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22 May 2020

via email: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information request and response

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act ("OIA") dated 7 May 2020.

You have requested the following information on the funded project "*The Citizen's Handbook*" 10-part docuseries:

All documentation, whether that be emails, forms or in any other form of communication relating to:

- *The original Content Proposal, including all documentation relating to the proposed treatment, scripts and approach to research.*
- *RNZ / NZ On Air's documentation on the assessment of the application, including confirmation of funding approval and any special conditions imposed.*
- *NZ On Air's documentation relating to any key deliverables sought during the production of the series.*

I am specifically interested to see the steps NZ On Air takes to ensure that content funded under the Factual stream is in fact factual.

For your information, the Factual funding stream focuses on audio/visual documentary and factual projects made for diverse audiences. We will prioritise content that is clearly different to local factual content made commercially. Funded content may involve different New Zealand regions and cultures, investigate significant topics of current or historic interest, may involve specialist journalism, reveal an aspect of te ao Māori, provide useful New Zealand information in an engaging way, or cover an event or issue important to New Zealand culture and identity.

Section 42 of the [Broadcasting Act 1989](#) limits the power of NZ On Air's editorial rights. If you refer to Page 65 of the attached information, this page of the contract outlines Production Standards which all projects agree to comply with, and which align with current legislation. You will also note the allocation of editorial control to RNZ.

In short, factual content has a certain amount of subjectivity. Our remit is to provide avenues for content to be produced, with various viewpoints, for a variety of New Zealand audiences. We only intervene in projects where agreed terms and conditions are breached.

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I note that when this particular project was funded, we had not finalised our [Factual roadmap](#). This project was funded out of a joint fund with RNZ. Our [funding strategy](#) and strategic priorities informed the criteria for assessing applications to that particular round. I have attached the following:

- RFP call for proposal (pg. 1 – pg. 2)
- MOU between NZ On Air & RNZ (pg. 3 – pg. 8)
- Additional questions the funding panel considered (pg. 9)

In particular, this project was funded as a 'Signature Project' as defined for the Joint Innovation Fund and is a combination of factual and scripted material. The proposal is for humour and satire to be employed to deliver civics education to a younger audience. A range of respected academics was consulted in the development process and a variety of published resource materials was used in the research and scripting phase.

I have also attached the requested information that we are able to release:

- Initial RFP proposal (pg. 10 – pg. 14)
- Short-listed applicants' proposal (pg. 15 – pg. 48)
- Extract of minutes with recommendation of funding (pg. 49 – pg. 55)
- Letter informing producer of successful application (pg. 56 – pg. 57)
- Contract for project (pg. 58 – pg. 82)
- Producers reports for drawdown (pg. 83 – pg. 93)

The following redactions in these documents have been made:

- Contact details for natural persons under s9(2A) of the OIA 1982
- Budgets and commercially sensitive information under s9(2b) of the OIA
- Out of Scope information

We decline to release the following information under s9(2b) of the OIA

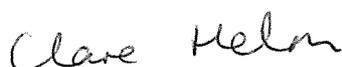
- Proposed and actual budgets
- Financial reporting

For your information, funding provided by NZ On Air for all successful projects is searchable on our website. You can also sign up to receive our bi-monthly industry newsletter via our website.

You have the right to refer this response to the Ombudsman if you are dissatisfied with it. More information on how to do this is [here](#). NZ On Air proactively releases information in accordance with the Government's commitment to the Open Government Partnership National Action Plan. This includes publishing responses to requests for information under the OIA. Please note that this response (with your name removed) will be published on the NZ On Air website shortly and will remain on our website for 12 months.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Yours sincerely



Clare Helm

HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

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