

23 September 2025

Ref: OIAD-5563

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 14 August 2025, in which you asked for:

“...all documentation, internal correspondence, meeting minutes, and policy papers relating to the Department of Conservation’s (DOC) development or consideration of any verification or validation framework for pest control contractors or community-led environmental projects.

In particular, I seek all material that references DOC adopting processes, frameworks, or models similar to those used by:

- *NZQA (New Zealand Qualifications Authority) for education and training verification; or*
- *MSD (Ministry of Social Development) for provider validation and funding eligibility.*

This includes, but is not limited to:

1. *Internal memos, reports, or guidance documents.*
2. *Correspondence (including emails) between DOC staff, other government agencies, and private sector parties.*
3. *Draft or final policy proposals.*
4. *Any assessments of operational, financial, or community impacts.*

The time period for this request is from 1 January 2022 to the date of this letter.

Please supply this information in electronic form.”

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

On 26 August 2025 in response to the Department seeking to discuss your request, you provided a proposed refinement of your request. It included a “*fallback micro-scope*” option as follows:

1. *Any final/draft doc held by PF2050 National Office that explicitly mentions verification framework, provider validation, NZQA, or MSD in relation to pest-control contractors or community-led projects, dated 1 Jan 2024 – 19 Aug 2025.*
2. *The top 10 email threads (by relevance) between PF2050 Manager and Procurement/Legal containing those terms, with attachments.*

Before proceeding to the Department's response, we have outlined our approach to your request and provided some relevant contextual information in light of the various components making up your correspondence and requests.

Approach to request

In line with your request, we have focused on your '*fallback micro-scope*'. This allowed us to respond to your request, as both your full and refined requests would amount to substantial collation and research, and we would therefore have had to refuse them under section 18(f) of the OIA.

For example, using your suggested range of broad search terms across the Department's information records would have identified a significant amount of information. We would then have had to review each item to determine if it fell within scope, following which those pieces confirmed as in scope would have then been collated and prepared for release. As you can see undertaking these steps would have required a large amount of time and taken staff away from their core duties for the time and as such would warrant the Department refusing your full and refined requests for substantial collation.

Verification/Validation frameworks

In New Zealand, specific verification and validation frameworks are applied across different sectors. The specific framework depends on the industry or sector, but they all serve to confirm that a product, service, or process meets its intended purpose and regulatory requirements.

Predator Free 2050 (PF2050)

You have referred to this programme. Its ambitious goal is to eradicate the most damaging introduced predators from all of Aotearoa New Zealand by 2050.

The national Predator Free 2050 programme brings together the knowledge of iwi and hapū, non-governmental organisations, businesses, government, scientists and communities.

The programme is guided by a shared strategy and led by the Department. Together, the work involves:

- innovating new tools and investing in science research to achieve PF2050;
- protecting native species through predator control across millions of hectares and many projects;
- supporting and empowering people and communities; and
- developing a clear and evidence-based plan to unlock eradication in the future.

The Department's website has tools, guidance and resources related to pest control and trapping. Based on the Departmental best practice trapping and monitoring techniques, the guidance and courses provide the skills required to establish a predator control programme.

This material includes the following links below:

[Trap in your community: Predator Free 2050 \(PF2050\) |
https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/predator-free-2050/community-trapping/](https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/predator-free-2050/community-trapping/)

[Practical guide to trapping |](#)

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/conservation/threats-and-impacts/pf2050/trapping-guide-pf2050.pdf>

[Take a predator free training course: Predator Free 2020 |](#)

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/predator-free-2050/trapping-training-courses/>

Animal pest control operations

Note that to lay pesticides or traps on public conservation land you must have permission from the Department. Further, there are procedures to ensure animal pest operations are effective, managed safely and meet all legal requirements.

