

23 May 2023

s 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

### OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your official information request of 29 April 2023 for:

1. *Please advise what the definition of “woman” is according to the Ministry for Women.*
2. *How is the term “woman” clarified in New Zealand Law, legislation, and employment.*
3. *Please provide all consultation reports the Ministry of Women has undertaken with New Zealand women, women’s groups, Muslim women or other religious women’s groups regarding the emerging rights you support of a man to self-identify as a woman. Is there any criteria required?*
4. *Does the Ministry of Women represent men who self-identify as women, as well as women who self-identify as men?*
5. *Please provide all consultation reports undertaken by Hon Jan Tinetti in relation to her passing and confirming the process of the Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Relationship Registration Bill with New Zealand women and women’s groups, particularly Muslim women or other religious women.*
6. *Please explain how religious women, who do not associate with unknown men as a rule, are able to exercise their human rights and freedom of religion if exclusive women’s spaces are able to be compromised by biological men who self-identify as women?*
7. *Please explain how you will work to ensure women’s rights to exclusive women spaces will be upheld.*
8. *Please provide the minutes of Jan Tinetti’s [sic] meeting with Kate Hannah and Internal Affairs officials on 1/09/2022 at 15.45.*

I will respond to your question in turn, noting that, under section 14 of the Official Information Act (the Act), question 5 and question 8 have been transferred to the Office of Hon Jan Tinetti which were subsequently transferred to the Office of Hon Barbara Edmonds.

I also note that the Office of Hon Jan Tinetti, who received the same request from you, transferred, also under section 14 of the Act, part 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 of their request to us and therefore, this letter is also responding to this transferred request.

*Please advise what the definition of “woman” is according to the Ministry for Women.*

Manatū Wāhine Ministry for Women does not define who a woman is, or uses any particular definition. Rather, as per our previous response, we recognise the right to self-identify. Manatū Wāhine represents all women.

*How is the term “woman” clarified in New Zealand Law, legislation, and employment.*

Manatū Wāhine is not responsible for, or aware of, any legislation that defines or clarifies the term ‘woman’.

*Please provide all consultation reports the Ministry of Women has undertaken with New Zealand women, women’s groups, Muslim women or other religious women’s groups regarding the emerging rights you support of a man to self-identify as a woman. Is there any criteria required?*

Manatū Wāhine has not undertaken any consultation on this topic. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18 (e) on the basis that this information does not exist.

*Does the Ministry of Women represent men who self-identify as women, as well as women who self-identify as men?*

Manatū Wāhine represents anyone who identifies as a woman.

*Please explain how religious women, who do not associate with unknown men as a rule, are able to exercise their human rights and freedom of religion if exclusive women's spaces are able to be compromised by biological men who self-identify as women?*

*Please explain how you will work to ensure women’s rights to exclusive women spaces will be upheld.*

Under the Act, you can request information that exist and is available, the Act does not allow for requesting explanations.

However, in the interest of being helpful, I can let you know that Manatū Wāhine is committed to upholding the rights of all New Zealanders to be treated fairly and with dignity, and to live free from discrimination based on their identity.

Please note that this response, with your personal details redacted, may be published on the Ministry’s website. If you have any concerns or comments related to this, please let us know by emailing [ministerialservicing@women.govt.nz](mailto:ministerialservicing@women.govt.nz), within two weeks of the date of this letter.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kellie Coombes', written in a cursive style.

**Kellie Coombes**  
Secretary for Women