ENERGY EFFICIENCY & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
TE TARI TIAKI PŪNGAO

9(2)(a)

4 June 2026

Dear 9(2)(a)

Re: Official Information Act Request: EECA BIM & NZEECS

Thank you for your email on 20 May 2026 in which you requested information under the Official Information Act 1982. In summary, you requested:

1. *a copy of the National energy efficiency and conservation strategy currently in force*
2. *an unredacted copy of the 2023 Briefing to the Incoming Minister.*

In response to your request:

1. The New Zealand Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (NZEECS) currently in force is the "Unlocking our energy productivity and renewable potential - New Zealand Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy 2017-2022". This is publicly available on the MBIE website. It remains in force until it is replaced. This part of your request is being refused under Section 18(d) of the OIA as the information is already publicly available.
2. Please find an unredacted copy of the 2023 Briefing to the Incoming Minister attached as **Appendix One**.

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.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request will be published shortly at https://www.eeca.govt.nz/about/news-and-corporate/official-information/ with your personal information removed.

Yours sincerely

Murray Bell
Group Manager, Policy and Regulation

Appendix One: EECA 2023 Briefing to the Incoming Minister

Please see email attachment.

Briefing to the incoming Minister of Energy

December 2023

EECA
TE TARI TIAKI PŪNGAO
ENERGY EFFICIENCY & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Introduction to **EECA**

EECA is a Crown entity as defined in the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act 2000.

EECA's function is to encourage, promote, and support energy efficiency, energy conservation, and the use of renewable sources of energy.

The Act also requires us to take into account wider sustainability principles when carrying out activities with a view to long-term outcomes both socially and for the environment.

Our opportunity is to build out a national energy system that balances affordability, prioritises reliability and resilience, increases productivity, and achieves positive environmental outcomes.

EECA is well-placed to support the Government's vision for broad electrification of the New Zealand economy

EECA delivers. We have a track record of designing and delivering effective programmes at pace. Alongside our impact and delivery focus, EECA is a trusted Authority on energy use, energy efficiency and renewables. We use three key levers across the energy system to get our work done: regulation, targeted investment, and education and information.

Our **regulations and standards** mean New Zealanders have access to, and are encouraged to use, the best performing new products and technologies available internationally, including vehicles – for home, commercial and industrial use, saving money and energy.

When there are significant, evidenced market barriers for the adoption of clean and clever energy technology, we use our expertise to **target investment** through co-funding mechanisms.

We provide evidenced-based **education and information** to New Zealanders and businesses to help them make informed choices – lowering energy bills, improving productivity, and future-proofing for a clean energy economy.

EECA is uniquely placed to share critical data and insights, provide co-ordination across the energy system, get technology first movers underway, and set standards to manage product regulation in line with international best practice. We are a trusted partner for business, industry bodies, the public sector and community organisations.

In addition to low-emissions outcomes, our work reduces air pollution, saves on energy costs, makes homes warmer and healthier, improves the resilience of the grid, and contributes to the energy independence necessary for a strong and stable economy.

This briefing discusses a number of strategic opportunities that we would like to talk to you further about:

+ **Electrifying New Zealand**
+ **Energy efficiency first: reducing costs to unlock economic productivity**
+ **Supercharging efficient and clean transport**
+ **Energy emission savings to meet our international obligations and increase competitiveness**

Strategic **opportunities**

Electrifying New Zealand

Electrification of the energy system offers increased security, affordability and a significantly reduced emissions profile

Fully electrifying technologies and processes is a big step change – requiring large scale investment in renewable electricity generation and network infrastructure. Our estimate is that in the South Island alone we need 800 MW of new capacity (equivalent to around 85 percent of Huntly power station) before 2037, and that is with a low net security level.

Energy efficiency and demand management offer significant potential to support the right investments in electrification by increasing resilience and reducing infrastructure cost.

EECA plays a vital role on the demand side to encourage the right investments in electrification

> EECA analysis shows that investment in energy efficiency could reduce North Canterbury's industrial process heat energy needs by 24%. This would avoid an estimated investment of $113M –$170M in electricity and biomass infrastructure.

Similarly, electrifying households through efficient, demand reducing technology will help ensure investment on the supply side is economic and reduces energy costs for New Zealanders.

EECA provides system-level market analysis to help coordinate investment and match energy supply to demand

Our Regional Energy Transition Accelerator (RETA) initiative brings gentailers, distribution line companies, business, and other important industry players together to develop a streamlined approach for investment in regional electrification. The reports forecast and map regional energy demand and supply to optimise asset investments and reduce costs.

