

1 February 2017

By Email

[REDACTED]
WELLINGTON

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act request – research on spot market customers

I refer to your email of 18 January 2017, in which you referred to the research the Authority has been conducting “on consumers’ attitudes to the risks of spot price offers”. You have asked what next steps the Board decided at its December meeting, and requested a copy of the research findings.

In response to the first part of your request, the Board is still considering the survey findings, and has asked Authority staff to collect more information from retailers offering electricity at prices linked to spot prices. Staff will need to report back to the Board once they have gathered that further information.

The second part of your request has been assessed in accordance with the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). Attached are two documents that set out the results of the two surveys.

In respect of the business customer survey results, we have withheld the survey results under section 9(2)(ba)(i) of the OIA, on the grounds that it is necessary to withhold the information to protect information that is subject to an obligation of confidence and making the information available would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied. It is in the public interest that we continue to receive this type of information from industry participants, both for this project, and generally.

In respect of the residential customer survey results, we have withheld the survey results under:

1. section 9(2)(ba)(i) (as explained above in relation to the business customer survey results)
2. section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA, on the grounds that it is necessary to protect information where making the information available would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.

I have also considered whether there is any public interest in releasing the information which would outweigh the potential harm that could be caused. I have decided that there is not.

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It may be possible to give you more background about the issue, in general terms, without disclosing prejudicial information, and if you would like to explore this option, please contact Doug Watt at Doug.watt@ea.govt.nz.

You are entitled to ask an Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision to withhold this information. The address for contacting the Office of the Ombudsmen is:

Office of the Ombudsmen
PO Box 10-152
WELLINGTON

Yours sincerely



Carl Hansen
Chief Executive