



03 FEB 2017

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 16 December 2016 in which you seek the following information:

- *A list of all Wellington school buildings that fall under 34 per cent of New Building Standard (i.e. classified as earthquake-prone).*
- *Any reports since July 2013 on Wellington's earthquake-prone school buildings.*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

The Building Act 2004 defines earthquake-prone buildings as those assessed at less than 34% of New Building Standard (NBS), and likely to collapse, causing injury, death, or damage to other property. As at 24 January 2017, no Ministry-owned school buildings in Wellington City were considered to be earthquake-prone. We have no information relating to seismic assessments for any non-Ministry-owned school buildings. Owners of such buildings - for instance, Boards of Trustees - must ensure that they meet the requirements of the Building Act, as well as any specific earthquake requirements imposed by the relevant territorial authority.

I am refusing your request for reports since July 2013, under section 18(e) of the Act as, given there are no Ministry-owned earthquake-prone school buildings in Wellington City, the information does not exist.

A number of Wellington City's Ministry-owned school buildings were previously assessed as being earthquake-prone. However, all these buildings have been strengthened, demolished, or, particularly in the case of timber-framed buildings, reassessed using the latest engineering industry guidelines. Traditional engineering assessments often score timber-framed buildings below the required NBS. It is useful to note that timber-framed buildings performed very well during the Canterbury earthquakes, with no incidents of serious injury or death attributable to them.

If Ministry-owned school buildings are assessed as being earthquake-prone our Infrastructure Advisory Services and Capital Works Teams assist in managing any necessary remediation work. An assessment is made as to whether such buildings remain able to be occupied while the required work is being completed. The following link provides further information on the process relating to the strengthening of earthquake-prone school buildings:

- <http://www.education.govt.nz/school/property/state-schools/fixing-issues/earthquake-resilience/strengthening/>

Since the Canterbury earthquakes, we have commissioned a number of investigations into the earthquake resilience of school buildings. Our findings can be found at the following two links. The first of these focuses on earthquake resilience in general, and the second deals specifically with matters relating to the resilience of timber-framed school buildings.

- <http://www.education.govt.nz/school/property/state-schools/fixing-issues/earthquake-resilience/>
- <http://www.education.govt.nz/school/property/state-schools/fixing-issues/earthquake-resilience/timber-framed/>

If you have any questions about this response, please feel free to contact the Ministry's Media Team at media@education.govt.nz.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

I hope my response has been of use to you.

Yours sincerely



Kim Shannon
Head of Education Infrastructure Service