



29 September 2023

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request made under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), received on 4 September 2023. You requested the following:

1. *The set of verification protocols employed to establish the identity of the caller.*
2. *A documented copy of your policy and procedural guidelines governing caller authentication.*

Your request for a set of verification protocols employed to establish the identity of the caller, and your request for a copy of the policy and procedural guidelines governing caller authentication, are both refused under section 18(c)(i) of the OIA, as releasing this information would be contrary to section 18(3) of the Tax Administration Act 1994 (TAA). Releasing specific information about caller validation would adversely affect the integrity of the tax system or prejudice the maintenance of the law.

However, it may help if I provide some context around your two requests.

Item 1

I understand you have been supplied with a recording of the call related to your initial complaint. The verification questions Inland Revenue asked to establish the identity of the caller are on this recording. Therefore, for the specific verification protocols employed in this instance, I refer you to this recording.

Item 2

Concerning caller authentication, it may help if I explain Inland Revenue's methodology. Our caller authentication is guided by section 18(1) of the TAA, which sets out Inland Revenue's responsibility to keep all sensitive revenue information confidential, unless the disclosure is a permitted disclosure that meets the requirements of sections 18D to 18J of the TAA.

Inland Revenue has two key types of validation when customers call: voice biometrics, and validation against an individual's account. If a customer is enrolled for voice biometrics, this method of validation is required to be used. The most secure form of caller authentication is voice biometrics through *Voice ID*. Individuals can register for *Voice ID* by phoning Inland Revenue on 0800 257 843.

For callers who are not enrolled for *Voice ID*, Inland Revenue will ask account specific questions to confirm their identity. These questions are auto-generated and are specific to the caller's account.

If Inland Revenue has concerns about the identity of the caller, we can ask additional and more complex validation questions, deny access to the account, or ask callers to write to Inland Revenue or visit an Inland Revenue office and bring photo ID to prove their identity.

If Inland Revenue believes someone is actively trying to access an account they are not authorised to access, there are several steps it can take including (but not limited to)

updating our system to show the account may be compromised or suspend their *myIR* account access.

Right of Review

If you disagree with my decision on your OIA request, you can ask an Inland Revenue review officer to review my decision. To ask for an internal review, please email the Commissioner of Inland Revenue via: CommissionersCorrespondence@ird.govt.nz.

Alternatively, under section 28(3) of the OIA, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision. You can contact the office of the Ombudsman via email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

If you choose to have an internal review, you can still ask the Ombudsman for a review.

Publishing of OIA response

Please note that Inland Revenue regularly publishes responses to requests that may be of interest to the wider public on its website. We consider this response is of public interest so will publish this response in due course. Your personal details or any information that would identify you will be removed prior to it being published.

Thank you for your request.

Yours sincerely

A grey rectangular box redacting the signature of Andrew Robertson.

Andrew Robertson
Segment Management Lead - Individuals