



s 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 3 April 2024 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*"I am writing a research paper that concerns in part the Algorithm Charter for Aotearoa New Zealand and the actions taken by its signatories to discharge the signatory commitments set out in the Charter.*

*I note your agency/entity/organisation is listed as a signatory to the Charter at [Algorithm charter for Aotearoa New Zealand - data.govt.nz](https://data.govt.nz).*

*To assist me with my research, please would you provide at your earliest convenience any reports or materials held by your organisation:*

- 1. setting out and/or summarising how and when your organisation has met, or intends to meet, the commitments to transparency and partnership set out in the Algorithm Charter for Aotearoa New Zealand;*
- 2. setting out or explaining how decisions made by the organisation are informed by algorithms. This may include without limitation "plain English" documentation of the algorithm/s, information about the data and processes involved, or published information about how data is collected, secured, and stored;*
- 3. that demonstrate or detail how your organisation is delivering clear public benefits through Treaty of Waitangi commitments by embedding a te ao Māori perspective in the organisation's development and use of algorithms consistent with the Treaty of Waitangi;*
- 4. that demonstrate or detail how your organisation has, or intends to, identify and consult with people, communities and groups who have an interest in algorithms, including Māori;*
- 5. that describe how your organisation makes sure data is fit for purpose by identifying and managing bias;*
- 6. showing how privacy, ethics, and human rights are safeguarded by regular peer reviews of algorithms to assess for unintended consequences, and how the organisation acts on this information; and*
- 7. setting out the nominated point of contact for public inquiries about algorithms – together with any internal policies, principles, rules, or guidelines that relate to the above matters."*

For the purposes of the Algorithm Charter for Aotearoa New Zealand (the Charter), Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) considers the Charter to cover any processes that automate decisions about outcomes, eligibility or need for people. This includes any modelling of current or future need or impact of policy choices on people.

HUD is very early in its use of algorithms and does not currently employ anything that meets the above criteria. This means we do not have specific responses to each of your questions as it has not become applicable yet or the information does not exist.

As signatories to the Algorithm Charter and members of the Algorithm Charter and Community of Practice we are being guided by the Charter's principles as we develop algorithms.

It is intended, any future algorithms created by HUD will be clearly described on our website with open-source code alongside plain English documentation where appropriate.

An example of the documentation approach we will continue to follow is the Change in Housing Affordability Indicators documentation on our website, which are available at:

- [www.hud.govt.nz/stats-and-insights/change-in-housing-affordability-indicators/about-the-indicators/#tabset](http://www.hud.govt.nz/stats-and-insights/change-in-housing-affordability-indicators/about-the-indicators/#tabset)
- [www.hud.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Documents/Methods-Nov-2022.pdf](http://www.hud.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Documents/Methods-Nov-2022.pdf)

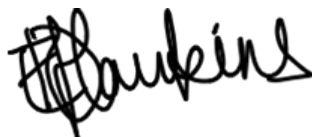
We explicitly attempt to identify anywhere the data contains gaps or omissions, particularly where this could lead to regional or local bias. If any bias is identified, it is managed on a case-by-case basis.

HUD's commitment to our Tiriti o Waitangi partners is outlined in MAIHI Ka Ora, the national Māori housing strategy which can be found here: [www.hud.govt.nz/our-work/maihi-ka-ora-the-national-maori-housing-strategy](http://www.hud.govt.nz/our-work/maihi-ka-ora-the-national-maori-housing-strategy). We already undertake consultation with stakeholders including iwi, hapū and Māori on policy and operation design. As algorithms are established at HUD we will follow the Algorithm Charter's requirement for engagement plan including opportunities for explicit feedback on the underlying models and assumptions. We are also developing internal Māori data governance guidelines which will help guide the development of algorithms.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website at: [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

As part of our ongoing commitment to openness and transparency, the Ministry proactively releases information and documents that may be of interest to the public. As such, this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on our website.

Nāku noa, nā



Eleisha Hawkins

**General Manager, System Insights and Strategy**

**Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development**