Manatū Hauora serves the government of the day. Once a new government is formed and sworn in, the Ministry will take direction from and serve that government. The incumbent Government is currently operating under the caretaker convention, and you can read more about what this means for both the Government and public sector agencies in Cabinet Office Circular at: [www.dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-10/co-23-10-government-decision-makingiduring-caretaker-period.pdf](http://www.dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-10/co-23-10-government-decision-makingiduring-caretaker-period.pdf).

Briefings to Incoming Ministers (BIMs) provide essential insights into portfolio complexities and nuances for incoming ministers to make informed decisions swiftly. Government agencies, such as Manatū Hauora, play a crucial role in ensuring that these documents provide clarity to foster effective decision-making and seamless transition for the incoming government. Ensuring that appropriate language is used is an important aspect of this, particularly in the health sector where there is a large amount of medical terminology, and te reo Māori is referenced throughout it.

A small number of staff have led the drafting of the Ministry’s BIMs and I note that at the time of your request they were not finalised. There has been no instruction to staff to remove the use of te reo Māori from the BIMs. Manatū Hauora does not hold any information in scope of your request, as such your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act. 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: [oiagr@health.govt.nz](mailto:oiagr@health.govt.nz).

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](mailto: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](http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests).

Nāku noa, nā



Steve Waldegrave  
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**Strategy, Policy and Legislation | Te Pou Rautaki**