

16 May 2025

DOC Queenstown Office
Cavells Building 1
Arthurs Point Road,
Arthurs Point,
Queenstown 9371
Ref: OIAD-5122

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 10 April 2025, in which you asked for:

All emails/reports concerning the closure of the Tunnel Beach track, in Dunedin.

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

On 15 April 2025 via phone call, you refined your request to *Cover correspondence from senior management internal emails/reports*. That refinement reset the 20-day deadline to respond to your request to 16 May 2025.

The Tunnel Beach Walk, as both a project to enhance the visitor experience and the response to damage during the October 2024 flood event, is a priority for DOC.

The scope of damage to the track from this flood event is significant, with 16 slips on the track itself, as well as further earth movements on the site. Without a full understanding of the scope of the current damage, and the risk of further movements either during or after any repairs were undertaken, it was decided that the safest course of action was to keep the track closed until thorough geotechnical investigations could be completed.

This decision has been made with people safety at the forefront of the process.

While emails about procurement do not fall within scope of your request, I can inform you that DOC engaged GeoSolve in early April to conduct the geotechnical investigation and this is now underway.

We're looking forward to being able to provide updates in the coming months to the public, and other stakeholders, on the progress of remedial works, and when they will be able to safely enjoy the Tunnel Beach experience again.

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	Oct 2024 – 10 April 2025	Collated emails and reports concerning the closure of Tunnel Beach	Released in part
2	31 March 2025	Tunnel Beach Walk Slip Repairs - Project Status Report (referred to on page 54 of Item 1)	Released in part

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed above, subject to information being withheld under one or more of the following sections of the OIA, as applicable:

- personal information, under section 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people,
- commercially sensitive information, under section 9(2)(i) - to enable a Minister of the Crown or any department or organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities, and
- confidential information, under section 9(2)(j) – to enable the Crown to negotiate without disadvantage or prejudice.

Page 54 of Item 1 references several governance and financial documents in relation to the Tunnel Beach Walk slip repairs. The project status report is provided as Item 2 as noted in the table above. The following two documents are withheld in full under sections 9(2)(i) and 9(2)(j) of the OIA:

- Tunnel Beach Walk Slip Repairs - Complexity Assessment Tool (for IBC)
- Tunnel Beach Walk Slip Repairs - Financial Spreadsheet (for IBC)

The remaining documents mentioned on page 54, Item 1, are outside the scope of your request.

In making my decision to withhold information, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the OIA 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 DOC's website.

If you would like to discuss this response with us, please contact the DOC Media Team by email to media@doc.govt.nz.

Nāku noa, nā



Aaron Fleming
Director Operations Southern South Island
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai