

28 March 2019

[REDACTED] *Withheld under s9(2)(a) of the OIA*

Dear [REDACTED], *Withheld under s9(2)(a) of the OIA*

I am writing to respond to your request under the Official Information Act 1982, received by Education New Zealand on 4 March 2019. You requested the following:

- *A copy of all correspondence and communications with Business NZ and the Employers and Manufacturers Association relating to the vocational education reforms.*

The information you have requested is attached, consisting of one excerpt from a Business NZ document that was emailed to Grant McPherson, ENZ Chief Executive, on 21 February 2019.

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 at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602. If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact Angela Meredith, Accountability Manager (angela.meredith@enz.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely



John Goulter
Acting Chief Executive
Education New Zealand

c.c. [REDACTED] *Withheld under s9(2)(a) of the OIA*

Excerpt from: Draft Submission by Business NZ to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, on the consultation paper: a new approach to employer-assisted work visas and regional workforce planning.

With large scale changes proposed to the vocational education sector, there is a high level of uncertainty regarding how all vocational education will be delivered in the future. Other than the expected disruption to the existing sector, working through a sector restructure affecting 250,000

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people currently in training and a network of 27 separate organisations will likely take years. And there will still be existing challenges in the vocational education sector, such as training in small, niche skill areas with low economies of scale, accessibility to education options, particularly in the regions, influencing the TEC's purchasing decisions and addressing quality assurance issues in education. If anything, a lack of confidence in investing in vocational education until the changes are worked through is likely to increase demand for skilled workers with vocational education enrolments dropping rather than strengthening an education sector response.

Similarly, welfare system responses need to take into account the barriers to employment described above, and strengthen the feedback loops to address the underlying aspects impacting on labour market supply.

Labour market strategies, plans and skills bodies

Regional skill hubs have been proposed through a range of different Government initiatives (Ministry of Education Hubs as part of the Tomorrow's Schools Reviews, Skills Hubs as part of the Vocational Education Reforms, Job and Skill Hubs as part of the Provincial Growth Unit, Regional Skill Hubs as part of this immigration review). While the reasoning for the hubs is sound, the existing skill hubs piloted have had mixed success to date.

Business and industry must play an active role in any skill hub approach, and BusinessNZ is keen to test strawman concepts on how they could work when driven by community and business needs with a 'single door' approach for employers, learners and workers.