

18 September 2026



Dear 

Thank you for your requests made under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), received on 31 August 2026. You requested the following:

 *looking into chatbots and customer service in government agencies. I would like to request information through the OIA about complaints relating to chatbots or AI customer-service systems, including: Number of complaints by year Complaint categories Records of significant incidents Reports of incorrect advice Escalations resulting from chatbot interactions Success metrics for chatbot interactions Could you please provide any reports, briefings, emails, memos or presentations not otherwise captured above that discuss concerns, risks, limitations, failures, complaints, accuracy problems or reputational issues relating to the chatbot system.*

And:

[...] documents estimating, discussing or evaluating cost savings, staffing reductions, efficiency gains, workforce impacts or budget reductions associated with chatbot implementation.

On 9 September 2026, you clarified your requests to relate to both modern style chatbots that utilise generative artificial intelligence (AI) and older style chatbots that utilise more rudimentary methods such as keyword matching and decision trees. You clarified that you would like any information relevant to the past 12 months.

Inland Revenue does not utilise any external facing chatbots (either modern or older style). I am therefore refusing your request for any complaints, incident reports, or other material estimating, discussing, or evaluating the impacts related to the implementation of, or interactions with chatbots in the past 12 months under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the documents alleged to contain the information do not exist.

While Inland Revenue has not implemented any external chatbots, we have commenced a programme of work to ensure Inland Revenue's external website content is fit for the future. The way in which people search for information online has evolved rapidly in recent years, and tools like Copilot, ChatGPT, and Siri are becoming increasingly common. Since these tools source information from publicly available content, we want to ensure that Inland Revenue's content on our website is surfaced as the authoritative source of tax advice and guidance no matter where or how our customers find it.

AI systems are only as reliable as the information available to them. If information is difficult to find, unstructured, or not accessible, AI can generate inaccurate guidance that can appear trustworthy. By making Inland Revenue's content accessible, discoverable, and usable by both people and machines, we will help customers and intermediaries have confidence that the guidance they are presented from Inland Revenue is both accurate and reliable.

Alongside this, we are also reviewing many of our publications that were originally designed for paper filing and print, and improving these for digital use, accessibility, and searchability.

Right of review

If you disagree with my decision on your OIA request, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the OIA. You can contact the office of the Ombudsman by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Publishing of OIA response

We intend to publish our response to your request on Inland Revenue's website (ird.govt.nz) as this information may be of interest to other members of the public. This letter, with your personal details removed, may be published in its entirety. Publishing responses increases the availability of information to the public and is consistent with the OIA's purpose of enabling more effective participation in the making and administration of laws and policies and promoting the accountability of officials.

Thank you again for your request.

Yours sincerely



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