

11 February 2026



s9(2)(a)

Our ref: OIA 2526-0781

Tēnā koe s9(2)(a)

Response to your Official Information Act request


Thank you for your email of 26 January 2026 to the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (the Ministry) requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- *The total number of meetings, discussions, or briefings held by the Chief Executive (or their office) since 1 January 2024 relating to waiata and karakia groups, practices, or proposed changes to the frequency of sessions.*
- *Copies of any agendas, minutes, notes, or summaries from these meetings.*
- *Any correspondence (including emails and messages) between senior leadership and the Public Service Association (PSA) regarding groups or proposed changes to how or when they operate.*
- *Any internal communications, reports, or advice provided to or from the Chief Executive regarding participation, workplace time allocation, or cultural engagement policies.*
- *Any decisions, policies, or guidance issued about waiata group operations, including any review or proposed limitation of sessions.*

Following a search of our records, I can confirm that the organisation does not hold any formal documentation, correspondence, or internal advice relating to waiata or karakia groups, proposed changes to their operation, or decisions by senior leadership on these matters. Therefore, I am refusing your request under section 18(e) of the Act; as the requested information does not exist.

To provide some context, waiata sessions that have occurred in the workplace have been informal, voluntary, and arranged organically by staff rather than through any structured programme or management-led process. These sessions paused when the staff who had previously led them chose not to continue doing so on a regular basis. Karakia is regularly used throughout the Ministry, but this occurs as part of normal cultural practice rather than through any formal organisational direction. As these activities have not been subject to policy development, formal oversight, decision-making, or engagement with external parties such as the Public Service Association, no agendas, minutes, reports, briefings, or correspondence exist within the scope of your request.

Under section 28 of the OIA, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my response relating to this request. The relevant details can be found on their website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz



Please note, due to the public interest in our work, the Ministry may publish responses to requests for official information on our website, shortly after the response has been sent. If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Ministerial Services team:
Ministerial@ethniccommunities.govt.nz.

Ngā mihi



Edward Firth
Director of Ministerial Services

Proactively released by the Ministry for Ethnic Communities