We have published RETA reports for every South Island region and have recently started on the North Island. Analysis to date suggests that for the South Island, the biggest investment needs to happen in Southland, Mid-South Canterbury and North-Canterbury – and provides recommendations on the best, most cost-effective pathway for stakeholders to take in each region. We will soon be publishing a RETA report for Northland.

Transitional low-carbon fuels, such as biomass and hydrogen, will play an important role in complementing electrification to improve security of supply

EECA has a strong working relationship with the biomass industry and businesses to identify opportunities where biomass can support electrification. We are finding that the best solutions come from the utilisation of existing land, rather than new mass planting.

We also lead in the promotion and demonstration of innovative hydrogen use for energy and transport. EECA has delivery oversight of a project with Hiringa and TR Group to deliver four hydrogen refuelling stations in the North Island and 20 heavy hydrogen fuel cell trucks. We also recently co-funded a feasibility study to explore turning green hydrogen into sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) for production at Marsden Point Refinery.

Current activity that we would like to discuss with you:

1. Through our **Regional, Sector, and Business energy transition programmes**, we work with regions, industry sectors and businesses to bring a coordinated approach for investment in electrification and decarbonisation. We would like to share progress so far and discuss how our insights can support efficient investment and widespread electrification.

2. We have a **Biomass Supply Request for Proposals (RfP)** ready to go based on previous expressions of interest, with a number of valuable biomass supply chain building projects in the South Island. We would like to share more information about this RfP, and the potential industrial fuel-switching projects.

3. We are preparing a **public engagement programme** to provide New Zealanders with information they need when making their next household purchase decision – that will support the electrification of New Zealand. For example, early estimates suggest that electrifying space heating could save New Zealand households over $3,000 over the lifetime of the appliance. Research is currently being undertaken to confirm cost savings for targeted appliances and technology. Based on modelling, we anticipate that if we generate as little as a 2% switch in annual sales to these targeted electric appliances, we will be able to generate a lifetime ROI of over $3.50 for every dollar of investment in public engagement, as well as remove over 10,000 tonnes of carbon.

Energy efficiency first: reducing costs to unlock economic productivity

Accelerating electrification requires a focus on making the most efficient use of the system as a whole

EECA's product and appliance regulations play a key role in utilising energy efficiency as the 'first fuel' at a business and household level.

> Since 2002, the 98 million products sold under our Minimum Energy Performance Standards and Labelling for energy using products, have saved businesses and consumers 94.5 PJ of energy, or the annual energy use of 2.2 million households, equating to $2.3 billion of national benefit and 3.5 Mt of CO2-e.

We also deliver vehicle energy and efficiency labelling across New Zealand, helping consumers make informed choices about their car purchase.

Energy efficiency is good for business

Energy is generally not a core part of most businesses' activity, but it is ours and we're well placed to support businesses to get the most out of their energy use. Many businesses don't know where or how to start. Our research shows there is a need for guidance on how to take a first step, how to progress, and how to prioritise. With the right investment planning and bespoke tools that EECA provides, energy is one of the few costs that businesses can control.

We hold direct relationships with New Zealand's top 100 energy users across sectors including food processing, manufacturing, forestry, agriculture and more. Many we have worked with for a number of years, helping them map the best and most efficient technologies and opportunities for reducing long-run costs and emissions. We are the leading agency providing SME's with this information through our many public facing channels and direct engagement.

Energy efficiency also has positive social impacts on households

The long-running Warmer Kiwi Homes programme delivers insulation and efficient heating retrofits to low-income households. The programme delivers warmer and drier homes, but also supports positive health and social outcomes. An independent evaluation of the programme showed that it achieves a 16% reduction in household electricity use over winter months and delivers a benefit cost ratio of 4:1. This equates to an estimated $15 million per year saved in avoided health costs, and supports downward pressure on hospital wait times.

Likewise, EECA is playing a leading role in promoting the roll-out of 'smart' technologies (that are able to interact with the wider electricity system) and making them a seamless, beneficial part of consumers' daily lives and the electricity system. It is estimated that investment in smart technologies could unlock at least 2 GW of distributed flexibility by 2030, and 5.8 GW by 2050.

