

19 May 2023

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-2211

[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Request for information 2023-108

I refer to your request for information dated 1 May 2023, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 1 May 2023. You have requested the following:

"I request the following information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act:

- *All correspondence related to the speed restrictions imposed by Kiwirail on parts of the Metlink network dated between April 26, 2023 and May 1, 2023*
 - *For the avoidance of doubt, this includes external correspondence to Kiwirail, Transdev, Metlink and any other person/entity as well as internal correspondence within GWRC"*

On 9 May 2023, a Metlink officer corresponded with you via email and over the phone to discuss the scope of your request, and you agreed to amend the request as follows:

"I request the following information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act:

- *All correspondence related to the speed restrictions imposed by Kiwirail on parts of the Metlink network dated between April 26, 2023 and May 1, 2023, sent or received by Metlink rail assets and rail operations staff, Metlink service design staff, Metlink senior managers, Greater Wellington Regional Councillors, the Greater Wellington Chief Executive, and the Metlink General Manager, and including as keywords "Kiwirail" and "speed restrictions" or "cancellation" or "suspension" or "suspended",*
 - *For the avoidance of doubt, this includes external correspondence from the parties listed above to Kiwirail, Transdev, Metlink and any other person/entity as well as internal correspondence within GWRC"*

Greater Wellington's response follows:

Background

KiwiRail is a state-owned enterprise that owns and manages the rail network within New Zealand. Greater Wellington has an access agreement with KiwiRail to run passenger trains on the Wellington Regional Metropolitan Network as part of the Metlink public transport network. KiwiRail is not a part of Greater Wellington, nor does it act as its agent.

On the afternoon of Thursday, 27 April 2023, KiwiRail informed Greater Wellington of a technical issue affecting KiwiRail's EM80 Track Evaluation Car (TEC). The TEC is an essential piece of equipment that is deployed on the Wellington rail network every four months to ensure that tracks are compliant with required engineering standards.

As communicated to Greater Wellington by KiwiRail on 27 April 2023, the unexpected technical issue with the TEC—which is the only equipment of its kind in New Zealand—meant that KiwiRail would be unable to conduct the required evaluation of Metlink's Kāpiti Line (KPL) due at the start of May 2023. KiwiRail also anticipated that they would not be able to complete the required evaluation of the Hutt Valley Line (HVL) due by 7 May 2023. To meet engineering requirements, if the evaluation had not taken place, train services could run at no more than 70 kilometres per hour.

On receiving this information from KiwiRail, Greater Wellington had to urgently plan for the temporary reduction of Metlink timetabled services, working closely with our rail operator Transdev. Effective Monday, 1 May 2023, Metlink train timetables were reduced on all lines (excluding the Wairarapa Line), limiting speed and frequency so that Transdev could safely run services while maintaining compliance with the speed restriction. As understood by KiwiRail, the operational integration of Metlink rail services across the Wellington metro rail network (Kāpiti Line, Johnsonville Line, and Hutt Valley Line) means that a temporary speed restriction on one line has impacts for the whole network. Transdev's staffing and rostering requirements meant that a reduction of services was necessary not only on the Kāpiti Line, but also on the Johnsonville and Hutt Valley Lines.

KiwiRail was able to repair the Track Evaluation Car and complete the necessary assessments of the Kāpiti Line and Hutt Valley Line in the first week of May 2023. As a result, the regular Metlink weekday train timetable was reinstated on Thursday, 4 May 2023.

Response to your questions:

All correspondence within the scope of the amended request is included in **Attachment 1**.

Some information in this correspondence has been withheld under section 7(2)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act) in order to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.

We have considered whether the public interest in the requested information outweighs Greater Wellington's need to withhold certain aspects of the requested correspondence. As a result, we do

not consider that the public interest outweighs Greater Wellington's reason for withholding parts of the document under the grounds identified above.

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Act.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Samantha Gain

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Waka-ā-atea | General Manager Metlink