

20 March 2025

By email to: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

## OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2025/05

On Thursday 20 February 2025 you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA) for the following information:

- *A copy of any risk analysis carried out into any and all restructures of the IT department at the Commission carried out since 2022;*
- *Copies of any information provided to the board of the Commission about that restructure;*
- *The Auditor General's review of the 2023 election included the following from section 4.112: "We have been told that two of the Commission's three systems that are critical to support running elections are at "end of life" and that it is difficult and expensive to maintain and make changes to them. We understand that work has been commissioned to better understand the remaining capability of these systems." Could you please provide the "work" to which the Auditor General refers?*
- *The same report at 4.113 says: "We encourage the Electoral Commission to consider its information technology as part of assessing organisational and election risks. As part of this, the Commission should consider potential security risks associated with how the various systems, including the online recruitment system, are configured." Could the Commission please provide any reporting on this linked to the AG's advice provided at DCE or CE level?*
- *For the years 2022, 2023 and 2024, please provide the number of people working in IT at the Commission, broken down by years of service at the Commission.*

The changes to the Commission's IT department in 2024 were undertaken to establish an organisational design for a high performance, highly capable, modern IT team that supports the Commission to meet its strategic objectives now and in the future. The Commission's technology needs continue to form a critical part of delivering its core functions, and the existing team structure and position descriptions were no longer fit for purpose.

Included in our response is risk analysis undertaken by the Chief Information Officer and presented to the Commission's board on 27 November 2024 (Appendix C - IT Organisational Design - Change Risk Analysis) regarding the IT change undertaken in 2024. No other changes were made to existing roles that required consultation since 2022.

Included are the following board papers related to the IT organisational structure change in 2024:

- Board Paper - Information Technology - Organisational Overview 110924
- Board Paper - IT Organisation Proposal 110924

- Board Paper - IT Decision 271124

In FY24 Q1, the Commission undertook an internal assessment of its software assets to understand their current quality condition and recommend investment treatments. It found that most of the Commission's core software applications that support enrolment & election management are in sufficient technical condition to support its current needs; however, the lack of a clear software application or product strategy is limiting its understanding of their suitability to support the Commission's business operations. It also noted that several assets require further review to determine their treatment in the short term, and planned remediation activities need to continue for software assets at risk of technical or compliance failure.

It found the infrastructure software of the Commission is in good condition and well placed to serve both current and future needs, and that investment in corporate software should be extended where appropriate as these assets are also well placed to support future needs. On 27 August 2024 the Commission's ELT agreed that regular assessment of the Commission's IT assets is included as part of the year-one quality assurance activities. Included in our response is the report from the internal assessment that was conducted that supports this paper (05a. TBQA Presentation.pdf).

Specific reporting linked to the Auditor General's advice will be provided to the Commission's Deputy Chief Executive or Chief Executive as we complete recertifications of our technology systems as part our preparations for the 2026 General Election as described in the Protective Security Requirements. This will include the online recruitment system, and will involve a security risk assessment and control validation audit.

For the years 2022, 2023 and 2024, the number of people working in IT at the Commission, broken down by years of service at the Commission are provided below.

Years of Service	2022		2023		2024	
	Permanent	Fixed Term	Permanent	Fixed Term	Permanent	Fixed Term
Less than 6 months	1	--	4	1	1	-
6 months to 1 year	-		3	--	2	-
1 to 2 years	-	1	-		7	-
2 to 3 years	2	-	-	1	-	-
3 to 5 years	7	-	3	-	-	-
5 to 10 years	-	-	1	-	3	-
10 to 20 years	2	-	2	-	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Contractors &amp; Consultants</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>3</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>25</b>		<b>23</b>		<b>17</b>	

Our IT change described above reduces our reliance on short-term contracted resources and we now have 23 permanent positions in IT for 2025. We still expect to engage short-term staff in IT as part of our normal practice to increase staffing levels using these engagements for election events. We're making good progress on recruitment, and with the support of our critical suppliers, we are confident of the Commission's ability to run a by-election or election.

Some redactions have been made under section 6(c) of the Act on the ground that making this information available would be likely to prejudice the maintenance of the law, and under section 9(2)(k) of the Act on the ground that withholding this information is necessary to prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage. We are not able to share detailed information regarding the Commission's technology infrastructure and security systems as this would prejudice the Electoral Commission's ability to prevent and detect cyber security threats and may also result in exposure of the information to those who may use this information for improper gain. This gain or advantage could damage trust and confidence in the electoral system.

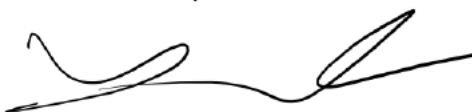
Some details have been withheld under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.

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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Lucy Hickman  
Deputy Chief Executive, Enterprise Services