Current activity that we would like to discuss with you:

1. **Updating EECA's regulatory system** requires amendments to the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act 2000 to allow New Zealand to respond quickly to the introduction of new products, technological developments, and keep pace with international best practice. The amendments do not introduce any new regulations, rather the amendments will allow us to ensure that future products and systems have the 'smartness' (i.e. ability) to interact with the wider network, and will support demand flexibility at scale. Demand flexibility brings benefits to consumers through efficiency and cost savings, and benefits to the wider energy system by minimising peak load and optimising network asset investments. We would like to discuss with you next steps on how to proceed with the amendments to EECA's regulatory system.

2. **Scaling uptake of efficient equipment for a range of businesses** can be done through our Clean Tech programme. The programme brings productivity and cost-saving benefits to small and medium firms from adopting efficient and low-emissions technology. The scheme has huge energy savings and emissions reduction potential if taken up in high volume. The Clean Tech programme is expected to save energy equivalent to energy generated by Tauhara power station each year (3.5% of NZ's electricity generation and is estimated to cost around $920 million). Total emissions reduction over seven years would be more than a year's worth of emissions from the commercial buildings sector (750 ktCO2e). We would like to discuss early lessons and how this new programme could support electrification.

3. **Smart products, including charging for EVs** are an emerging focus and we are working on new standards and information to promote smart chargers for electric vehicles. EV chargers are likely to use the most energy of any appliance in the household, making this important to get right at what is still a relatively early stage of EV adoption. Widespread use of this internationally proven technology will significantly reduce peak demand issues, result in lower electricity bills for charging, and minimise line upgrades. We would like to share our proposed directions for smart products including smart chargers for EVs.

4. **Energy hardship and cost of living** pressures are addressed through our Warmer Kiwi Homes programme which was recently expanded to deliver additional energy efficiency services to low-income households and hard-to-reach communities. We would like to discuss additional opportunities to address cost of living and energy hardship outside of the Warmer Kiwi Homes programme, depending on your priorities.

Supercharging efficient and clean transport

Transport represents a huge opportunity to reduce energy costs for New Zealanders and domestic emissions

Ninety nine percent of all transport fuel is fossil-fuel. The sector currently produces 44% of New Zealand's energy-related emissions, which means reducing emissions is key to achieving our 2050 goals. We have the right kind of environment for EVs with our highly renewable grid, and have been using our levers to signal the transition to manufacturers, and give consumers more choice.

EECA is playing a key role in supporting this market transition, through working with key transport industry players, educating end users, delivering public EV chargers and demonstrating technologies and other solutions that are in the early stages of market adoption.

Quality EV charging infrastructure is central to increasing public confidence in electric vehicles

Our research shows that 80% of EV drivers do at least half their charging at home, but 76% of EV drivers also use public chargers, mostly for long trips (an increase of 27% since 2021).

Our established delivery approach and strong relationships in the transport and energy sectors mean we successfully deliver at pace. The competitive tendering process EECA oversees provides us with visibility of project funding models and related costs (such as electricity connection costs and lines charges, capital works and consents). This allows us to ensure the Government contribution is only at a level that is required to significantly accelerate a charger project or enable a project that has importance to the national charging network but would not currently be considered commercially viable.

We have been working closely with industry to support New Zealand's public EV charging network, including the rollout of EV charging hubs since the early days of adoption. There are now fast public chargers at least every 75km across almost the entire State Highway network.

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Demonstration of new technologies and applications is vital to market uptake

EECA supports the demonstration of new energy efficient and low-emission transport technologies and applications, an intervention that significantly de-risks future private investment.

Demonstration within our transport network has been a key focus. Among the hundreds of projects we've supported are New Zealand's first hydrogen fuel cell truck trial with NZ Post, a world first electric milk tanker in partnership with Fonterra, an electric ferry 'East by West' custom designed for Wellington conditions, a shore-based power supply for StraightNZ ferries while in berth, and the recent development of our first public charging hubs.

More broadly, we've helped bring to the market highly replicable technology including a New Zealand-first fully autonomous electric tractor that can also serve as a back-up generator, electric frost fans for an orchard, and industrial scale high temperature heat pumps.

Local production and supply chains related to these technologies have, in several cases, become well established, following the original demonstration with EECA co-investment.

Current activity that we would like to discuss with you:

1. Through our agile **Public EV Charging Programme** we have partnered with the private sector to build out the public EV charging network, and support charging hubs – an international concept that the market has not yet invested in due to the high up-front costs involved (particularly electricity connection costs) and New Zealand's relatively small (but rapidly growing) EV fleet. EECA runs several funding rounds per year to support the development of different forms of public charging infrastructure (such as fast charging hubs on State Highways, destination charging at libraries or shopping and chargers on key holiday routes). In November 2023 EECA received applications for a funding round focused on public charging hubs, with successful applicants to be announced in early 2024. We also have several more public charging funding rounds planned for early 2024.

