

15 June 2023

By email to: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

## **OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2023/18**

On 28 May 2023 you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA) for the following information:

*Analysis of Benford's Law: I request any reports, studies, or findings that the Electoral Commission has conducted regarding the application of Benford's Law to New Zealand election results. Specifically, I am interested in any identified deviations from the expected distribution of leading digits and the Electoral Commission's assessment of such deviations.*

*Evaluation of Exit Poll Data: I would like to obtain any reports, studies, or analysis carried out by the Electoral Commission that compare the results of exit polls with the actual election outcomes. Please provide details of the methodology employed, findings, and any discrepancies discovered during the evaluation process.*

*Investigations into Electoral Fraud: If the Electoral Commission has undertaken any investigations or inquiries into alleged instances of electoral fraud or irregularities, I kindly request access to relevant reports, findings, or statistics related to these investigations. Understanding the Commission's efforts to ensure the integrity of our electoral process is of great importance.*

### Analysis of Benford's Law

Benford's law is not applied to election results, and is not used in the Electoral Commission's work or discussed in information we hold. Accordingly, this part of your request is refused under s 18(e) of the OIA as the information does not exist.

### Exit polls

Exit polls are prohibited in New Zealand under section 197 of the Electoral Act 1993, so the Commission does not compare exit polls with election results. Accordingly, this part of your request is refused under s 18(e) of the OIA as the information does not exist.

### Investigations of electoral fraud

We have interpreted your request as relating to fraud or irregularities relevant to the election results. We have not had such instances and so have not undertaken investigation into them. Accordingly, this part of your request is refused under s 18(e) of the OIA as it does not exist.

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every 3 months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted.

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 request. Information about how to do this is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Temel'.

Kristina Temel  
Manager, Legal and Policy