

22 September 2026

s 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe,

Your request

Thank you for your request to the Electricity Authority Te Mana Hiko (Authority), received on 16 August, under the Official Information Act 1982 (Act) for the following information:

This request concerns the proposed or potential data-centre development at or near the former Taranaki Combined Cycle power-station site in Stratford, Taranaki, associated with Contact Energy Limited, CDC Data Centres, Infratil Limited, or their representatives.

Please provide information held from 1 January 2024 to the date of this request.

1. Correspondence and engagement

- 1. All correspondence, emails and attachments, letters, meeting records, file notes, calendar entries, presentations, reports, and briefings between the Electricity Authority and:*
- 2. Contact Energy;*
- 3. CDC Data Centres;*
- 4. Infratil;*
- 5. Transpower;*
- 6. Powerco;*
- 7. the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment;*
- 8. the Ministry for the Environment;*
- 9. Invest New Zealand;*
- 10. Taranaki Regional Council;*
- 11. Stratford District Council; or*
- 12. any other government agency or electricity-sector participant,*

concerning the potential Stratford data centre, a possible load of approximately 250 MW, or related electricity supply, grid connection, transmission capacity, distribution capacity, battery storage, renewable generation, market arrangements, or security-of-supply matters.

2. Analysis and advice

All internal advice, analysis, assessments, reports, modelling, briefings, presentations, board papers, meeting minutes, risk assessments, or decision records concerning:

- 1. the effect of a new electricity load of approximately 250 MW—or any similarly sized data-centre load—on electricity prices, demand, generation, transmission, distribution, competition, reliability, resilience, or security of supply;*

2. *the potential effect on residential, commercial, industrial, or rural electricity consumers;*
3. *whether existing electricity-market, connection, transmission-pricing, or regulatory settings are adequate for large new data-centre loads;*
4. *the role of new generation, battery storage, demand response, or long-term supply arrangements in supporting such a load.*

3. *Regulatory and policy work*

All records concerning actual or proposed Electricity Authority regulatory, policy, monitoring, market-design, transmission-pricing, or information-gathering work relating to:

1. *data centres;*
2. *hyperscale or large-load customers;*
3. *grid-connected battery energy storage;*
4. *electricity-intensive infrastructure;*
5. *large new transmission or distribution connections; or*
6. *the Stratford/Taranaki proposal specifically.*

4. *Government engagement*

All correspondence or briefings concerning the Stratford proposal between the Electricity Authority and Ministers, ministerial offices, MBIE, the Treasury, the Ministry for the Environment, Invest New Zealand, or any other central-government agency.

On the 26 August, we subsequently worked with you to refine part 3 of your request to the following:

3. *Regulatory and policy work*

All meeting papers and minutes, and consultation submissions and decision papers...

Our response

We respond to your request in turn.

1. Correspondence and engagement concerning the potential Stratford data centre

One document falls in scope of this part of your request, please find this enclosed. For context, this is a meeting note between the Electricity Authority and the System Operator (Transpower) and the reference to “BESS enhancements” in this bullet point is a reference to enhancements to the regulation/Code and supporting software systems in the context of electricity market settings.

2. Analysis and advice concerning the effect of a new electricity load of approximately 250 MW, etc.

The Authority holds two documents that fall within scope of the second part of your request. The Authority plans to publicly release these within the near future, as they form part of materials considered by the Common Quality Technical Group. The minutes and materials for the technical group can be found here: [Common Quality Technical Group | Electricity Authority](#).

As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(d) of the Act, as they will soon be publicly available.

The Authority does not model new demand, although we plan to in future with a focus on security of supply.

3. All meeting papers and minutes, and consultation submissions and decision papers concerning data centres, etc.

The Authority has previously completed work regarding how applications for large loads (larger than 69kVA) and large distributed generation (larger than 10kW) are processed and approved/declined.

This was part of the Authority's Network Connections stage 1 project. The formal consultation papers, submissions received, and decision papers are located on our website: [Network connections project – stage one | Our consultations | Our projects | Electricity Authority](#)

After the decision paper was released, the Authority completed a second technical consultation on the Code drafting only. This is publicly available here: [Network connections project \(stage one\) technical consultation | Our consultations | Our projects | Electricity Authority](#).

Furthermore, minutes of the Technical Group that considered this work are also publicly available on our website: [Network Connections Technical Group | Electricity Authority](#).

The Authority has work underway to unlock the potential of grid-scale batteries. Formal consultation papers, submissions received, and upcoming decision papers can be found on our website: [Unlocking the benefits of battery energy storage systems | Our projects | Electricity Authority](#)

The Authority has had initial discussions with its Common Quality Technical Group on the technical requirements of large loads connecting to the power system. Minutes of the meeting are publicly available on our website: [Common Quality Technical Group | Electricity Authority](#)

4. All correspondence or briefings concerning the Stratford proposal between the Electricity Authority and Ministers, etc.

No information was identified as being in scope of this part of your request, therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act.

Release of information related to your request

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.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, the Authority may proactively release a copy of this response on our website. All personal data, including your name and contact details, will be removed before publication.

If you'd like to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact us by emailing oia@ea.govt.nz.

Nāku noa, nā,



Airihī Mahuika
GM Legal, Monitoring and Compliance

Appendix 1

Item No	Date	Document Type	Title	Release (withholding grounds noted where applicable)
1	7 August 2026	Meeting notes-Excerpt	Meeting between Electricity Authority and System Operator (Transpower)	<i>Partial release as an excerpt under section 16(1)(e) of the Act</i>