

18-E-0462 – DOC-5546932

17 August 2018

[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), dated 2 August 2018. You requested the following official information held by the department:

- 1) The exact dates which helicopters have flown and poisoned with 1080, brodifacoum (sic) and/or any other poison, this year and what exact dates they will fly for the rest of the year.*

No aerial applications of toxin have been undertaken by the department in 2018 (in the period 1 January until the date of your request). Your request for this information is thus declined as it does not exist (Section 18(e) Official Information Act refers).

Aerial applications of toxin have been undertaken by other agencies on public conservation land. Information held by the department regarding these operations is already publicly available via the department's Pesticide Summary web application: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/pesticide-summaries/>. This application allows you to view the spatial map of each pesticide operation and returns a summary showing which toxins have been laid on public conservation land, by whom, and during which periods. The operational dates supplied by outside agencies is often a range of dates in which an operation took place. Your request for the specific dates on which flights occurred is thus declined as this information either:

- a) already publicly available, or;
- b) is not currently held by the department (Section 18(e) Official Information Act refers).

Your request for information regarding the exact dates of future aerial operation is also declined as this information does not exist (Section 18 (e) Official Information Act refers). The nature of this work means it is strongly weather dependant and exact dates of aerial delivery cannot be known in advance. I have considered section 18B of the Act in reaching my decision

- 2) the specific days that these poisons have been aerially dropped or ground laid in 2018, and; where you have aerially dropped or ground laid poisons since May 28th.*

As above, up until the date of your request the department has not undertaken any aerial delivery of toxins in 2018. Your request for this information

regarding exact dates on which the department have aerially apply toxin is thus declined as it does not exist (Section 18(e) Official Information Act refers) for either period indicated.

Information held by the department regarding application of toxins by other agencies on public conservation land is already publicly available via the department's Pesticide Summary web application: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/pesticide-summaries/>. This application allows you to view the spatial map of each pesticide operation and returns a summary showing which toxins have been laid on public conservation land, by whom, and during which periods. The operational dates supplied by outside agencies is often a range of dates in which an operation took place.

You also requested the specific dates of the application of 'ground laid toxins' on public conservation land. The department collects and collate dates that these were present on conservation land but not the date on which the toxin was deployed. In contrast to aerial toxins, ground based baits (for example those in bait stations) may be present for a longer period of time. The dates when the toxin is present is viewed as the most relevant and meaningful data to collect and display. These dates may be viewed in the above pesticide summary.

Your request for the exact dates on which toxins were applied are thus declined as this information is either:

- a) already publicly available, or;
- b) is not currently held by the department (Section 18(e) Official Information Act refers).

Please note that some operations may use a combination of ground based and aerial distribution, and dates supplied in the pesticide summary may represent this.

- 3) *copies of the GPS flight path video recordings, of when they spread the poison on each of these specific days.*

As above, in the period of your request the department has not undertaken any aerial delivery of toxins. Your request for information is thus declined as it does not exist (Section 18 (e) Official Information Act refers).

I have considered section 18B of the Act in reaching my decision. You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decisions by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

In writing this response I note that the department does make a significant effort to clearly communicate the use of toxins on public conservation land. The intended timings of all currently planned operations using toxins on public conservation lands are publicly advertised on the Pesticide Summary (above); this information is updated daily. The development of an interactive spatial mapping tool specifically for this purpose provides a high level and detail of information to the public. The Pesticide Summary captures hundreds of operations around the country, conducted by myriad of groups such as local and regional councils, conservation NGO's, community groups, farming groups, and the department itself. With our own pest control work, DOC communicates and consults extensively with local communities

regarding operations in their area, including timings of operations.

I thank you for your enquiry and I trust this response adequately addresses your concerns. Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and any enclosed documents may be published on the Department's website.

Yours sincerely,



Hilary Aikman  
Director National Operations