

Request for details of trade inquiries received by New Zealand Trade Development Board's overseas offices

Legislation	Official Information Act 1982, s 18(f)
Agency	New Zealand Trade Development Board
Ombudsman	Sir Brian Elwood
Case number(s)	W45790
Date	May 2001

Request for details of trade inquiries received by New Zealand Trade Development Board's overseas offices—request declined—substantial collation and research—information could not be made available without a major disruption of the work of those offices—request withdrawn

A request was made to the New Zealand Trade Development Board to provide details of trade inquiries about New Zealand products and services that the Board had received in its 35 overseas offices in the year ending 31 August 2000. There had been between 12,000 and 22,000 such inquiries. The Board refused the request in reliance upon section 18(f) of the OIA. The requester sought a review of this decision.

The Board explained that if it were to make the information available, it would have to look at between 10,000 and 25,000 individual pieces of information which were stored 'either in books, computer databases or files in 35 offices around the world'. Such a task would take between 5,000 to 12,500 hours, or between 670 and 1,700 person days, assuming that half an hour was spent on each inquiry. The Board considered that such an outlay of time would 'result in a major and protracted disruption of the normal work of our offshore network'.

When the requester was informed of this, the request was withdrawn.

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