

19 February 2024

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-25389

By email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Request for information 2024-009

I refer to your request for information dated 20 January 2024, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 20 January 2024. You have requested the following:

"I am writing to make an Official Information Act request.

I request that you attach copies of all of the sound files of your Metlink automated announcements.

This should include:

- *Train Onboard Announcements - The automated announcements played onboard the Metlink Matangi trains.*
- *Train Onboard Announcements - The automated announcements played onboard the Metlink Wairapa trains.*
- *Train Station Announcements - The automated announcements played at the Wellington station platforms.*
- *Bus Onboard Announcements - The automated announcements played onboard the Metlink buses.*

For all of the above i require both the English language versions and the Te Reo Maori language versions.

If possible please attach as .mp3 or .wav format or as .zip folders containing .mp3 or .wav format. But if not then any format is fine. As long as it is an accessible audio format.

Thank you for your help and i look forward to your response"

Greater Wellington's response follows:

For the Bus On-Board announcements:

The bus files use Amazon Webservices (AWS) technology, using Amazon Polly voice, with capability to form words with custom international phonetic alphabet (IPA) pronunciations. For the te reo Māori (Māori) pronunciations we have set up a list of the phonetic overrides to achieve correct pronunciation. We acknowledge that this may not always be 100% completely correct. If you are interested in discussing the Māori pronunciation, we can explain the process we've gone through in hiring an external consultant to support this.

Each word's sound file is created for that trip at time of the bus' initial departure. Unlike the sound files for the train and stations which are audio recordings, the bus files are generated by a text-to-speech engine. These are only available locally, on the device used to generate them and are not saved as segments in a digital library.

We are refusing this part of your request under section 17(e) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act) on the basis that the document alleged to contain the information does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

Section 17(e) of the Act requires us to consider consulting you before making our decision to refuse your request. A Metlink policy officer has attempted to contact you to discuss your request but has not been able to reach you.

For the Train On-Board Announcements (Matangi and Wairarapa), and the Wellington Station platform announcements:

Train on-board announcements and station platform announcements use the same format, technology and method. They use a speech-mixing engine, that contains pre-recorded words and "stitches" them together with a specialty Simpleway speech software. Note that this is all completed by the same voice actor.

We will meet this part of your request pursuant to section 15(1)(c) of the Act where the information requested in a document, that information may be available in the case of a document that is an article or thing from which sounds or visual images are capable of being reproduced, by making arrangements for the person to hear or view those sounds or visual images.

We provided you with the opportunity to listen to the on-board announcements. We arranged a meeting for Friday 2 February 2024, however you weren't in attendance. To organise another time to listen to the on-board announcements please contact [REDACTED]

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Act.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "sugan:-".

Samantha Gain

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Waka-ā-atea | Group Manager Metlink

PROACTIVE RELEASE