24 December 2021

████████████

By email to: ██████████████████

Dear ████

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2021/41

Thank you for your request of 3 December 2021 under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) in which you asked:

> "At what Point are the votes that are manually counted uploaded to a digital system from their paper form? What machine are they uploaded to and what company manufactures the machine and the software they use? From there what other systems are they then sent to? And what machines and software are they using and who makes the software and machines?"

Your questions have been answered in order as set out below.

Question 1: At what point are the votes that are manually counted uploaded to a digital system from their paper form?

The process for counting votes in New Zealand is very thorough and careful, to maintain confidence and integrity. All votes are counted by hand – the Electoral Commission does not use vote counting machines.

There are two counts performed after voting has ended. The first is a preliminary count of votes on election night, followed by the official count which starts the day after election day.

During the preliminary count, all ordinary votes cast are counted and the preliminary results are released on election night. Preliminary results are entered into the Election Management System by electoral officials at electorate headquarters after 7PM on election day.

During the official count, all ordinary votes cast are counted a second time and special votes are checked and counted. Once the count is complete for each voting place during the official count, the totals are recorded on a certificate of results which is signed by the Returning Officer for that electorate and a Justice of the Peace to declare that results are accurate. These results are then entered manually into the Election Management System – this process happens progressively over the official count period.

Question 2: What machine are they uploaded to and what company manufactures the machine and the software they use

The Election Management System is a purpose-built system developed in New Zealand for the exclusive use of the Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission design, test and manage its

development. Software development is performed by a New Zealand company CATALYST. NET LIMITED, NZ Company Number 952897. CATALYST is contracted to the Commission to help the Commission maintain the Election Management System. The system is hosted at New Zealand Government approved 'All-of-Government' data centres.

Question 3: **From there what other systems are they then sent to? And what machines and software are they using and who makes the software and machines?**

The Election Management System is used to generate the election results website at www.electionresults.govt.nz and an associated election results 'media feed', both hosted by Catalyst Cloud, a New Zealand cloud computing provider.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your requests. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

James Willcocks

Chief Information Officer
Electoral Commission