



18 March 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

**Official Information Request**  
**Our Ref: SSCOIA 2019-0026**

I refer to your official information request received on 21 February for:

*“transcripts or copies of all evidence and or witness statements provided to the Inquiry into the use of external securities consultants by government agencies”.*

As noted in the Inquiry report over 100 interviews were conducted by the Inquirers, both voluntarily and under compulsion. The ability of SSC to protect information received by witnesses is required not only to successfully conduct such an Inquiry, but also to not prejudice the supply of similar information in the future.

Therefore, we are withholding any witness statements or transcripts in full under the following section of the Official Information Act (OIA) 1982:

- 9(2)(ba)(i)– to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.

With regard to evidence other than witness statements provided to the Inquiry, on the day the report from the *Inquiry into the use of external securities consultants by government agencies* (the Inquiry) was published, the State Services Commission (SSC) proactively published other information relating to the Inquiry alongside the report.

This information includes relevant internal correspondence, correspondence with the Inquiry team and other material, subject to the provisions of the OIA, and excluding information of an administrative or trivial nature. The Inquiry report also included a summary of the responses all agencies provided to the Inquiry.

This information is available at the following link: <https://www.ssc.govt.nz/inquiry-use-external-security-consultants-government-agencies>.

On the same day each agency included in the Inquiry proactively released the information it provided to the Inquiry, again subject to the provisions of the OIA. This information is available on each agency's website. Where information has been withheld from proactively released documents under the provisions of the OIA, the grounds are described in the documents.

The information publicly available, namely a detailed Inquiry report and findings, as well as the extensive material released by SSC and by agencies that were subject of the Inquiry, has been assessed by those agencies using the provisions of the OIA, and in consideration of the public interest. We are therefore declining your request for evidence (other than witness statements) provided to the Inquiry under section 18(d) of the OIA– on the grounds the information requested is publicly available.

In making our decision, we have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the OIA, as referred to above.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact [Ministerial.Services@ssc.govt.nz](mailto:Ministerial.Services@ssc.govt.nz).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that we intend to publish this letter (with your personal details removed) on the State Services Commission's website.

Yours sincerely



Nicky Dirks  
**Managing Principal – Ministerial Services**  
**State Services Commission**