



23 January 2026

OIA 1124/1125-26

[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

I refer to your requests received on 12 January 2026, which has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). This letter responds to both of your requests in which you seek 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 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 unmarked graves at the Kimberley Centre. This includes drafts, appendices and attachments.

Response to your request

The Crown Response Office (CRO) has not participated in an independent advisory group or independent investigation into unmarked graves. The only documents that are held on this topic are emails generated responding to media queries and OIA requests. I do not consider these emails to be in scope of your request.

The CRO also does not hold any information that corresponds to your request mentioning unmarked graves at the Kimberley Centre. As a matter of good practice, we have made reasonable efforts to search for this information.

In these circumstances, 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.

Context

The Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry found there are at least 4,000 unmarked graves associated with psychiatric and psychopaedic sites in Auckland, Waikato, Nelson, Rangitikei, Horowhenua, Porirua, Otago, Westland, and Canterbury.

In response to the Royal Commission's recommendations, a Survivor Support and Recognition Fund (SSRF) was established. The fund provides contestable grants to a wide range of community organisations that support survivors of abuse in care. It also provides funding to local authorities to help honour the memory of those who died in care institutions

Local authorities with former psychiatric hospitals and psychopaedic sites (or other former care institutions) in their regions were invited to apply to the SSRF and to consider a range of initiatives that may be considered for funding. These include research into unmarked

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graves, memorial initiatives, historical recognition, and culturally appropriate ceremonies or events. Decisions on whether local authorities respond are the responsibility of each authority, noting the criteria and purpose for which funding is granted.

Local authorities have until the end of February 2026 to apply to the fund which is being administered by the Department of Internal Affairs Community Matters team. We would therefore encourage you to reach out to relevant local authorities for further information on their intentions on these matters.

We may publish this OIA response on www.abuseinquiryresponse.govt.nz (with your personal details having been removed). Publishing responses to OIA requests increases the availability of information to the public and is consistent with the purpose of the OIA to enable effective participation in the making and administration of law and policies, and to promote the accountability of Ministers and officials.

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



John Henderson
General Manager Enabling Services

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