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| Request for video footage recorded during an investigation |
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| Legislation Official Information Act 1982, s 15A  Agency Ministry for Primary Industries  Ombudsman Peter Boshier  Case number(s) 432328  Date September 2016 |

*1100 hours of video footage—extension of time limit reasonable—concerns about volume of information addressed by disclosing a sample*

A number of requesters complained about the Ministry of Primary Industries’ (MPI) decision to extend the maximum time limit for responding to their requests for video footage recorded as part of Operation Achilles. Operation Achilles was a 2012/13 investigation into potential illegal discarding of fish by certain fishing vessels.

The reason for the extension was to enable consultation to be undertaken about whether the footage could be anonymised. There were 1100 hours of video footage at issue, and MPI estimated it would take several thousand hours of work to anonymise that footage by pixellating faces and other measures to protect privacy. The Ombudsman formed the opinion that the extension in this case was reasonable. MPIs’ concerns about the volume of the video footage at issue were addressed by disclosing a sample of 15 hours of video footage showing the systematic discarding of fish. The footage was released on MPIs’ YouTube channel.

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