

3 June 2026

Ref: OIA 26056

[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

I refer to your request for official information received on 22 March 2026:

I seek all communications held by the relevant Fast Track Panel regarding the VTM Taranaki fast track application, specifically:

Scope of request

All internal and external communications, including but not limited to:

- Emails (including attachments)
- Text messages or instant messages (e.g. Teams, WhatsApp, Signal or similar platforms)
- File notes, meeting notes, or records of conversations
- Phone call records and any notes or summaries of those calls

Date parameters

This request is limited to communications sent, received, or recorded on or within 3 working days either side of the following dates:

- 5 April 2024
- 8 April 2024
- 22 November 2024
- 15 April 2025
- 15 May 2025
- 29 May 2025
- 18 July 2025
- 12 August 2025
- 4 February 2026

Participants / subject matter

This request includes communications:

- To and from Ministers or their offices;
- Between Panel staff;
- Between Panel staff and Ministers, Ministerial offices, or other agencies or groups, including the fast track panel and TTR (Manuka Resources); and
- Between Panel staff, the fast track panel and TTR (Manuka) or its representatives.

On 15 April 2026 your request was clarified to:

In broad terms, we are interested in information or communications involving the panel that could be commercially relevant to the applicant, or an investor.

On 17 April 2026 we advised you that we were extending the time to respond to your request to 3 June 2026.

To assist with your understanding of the documents released, here is a timeline:

#### **4 February 2026**

The panel finalised Minute 36 to accompany the release of the draft decision. The Minute stated that *The Panel directs the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) to publish the Draft Decision on the Fast Track website.*

Consistent with the convention of no surprises the EPA provided a copy of the draft decision and minute to Ministers Simmonds' and Bishop's offices at 11.23am.

The Application Lead and Team Leader called Alan Eggers at 1pm to advise of the draft decision and provide advance notice of the steps that would occur later that day, including publication. During this conversation, Alan Eggers asked if the EPA could delay publishing the draft decision for 24 hours.

The draft decision was emailed to Alan Eggers and Morgan Slyfield at 1.10pm.

EPA staff called Alan Eggers back to advise of the EPA's decision to publish the draft decision at midday the next day, 5 February).

Morgan Slyfield responded at 2.08pm requesting that the EPA suspend processing of the application and confirm that it would not publish the draft decision. This request is referenced in Minute 36.

The request to suspend the application was provided to me. I asked the EPA to hold off notifying the Minister and advising that I would need to seek advice to consider the request. At 5pm I met with EPA staff to discuss the suspension request and timing of publication.

Following this meeting I emailed panel members advising of the proposed approach to the request.

#### **5 February 2026**

It was proposed that the draft decision be published at 12pm on 9 February 2026. Later that afternoon the request was amended to 6pm that day. The draft decision was sent to the Minister (Section 72 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024) and was published on the Fast-track website at approximately 6pm on 5 February.

The information you have requested is listed in the table below and attached.

<b>Page Number</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Decision</b>
001	30 Jan 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii)

003	30 Jan 2026	Attachment	Release
004	03 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) S 9(2)(g)(i)
008	04 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) Attachment publicly available
009	04 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) Attachment publicly available
010	04 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii)
013	04 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) Attachment publicly available
014	04 Feb 2026	Document	S 9(2)(g)(ii)
016	04 Feb 2026	Document	S 9(2)(g)(ii)
018	04 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) Attachment publicly available
019	04 Feb 2026	Attachment	S 9(2)(g)(ii)
021	04 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) S 9(2)(g)(i) Attachment publicly available
022	04 Feb 2026	Attachment email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) S 9(2)(g)(i) Attachment publicly available
025	04 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) Out of scope
028	04 Feb 2026	Image	Out of scope
029	04 Feb 2026	Image	Release
030	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii)

			Out of scope
034	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) S 9(2)(g)(i) 9(2)(ba)(ii) Out of scope
045	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) S 9(2)(g)(i) S 9(2)(h) Out of scope
053	05 Feb 2026	Email	Out of scope
054	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) S 9(2)(g)(i)
060	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii)
061	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) S 9(2)(g)(i) S 9(2)(ba)(ii)
070	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) S 9(2)(ba)(ii) S 9(2)(g)(i) Attachment publicly available
078	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) S 9(2)(ba)(ii) S 9(2)(g)(i) Out of scope information. Attachment publicly available
086	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) Attachment publicly available
088	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii)

090	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) S 9(2)(ba)(ii) S 9(2)(g)(i)
100	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) Attachment publicly available
102	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) Attachment publicly available
104	05 Feb 2026	Attachment	S 9(2)(g)(ii)
106	05 Feb 2026	Email	S 9(2)(g)(ii) S 9(2)(ba)(ii) S 9(2)(g)(i) Out of scope Attachment publicly available

Some of the information you have requested has been redacted under the following sections of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

- Section 9(2)(ba)(ii) – protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely otherwise to damage the public interest.
- Section 9(2)(g)(i) – to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions
- Section 9(2)(g)(ii) – to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the protection of employees from improper pressure or harassment.
- Section 9(2)(h) – to maintain legal professional privilege

Some of the information you have requested has been redacted because it is out of scope of your request.

We consider there is good reason to withhold this information that outweighs the public interest in making it available.

I hope this information is helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision under section 28(3) of the OIA. You can contact the Ombudsman on 0800 802 602, or by email at [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz)

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us via [OIA@fasttrack.govt.nz](mailto:OIA@fasttrack.govt.nz)

Your request and our response may be published on the Fast-track website, [www.fasttrack.govt.nz](http://www.fasttrack.govt.nz). OIA responses are made available so others can read more about the Panel's work and the questions the Panel is asked. Any information that might identify you will be removed to protect your privacy.

Nāku noa nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kit Toogood', is positioned below the Māori phrase.

Hon Kit Toogood KC  
**Taranaki VTM Expert Panel Chair, Fast-track**