

12 March 2026

By email to: [REDACTED]

Kia ora [REDACTED]

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2026/10

On 12 February 2026 you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA) for the following information:

I seek the following information regarding the Electoral Commission's planning and delivery of services for Māori Electorates in the upcoming electoral cycle:

1. Strategy and Operational Approach

Please provide all documents, briefings, internal policies, planning papers, or guidance that outline how the Electoral Commission intends to service Māori Electorates specifically.

- *This includes any operational models, engagement frameworks, or electorate specific approaches developed for Māori Electorates. specific approaches developed for Māori Electorates.*

2. Use of a 'Blanket' Māori Engagement Approach

I have been informed that the Commission intends to use a "blanket canvassing approach" across Māori populations and Māori voters within General Electorates, with the expectation that this will organically increase participation and turnout in the Māori Electorates.

- *Please confirm whether this is an accurate description of the Commission's strategy.*
- *If so, provide any analysis, rationale, research, or decision-making documents that informed this approach. making documents that informed this approach.*

3. Electorate Specific Considerations

*Please provide any assessments, reports, or advice relating to: **Specific Considerations***

- *The potential risks or limitations of applying a generalised voter engagement model to Māori Electorates.*
- *How the Commission has considered the distinct needs, motivations, and participation barriers of Māori voters enrolled in Māori Electorates.*
- *Any evaluation (internal or external) of how previous Māori Electorate engagement strategies have performed, and whether these informed current planning.*

4. Workforce, Resourcing, and Community Partnership Plans

Please provide information on:

- *Whether electorate specific staffing, resourcing, or community partnership models are planned for Māori Electorates, specific staffing, resourcing, or community partnership models are planned for Māori Electorates.*
- *Any documents detailing how the Commission intends to provide culturally safe engagement and appropriate entry points for Māori communities.*

Given the critical importance of tailored and effective engagement with Māori Electorates, I am particularly interested in understanding how the Commission intends to avoid generic or “one-size-fits-all” approaches that may not meet the needs of whānau, hapori, and Māori voters generally.

The Electoral Commission provides services to all eligible voters of Māori descent regardless of their roll choice. Some of our services are designed specifically for Māori audiences while others are designed to engage all eligible voters in New Zealand.

It is also important to note that many of the services we provide and the way they are provided are dictated by electoral legislation and our statutory objectives for example voting places must be politically neutral, accessible and available to all voters.

In response to your request, we have provided documents from across multiple areas of our work, noting that some will provide responses to more than one question/request.

1. Strategy and Operational Approach –

We have provided documents that describe our approach to service provision for Māori:

- Niho Taniwha – services for Māori Delivery Plan & Board paper.** This document provides an overview of our approach to providing voting services for voters of Māori descent for the 2026 elections.
- Māori Electoral Option – public information and education strategy, December 2025.** This provides a detailed overview of our approach to public information about the roll choice for Māori for the 2026 General Election. It recognises the diversity of Māori audiences and the targeted communication approaches required.
- He Purapura Whetū - education and participation strategy.** This is our overarching approach to face-to-face education and participation driven by community engagement practice.
- Digital Communications Roadmap.** This provides an overview of our approach to digital communication for the 2026 Māori Electoral Option and election campaigns.
- Enrolment Strategy – Board paper.** This paper provides an overview of the initiatives we will develop to support enrolment uptake ahead of the 2026 elections.
- Project Brief – enhancing services for Māori.** This provides the brief of this workstream that was established to support service design and provision of services for Māori from across the organisation.
- Te Pātikitiki - practice framework.** This document supports our engagement approach with community, particularly our face-to-face education.

2. Use of a ‘Blanket’ Māori Engagement Approach

The Commission provides services for all Māori regardless of roll choice:

- a. **Ngā Maihihioterā - The Electoral Commission Māori Strategy.** The Commission's overarching strategy that underpins relationship building, service design and organisational capability.
- b. **Ngā Maihi tool.** This tool provides guidance to kaimahi on how to give effect to our strategy in the design and development of services. This tool was developed as part of the enhancing services for Māori workstream.
- c. **Highbury video - YouTube link.** Video interviews on perspectives from internal staff and voters on our electoral processes. This video has been used for internal training: [Training video](#)

3. *Electorate Specific Considerations*

- a. **Pou Whirinaki job description.** This position description is for the Manager Māori Electorates role, a national position that reports to the Director Voting Services. This role was established in 2024.
- b. **He Tātāritanga o Te Whare Pōti Kaupapa Māori i te Pōtitanga ā Motu 2023 - GE 2023 Review of Kaupapa Māori Voting Place.** This paper provides an internal review of Kaupapa Māori Voting Places as provided during the 2023 election, conducted by the Commission's Māori Advisory Team that has been used to plan for 2026.
- c. **Kaupapa Māori Voting Place – project brief.** This provides the original project brief for provision of kaupapa Māori voting places for the 2026 elections.
- d. **Services to Voters – project brief.** This project brief provides a high-level overview of voting services for the 2026 election including services for Māori.
- e. **Voting services for Māori - paper.** This paper provides a summary of planning for voting services for Māori for the 2026 election.
- f. **Pou Tikanga report.** This report from the 2023 election was commissioned through the National Iwi Chairs Forum and describes services the Forum provided as well as reflections on services provided by the Commission. This has been used to support planning for 2026.
- g. **Te reo Māori regional dialect approach – final brief.** This is the Commission's approach to the utilisation of regional mita in support of information sharing.

4. *Workforce, Resourcing, and Community Partnership Plans*

- a. **Strategic Engagement & Partnerships - community engagement MEO plan.** This provides an overview of the plan for face-to-face engagement in communities across the motu.

Some names and contact details have been withheld from the documents under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA where the withholding is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons.

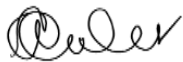
Pages 19 and 20 of the document entitled **Māori Electoral Option – public information and education strategy, December 2025** have been withheld under sections 9(2)(b)(i) and 9(2)(b)(ii) where the withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would disclose a trade secret; or would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied the information.

In each case where redactions have been made under section 9, consideration has been given to, and I am satisfied that the reasons for withholding of the information are not outweighed by other considerations which render it desirable in the public interest to make that information available.

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



Anusha Guler
Deputy Chief Executive Operations