A few links that may be of interest are set out below:

[Animal pest control operations | https://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/business-or-activity/animal-pest-control-operations/](#)

[applying-for-doc-permission-external-agencies.pdf |](#)

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/conservation/threats-and-impacts/pest-control/sops/processing-applications/applying-for-doc-permission-external-agencies.pdf>

[national-standards-pest-operations.pdf |](#)

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/conservation/threats-and-impacts/pest-control/sops/processing-applications/national-standards-pest-operations.pdf>

[Managing animal pests: Standard DOC operating procedures \(SOPs\) |](#)

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/our-policies-and-plans/our-procedures-and-sops/managing-animal-pests/>

Department's response

We have focused on identifying records, documents, or correspondence that fell within the scope of your *'fallback micro-scope'*. While all effort has been made to identify and provide you with a full and complete list of what the Department holds, we note a limitation to the information will be differing naming protocols used by various staff when adding documents to the Department's information management systems.

Question 1:

Any final/draft doc held by PF2050 National Office that explicitly mentions verification framework, provider validation, NZQA, or MSD in relation to pest-control contractors or community-led projects, dated 1 Jan 2024 – 19 Aug 2025

The documents identified as within scope and prepared for release are listed in the Document schedule attached. One document, listed as Item 18 in the Document schedule, has had certain content withheld under sections 9(2)(a) and 9(2)(g)(ii) of the OIA. This is to both protect privacy and officials from improper pressure or harassment.

Two documents, not listed in the Document schedule but falling within scope, have been withheld in full under sections 9(2)(b)(ii) and 9(2)(k) of the OIA. This is to protect the commercial position of the party who supplied the information and to limit or prevent the disclosure or use of the information for improper gain or advantage.

In making my decision, 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.

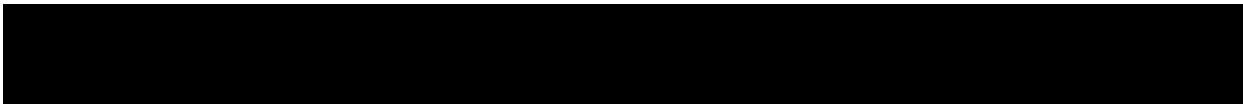
Question 2:

The top 10 email threads (by relevance) between PF2050 Manager and Procurement/Legal containing those terms, with attachments.

There was no correspondence identified as being in scope of Question 2.

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 that reads "Ben Reddiex".

Ben Reddiex
Director National Programmes
Department of Conservation | *Te Papa Atawhai*

Document schedule

Item	Date	Document description/summary	Decision
Item 1	1 March 2025	Overview of Review - Micro credential and Qualification Review	Released in full
Item 2	1 April 2025	Guidelines for Listing skill standards on the DASS	Released in full
Item 3	17 March 2025	250317 Level 3_4plan_BG.pptx	Released in full
Item 4	18 July 2025	MC L4 Develop conservation leadership skills_Form-1-MC-Listing-and-Approval - Draft_18 July	Released in full
Item 5	18 July 2025	SS_L4_Manage risk and safety - DRAFT_18 July	Released in full
Item 6	18 July 2025	SS L4 Support and lead _DRAFT_ 18 July	Released in full
Item 7	11 June 2025	L3 Managing self for conservation activity Form-1-MC-Listing-and-Approval (2) - Draft Clean	Released in full
Item 8	12 June 2025	L3 Skill-standard- Conservation Practical and Tech Skills - Conservation activity DRAFT - Clean	Released in full
Item 9	13 June 2025	Level 3 Conservation Pract Tech Skills - Conservation activity Form-1-MC-Listing-and-Approval (2) - Draft Clean	Released in full
Item 10	14 June 2025	Skill-standard-Managing self in conservation activity Draft Clean	Released in full
Item 11	21 May 2025	DOC Sponsored Enrolment to the PRT301 course - to June 2025	Released in full
Item 12	18 July 2025	SS-L4 Cons outcome monitoring - DRAFT - 18 July	Released in full
Item 13	18 July 2025	Level 4 MC Carry out conservation outcome monitoring Form-1-MC-Listing-and-Approval - 18 July	Released in full
Item 14	18 July 2025	SS-L4 Cons advanced tool use - DRAFT - 18 July	Released in full
Item 15	18 July 2025	Level 4 MC Demonstrate conservation pest control_resulting_tools - 18 July	Released in full
Item 16	18 July 2025	SS-L4 Cons pest control - DRAFT - 18 July	Released in full
Item 17	18 July 2025	SS-L4 Cons result monitoring - DRAFT - 18 July	Released in full
Item 18		Draft Internal Staff Story	Released in part