



OIA 19-E- 0385/docCM 6000163

10 July 2019

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation, dated 12 June 2019. You requested the following:

Please supply the following information under the [Official Information Act (OIA) / Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA):

Toxicology reports and necropsy reports (including photos) for the two Kea found dead after the April 2019 aerial 1080 operation conducted in the Perth Valley by Zero Invasive Predators (ZIP) in partnership with DOC.

Before answering your request, we have decided to provide contextual information about the predator removal operation ZIP is carrying out in the Perth River Valley.

This operation is part of a ZIP research and development trial that aims to completely remove possums and potentially rats, and significantly reduce stoats, from the 12,000-ha research area, and to prevent predators from re-establishing. In addition to the use of aerial 1080, the work programme also involves the use of ‘natural barriers’ such as large rivers and alpine ranges to prevent reinvasion, along with the establishment of a network of devices to detect any survivors or invaders.

Thirteen radio-tagged kea were monitored through the first phase of the operation. Sadly, two died from 1080 poisoning. This information has been publicly released on the Department’s and ZIP’s websites:

www.doc.govt.nz/news/media-releases/2019/zip-reports-kea-deaths-in-predator-removal-trial2/

<http://zip.org.nz/updates/2019/6/update-on-perth-river-valley-work-programme-7-june-2019>



Estimating kea population size is difficult due to factors such as their extensive range over rugged terrain, their low population densities, and the cryptic behaviour of adult birds. The estimated population of 75-100 kea in the Perth Valley/Whataroa area is likely to be due in part to a long history of predator control in the area, including multiple 1080 predator control operations. This is explained further in 2019 research about kea survival during aerial predator control, publicly available online in the New Zealand Journal of Ecology <https://newzealandecology.org/nzje/3351>

Pathology Reports

In response to your request, I have attached the pathology reports that contain autopsy and toxicology results for the two birds that died in the ZIP operation. Personal details of ZIP staff have been withheld under section 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons. The Department does not hold photographs of the kea.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Official Information Act.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents will be published on the Department's website.

Yours sincerely,



Amber Bill
Director Threats, Biodiversity
for Director-General