

Official Information Act Request

Requester's details

Date: 26 June 2025

Name: [REDACTED]

Organisation: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Reference number: ENQ-49432-C3Q8G4

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

I refer to your request received on 28 May 2025:

I respectfully request the following information regarding the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 application submitted by Trans-Tasman Resources Ltd (TTRL) for the Taranaki VTM Seabed Mining Project:

1. **Operational Start Date:**
 - Does the application specify an intended or estimated date for commencement of seabed mining operations (including dredging)?
 - If so, what is the stated start date and the projected timeline for operational readiness?
2. **Project Staging and Dependencies:**
 - Does the application outline any staged development timeline (e.g., engineering, environmental baseline updates, infrastructure build)?
 - Is capital raising identified as a precondition for operational commencement?
3. **Financial and Commercial Readiness:**
 - Has the EPA received information or assurances regarding whether TTRL has secured funding for the project's operational phase?
 - Has the EPA requested a financial feasibility assessment as part of the application review?
4. **Ministerial and Panel Briefings:**
 - Has the EPA provided any briefing notes, memoranda, or internal assessments regarding TTRL's operational readiness or timeline to Ministers or the Fast-track expert panel?
 - Please provide a list of all iwi authorities, hapū, councils, and private sector entities who have indicated support, partnership, or endorsement of Trans-Tasman Resources Ltd's application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024
5. **Transition Plan and Operational Timeline:**
 - Has TTRL submitted a two-year transition or staging plan as part of its application under the Fast-track Approvals Act?
 - If yes, please provide a copy or summary of that transition timeline and any milestones listed

The information you have requested follows and has been reordered for ease of response.

The Fast-track process operates across two agencies: the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) and the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). Each agency is responsible for specific aspects of the process based on their respective roles. The MfE assesses referral applications and provides advice to the Minister for Infrastructure to inform his decisions on referral applications. The Fast-track team at the EPA provides administrative support for the substantive application process, including secretariat advice and support to the panel convener and expert panels who make a decision on substantive applications. More information is here: [Process overview | Fast-track website](#).

The Fast-track team received a substantive application for the Taranaki VTM project on 23 April 2025 and deemed it to be complete on 15 May 2025.

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- If so, what is the stated start date and the projected timeline for operational readiness?

2. Project Staging and Dependencies:

- Does the application outline any staged development timeline (e.g., engineering, environmental baseline updates, infrastructure build)?
- Is capital raising identified as a precondition for operational commencement?

5. Transition Plan and Operational Timeline:

- Has TTRL submitted a two-year transition or staging plan as part of its application under the Fast-track Approvals Act?
- If yes, please provide a copy or summary of that transition timeline and any milestones listed

This information will be in the substantive application, which is publicly available on the Fast-track website via the following link: [Substantive application | Fast-track website](#).

Information on what is required for the substantive application, is publicly available, via the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 legislation here: [Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 No 56 \(as at 30 May 2025\), Public Act Contents – New Zealand Legislation](#).

These parts of your request are therefore refused under 18(d) of the Official Information Act (OIA), as the information is publicly available.

3. Financial and Commercial Readiness:

- Has the EPA received information or assurances regarding whether TTRL has secured funding for the project's operational phase?
- Has the EPA requested a financial feasibility assessment as part of the application review?

As previously noted, the Fast-track team's role in the process is to provide administrative support for the substantive application process, including secretariat advice and support to the panel convener and expert panels who make a decision on substantive applications.

The Fast-track team assesses substantive applications for completeness and for any competing applications. The application process does not require assurances on funding or request further

assessments outside of what is required for the substantive application. These parts of your request are therefore refused under section 18(e) of the OIA as the information does not exist.

4. Ministerial and Panel Briefings:

- Has the EPA provided any briefing notes, memoranda, or internal assessments regarding TTRL's operational readiness or timeline to Ministers or the Fast-track expert panel?
- Please provide a list of all iwi authorities, hapū, councils, and private sector entities who have indicated support, partnership, or endorsement of Trans-Tasman Resources Ltd's application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

The EPA has not provided any briefing notes, memoranda, or internal assessments regarding TTRL's operational readiness or timeline to Ministers or the Fast-track expert panel. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(e) of the OIA as the information does not exist.

The Fast-track team assesses substantive applications for completeness and for any competing applications and this does not include engaging with external stakeholders. Consultation and stakeholder engagement is undertaken by the applicant and the outcomes of this engagement are publicly available in both the referral and substantive applications. This information is available via the following links:

- [Taranaki VTM project | Ministry for the Environment](#)
- [Substantive application | Fast-track website](#)

This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(d) of the OIA, as the information is publicly available.

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

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us via oia@fasttrack.govt.nz

We may publish your request and our response on our website, www.fasttrack.govt.nz We make OIA responses available so others can read more about the work we do and the questions we are asked. Any information that might identify you will be removed to protect your privacy.

Nāku noa nā



Michelle Ward
General Manager, Climate, Land and Oceans