[redacted]

Whare Kaupapa Atawhai | Conservation House

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Ref: OIAD-9476

19 August 2026

Tēnā koe [redacted]

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 22 July 2026, in which you asked:

> *"…Can you please send all test procedures. Birds, number of each, any other suspected animals and life forms found, locations of the collected specimens. And who tested them for 1080.*
> *Any independent testing.*
> *This is of regional significance. Should 1080 be found. We need to notify owners not to take dogs for walk on beaches and rivers. Or should we just put out a public alert warning people not to take pets to beaches. Any rivers or catchments where 1080 has been dropped. With suspected animals having died from 1080 or secondary poisoning.*
> *Until such time as we can be certain there is or isn't a risk.*
> *If it can't be excluded. Then it has to be included and suspected until such time.*
> *Independent testing can verify what Doc is saying.*
> *Please. Let us know where the public can take birds and animals they have found for a postmortem. Autopsy to verify one way or another…"*

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

DOC has interpreted the first part of your request (detailed above) as seeking information about the testing and examinations undertaken (investigation) in relation to the deceased South Island pied oystercatchers found at the Motueka Sandspit.

DOC holds a contract with the Bioeconomy Science Institute (BSI) Toxicology Laboratory to undertake toxicology analyses, including testing for sodium fluoroacetate (1080). The laboratory is accredited by International Accreditation New Zealand (IANZ) and also under the Ministry for Primary Industries' Recognised Laboratory Programme. Useful information about their accreditations and work can be found here: Laboratories & diagnostics » Manaaki Whenua

The following testing and examinations were undertaken:

- Five deceased oystercatchers were swabbed and tested for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). All test results were negative.
- Tissue samples from two birds were submitted to the BSI Toxicology Laboratory for 1080 testing. The results were negative for 1080. Please see Item 1, listed in the table below.

- Two carcasses were submitted to VetPath for necropsy and pathology assessment. The necropsies did not identify a cause of death. Histopathology testing is ongoing, and final results were not available within the initial statutory period for response specific to the OIA - as it takes a while for bones to decalcify to enable testing.
- Stomach contents from four birds were sent to the Cawthron Institute for testing for naturally occurring marine toxins. No marine toxins were detected - noting marine toxins can be difficult to detect.
- Examination of stomach contents found shellfish fragments in three of the six birds examined. No crab remains were identified.

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	28 July 2026	Copy of BSI Toxicology Laboratory Analysis Report	Released in part

No other animal species were submitted for testing as part of this event.

Testing was undertaken by external accredited laboratories, including the BSI Toxicology Laboratory, VetPath, and the Cawthron Institute.

With respect to the second part of your request, DOC advises that members of the public who wish to have a deceased bird or animal examined should first contact a veterinarian for advice.

A veterinarian can assess the circumstances and recommend appropriate diagnostic testing or post-mortem examination options. Any such testing or post-mortem examination would generally be undertaken at the expense of the person seeking the testing and/or examination.

Official information within the scope of your request

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the document listed as Item 1 in the table above, subject to information being withheld under sections 9(2)(a) and 9(2)(g)(ii) of the OIA, as applicable, to protect both the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people, and Ministers, officials, or employees from improper pressure or harassment.

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.

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 document may be published on the DOC's website.

Nāku noa, nā



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