



31 March 2026

CRO OIA 1236-26

Tēnā koe

I refer to your request received on 3 March 2026 under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). You requested the following information:

“Copies of any of the office’s reports, documents, minutes, briefing notes, memoranda, correspondence, legal advice, aide memoires, texts or emails, both internal and external, and dated 2024, 2025 or 2026 - mentioning (the possibility and/or recommendation for) an independent investigation into unmarked graves and/or an independent advisory group to investigate unmarked graves. This includes drafts, appendices and attachments.

Copies of any of the office’s reports, documents, minutes, briefing notes, memoranda, correspondence, legal advice, aide memoires, texts or emails, both internal and external, and dated 2024, 2025 or 2026 – mentioning (the possibility of) unmarked graves at the Kimberley Centre site. This includes drafts, appendices and attachments.”

Verbal request

You clarified your request verbally with Tamsin Vuetilovoni (Principal Advisor Communications) about the information you were seeking. Our understanding is that you would like copies of any advice the Crown Response Office (CRO) provided to Government about recommendation 19 of the Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCOI) – Establish an independent investigation of unmarked graves and urupā:

The government should appoint and fund an independent advisory group to investigate potential unmarked graves and urupā at the sites of former psychiatric and psychopaedic hospitals, social welfare institutions or other relevant sites.

We understand you also want to understand what the analysis was to accept its intent and our advice to get to where we are now with a Survivor focused fund.

Response to request

The CRO has completed an extensive search for all documents that could reasonably fall within the scope of your request. The CRO is satisfied that no advice was provided to the Minister, or to senior officials, that discusses the appointment or funding of an independent advisory group to investigate potential unmarked graves or urupā at the sites of former psychiatric or psychopaedic hospitals, social welfare institutions, or other relevant sites.

Therefore, I am refusing your request under section 18(e) of the OIA as the information you have requested does not exist and is unlikely to be held by another agency.

I would like to reassure you that we have exhausted every avenue reasonably available to find all information on record regarding advice to Ministers or Government on the establishment of an independent advisory group to investigate unmarked graves.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available via www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'John Henderson', written over a faint, stylized blue outline of a signature.

John Henderson
General Manager, Enabling Services

Published by the Crown Response Office