

Reference: 20190629



2 October 2019



Thank you for your Official Information Act request, received on 4 September 2019.
You requested:

- “1: *When did Treasury first know Southern Response was keeping dual DRA’s?*
- 2: *Was anyone in Treasury a party to the decision to minimise costs for Southern Response and its two DRA practice? Who?*
- 3: *When did treasury first have correspondence with then Minister Gerry Brownlee or then Finance Minister Bill English?”*

When did Treasury first know Southern Response was keeping dual DRA’s?

In May 2015, Southern Response Earthquake Service Limited (Southern Response) discussed with the media the Detailed Repair/Rebuild Analysis (DRA) it provided customers once their properties had been assessed and how this differed from the “AMI Office Use” version of the document which listed costs the company considered to be out of scope. See <https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/industries/68910133/>

The matter has been referred to in court cases such as *Avonside Holdings Limited v Southern Response* (in the High Court in 2013, Court of Appeal in October 2014 and Supreme Court in 2015). The Treasury was aware of this publicly available information at the time. We have searched our archives and other records and can find no references to the two DRA approaches in correspondence prior to that time.

Therefore, we cannot confirm whether the Treasury was aware of the approach prior to the public information referred to above. The Treasury’s focus, then and now, remains on Southern Response’s progress in resolving claims arising from the Canterbury earthquakes.

Was anyone in Treasury a party to the decision to minimise costs for Southern Response and its two DRA practice? Who?

The Treasury is not aware of, and has never been party to, any decision to minimise costs for Southern Response. The Treasury is aware that Southern Response has released documents under the Official Information Act showing that the decision regarding two DRAs was made by AMI in 2010, prior to any Crown involvement with the company.

When did Treasury first have correspondence with then Minister Gerry Brownlee or then Finance Minister Bill English?

The Treasury first had correspondence with Minister Gerry Brownlee and Finance Minister Bill English when they first became Ministers of the Crown. There is no record of the Treasury corresponding with these Ministers in regards to Southern Response's use of two DRAs, and I consider it unlikely that there has been any such correspondence.

On the basis of the explanation above your request is refused pursuant to Section 18(e) of the Official Information Act – the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or cannot be found.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Treasury website.

This reply addresses the information you requested. You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision.

Yours sincerely

Shelley Hollingsworth
Manager, Commercial Performance