

02 May 2025

Whare Kaupapa
Atawhai/Conservation
House - 18 Manners
Street, Box 10420,
Wellington 6140
doc.govt.nz

Ref: OIAD-5084

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (the Department), received on 02 April 2025, in which you asked for:

“Provide full electronic copies of:

- a) any internal DOC documents;*
- b) any communications with any Minister (including any briefings, advice, aides memoire, or memoranda);*
- c) any communications with any other third party (including the Milford Opportunities Project / MBIE, the Commerce Commission, any Ngāi Tahu party, and any commercial operator), in connection with Milford Sound Tourism Ltd (MSTL) or Piopiotahi Milford Sound since our last request on 12 March 2025.”*

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed in Table 1 - Schedule of documents (appended to this response letter), subject to information being withheld under one or more of the following sections of the Act, as applicable:

- personal contact details of officials, under section 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons;

I regret I am unable to provide you with the documents listed in Table 2 – Schedule of documents, which I am withholding in full under section 18(a) by virtue of:

- section 9(2)(h) - to maintain legal professional privilege
- section 9(2)(f)(iv) – to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act and determined there are no public interests that outweigh the grounds for withholding.

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 OIA.

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

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anita', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anita Murrell
Principal Advisor
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Table 1 - Schedule of documents released

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	From 19 to 28 Mar 2025	Multiple email chains.	Released in part - section 9(2)(a) section 9(2)(h)

Table 2 - Schedule of documents withheld in full

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
2	From 26 Mar to 01 Apr 2025	Email chain regarding the MOP comms package to support a ministerial announcement.	Withheld in full - section 9(2)(h) section 9(f)(iv)
3	28 March 2025	25-B-0128 - Briefing - Reconsideration decision on MSTL	Withheld in full - section 9(2)(h) section 9(f)(iv)