

Official Information Act Request

Requester's details

Date: 7 April 2021

Name: [REDACTED]

Organisation: Radio New Zealand

Email: [REDACTED]

Reference number: ENQ-43187-B4D6H0 and ENQ-43404-X8J6N3

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your request received on 20 December 2021, and refined on 4 February 2021, for communications from 1 July 2021 to the present regarding spent cell liner:

“Emails, voicemail messages, and other documents recording conversations between the EPA and Rio Tinto that actually track ‘the movement of exported spent cell liner’, specifically:

- Requests for updates and responses that there is nothing to report
- Progress reports
- Liaison with other agencies
- Peer reviews of documents
- Documents for review.”

I also refer to your further request made on 4 February 2022 for:

- Emails, voicemail messages, and other documents recording conversations between the EPA and Rio Tinto regarding potential movement or disposal channels of spent cell liner.

On 2 March 2022, we extended our decision on your two requests until 7 April 2022, because your requests required a search through a large quantity of information, and meeting the original time limits would have unreasonably interfered with our operations. Also, consultation has been necessary to decide on your requests, and this means that proper responses could not reasonably be made within the original time limits.

We considered both your requests at the same time. The information we are releasing to you may be found at the following OneDrive link:

<https://bit.ly/3KhYkg9>

There has been no actual movement of spent cell liner in the time frame in question. However, there have been emails, voicemail messages, and other documents in relation to a current application for movement of spent cell liner.

Current permits for the import and export of hazardous waste may be found on our website: <https://www.epa.govt.nz/industry-areas/hazardous-substances/hazardous-waste/current-permit-holders/#Export>

Some of this information has been redacted under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), to protect the privacy of individual persons; and some of this information has been redacted under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA, because making this available would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information. Withholding this information is not outweighed by other considerations that would make it in the public interest to make it available.

I hope this information is helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. You can contact the Ombudsman on 0800 802 602, or by email at info@ombudsman.parliament.nz

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us via ministerials@epa.govt.nz

We may publish your request and our response on our website, www.epa.govt.nz. We make OIA responses available so others can read more about the work we do and the questions we are asked. Any information that might identify you will be removed to protect your privacy.

Yours sincerely



Dr Allan Freeth
Chief Executive