

30 November 2023

By email to: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2023/95

On the evening of Wednesday 1 November 2023 you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA) for the following information:

I am writing to request official information regarding the status of a recent complaint that was filed with your office. The complaint in question, filed on 15th October 2023 reference [REDACTED], concerning my son being unable to vote at Otumoetai Primary school in Otumoetai, Tauranga as he was told they had "run out" this was at approximately 4.30. Despite the passage of time since the filing, we have not received any acknowledgment or updates on the resolution process. In light of this, I would like to inquire if there have been other similar complaints that have been received by the commission. I'd like to understand the overall scope and extent of any issues related to the aforementioned matter.

Please provide the following information:

A summary of all complaints received by the commission related to insufficient numbers of voting papers/ballots or those being unable to cast their vote, from October 14th 2023 up to today's date 1st November 2023 from all electorates.

The status of each complaint, including any actions taken or pending resolutions.

Any relevant documentation or correspondence related to these complaints, such as official reports or correspondence with the concerned parties.

Additionally, please specify the protocols and timelines for addressing such complaints and the steps taken to ensure transparency and accountability in the resolution process.

We have provided answers to your questions below:

- 1. A summary of all complaints received by the commission related to insufficient numbers of voting papers/ballots or those being unable to cast their vote, from October 14th 2023 up to today's date 1st November 2023 from all electorates.*

Any formal complaints to the Commission in relation to voters unable to cast votes during the 2023 General Election are managed through our public enquiries process.

The Commission received 13 complaints from members of the public regarding insufficient numbers of voting papers at voting places. We have itemised these complaints in the attached table.

- 2. The status of each complaint, including any actions taken or pending resolutions.*

The attached table shows the status of each complaint.

- 3. Any relevant documentation or correspondence related to these complaints, such as official reports or correspondence with the concerned parties.*

Zendesk is the system used in the Commission for enquiries. Zendesk records all documentation and communications. We have captured this information in the table for your information. We have not included any information that could be used to identify complainants for privacy purposes.

- 4. Additionally, please specify the protocols and timelines for addressing such complaints and the steps taken to ensure transparency and accountability in the resolution process.*

The protocol and timelines for how the Electoral Commission handles complaints can be found on our website: [Complaints | Elections](#).

The Commission also holds a review and reports to Parliament after every election. The review looks at all aspects of the election, including what went well and what we can do to improve services to voters. The results of this review will be made public when it is completed.

More information about the review and how to make a submission after the election will be available at [Justice - New Zealand Parliament \(www.parliament.nz\)](#) once select committees have been re-established for the 54th Parliament.

It's important to us that people have a good experience voting, and we take it very seriously if that hasn't happened.

Voting places were well stocked with voting papers, were monitored continuously, and restocked when needed. Mobile teams were available to resupply in areas where we experienced higher than anticipated demand. Election day was busy, especially as more people took the opportunity to enrol and vote on the day.

We had queues at some of our most popular voting places and we are aware of a small number of instances of voting places temporarily running out of special voting papers. The electoral legislation anticipates that this can occur and provides a process to enable voting to continue. The Electoral Commission has detailed processes for staff to follow where this happens so that voters can continue to vote. Sometimes our staff will suggest nearby voting places where wait times are shorter or where voting papers may be available.

I would like to apologise that you did not receive an acknowledgement of your complaint, and that we did not resolve it within our target timeframes. We do aim to be responsive and follow through with our commitments in everything we do. I am sorry that we failed to do that in your case.

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every 3 months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Martin Rodgers
Director Voting Services