2. We have been working with the **heavy freight** industry on solutions to overcome financial and non-financial barriers to investing in electric and hydrogen low-emissions heavy vehicles. This is a sector with huge potential given its disproportionate emissions profile (4% of vehicles on New Zealand roads are creating 24% of transport emissions) and there are proven solutions that are available internationally. We would like to discuss with you a programme that is ready to go to market, as well as initiatives to deliver the charging infrastructure needed to support investment in heavy vehicles.

Energy emission savings to meet our international obligations and improve competitiveness

Energy makes up over 40% of New Zealand's total greenhouse gas emissions

The industrial and transport sectors continue to be the biggest opportunities for reducing energy emissions, as well as electrifying the home. Through energy efficiency and fuel-switching, EECA is well placed to support decarbonisation while improving productivity and economic competitiveness.

Every year that an emissions reduction project is brought forward matters

Treasury has released analysis illustrating a need for the Government to purchase potentially between $3-$23 billion in international offsets in 2030 under a range of scenarios to meet our Nationally Determined Contribution and international obligations under the Paris Agreement. Offshore carbon credits will be expensive to purchase, costly to monitor and verify, and offer a low level of confidence about additionality, delivery, and outcomes.

> Based on the industrial and commercial projects that EECA has supported to date, we have locked in annual CO2 reductions of 1.5 million tonnes, at a levelised lifetime abatement cost to Government of $19/tonne.

This is a significant contribution to meeting the Government's emission budgets – achieving accelerated reductions of around 13% of what is required across all sectors between 2025 and 2030.

If the Government wishes for EECA to continue to use a co-funding model, we can achieve a relatively cheap cost to government of emissions reductions by scaling our investment. Our Government Investment in Decarbonising Industry (GIDI) process used an open book application process to assess the minimum financial support needed to bring the cost to business (which is much higher) within reach and get the investment across the line. Our average co-funding percentage under the GIDI model was around 31% of capital expenditure across all projects.

There is significant opportunity to leverage private finance

As part of our business programme, we hold direct relationships with 10 private finance providers to boost the reach of our programmes, and at the same time help banks better understand quality business' decarbonisation projects. We aim to raise awareness of the financial products available to businesses and make it simpler to offer competitive rates for emissions reduction projects. We collaborate on joint marketing to engage and educate the market on what is available. We also support the structuring of project finance on large deals, and provide project monitoring and verification contributing to the assurance for finance providers, on a more ongoing basis.

Current activity that we would like to discuss with you:

1. We note the Government's signal that businesses should reduce emissions without expecting direct financial support, and your tax plan indicated that a portion of GIDI funding should be reprioritised. We would welcome a conversation with you around the Government's **preferred policy levers to impact industrial decarbonisation**. Our existing programme infrastructure and developed relationships with industry mean we are well-placed to support new approaches that align with your priorities.

2. Our **engagement with industry, including RETA** shows there is an immediate need for local electricity upgrades to enable business process heat electrification at the industrial site level. Electrical connection costs can be over half the capital cost of a typical fuel switching project and often present a major barrier to businesses making an investment decision. Businesses also face other disincentives including first-mover disadvantages and a lack of access to reliable information to inform investment. We would like to discuss opportunities for energy efficiency to help optimise investment and activity on a regional basis.

3. It is expected that **alternative fuels**, such as sustainable hydrogen, will play a role in the future low-emissions energy mix. We have been supportive of technologies utilising it, where it is an efficient use of renewable energy and represents cost-effective emissions reductions in the energy system. We have supported demonstration hydrogen projects where its use could prove to be a viable decarbonisation option (e.g. heavy transport or very high temperature needs). We would like to discuss further opportunities for its role in the low-emissions transition.

Early decisions required

Tactical items that require an early decision or engagement

Item and description	Action sought
1. 2024/25 Levy Consultation: Under the Electricity Industry Act 2010 and Energy (Fuels, Levies, and References) Act 1989, EECA is required to consult on its levy funding request prior to submitting a request to the Minister of Energy and Resources. This consultation must take place with industry participants or persons who are liable to pay the levies, and any other person that EECA believes will be significantly affected by the levies.	A consultation document has been prepared, which will be shared with you under no surprises, before consulting with industry. We will report back to you on the outcome of that consultation, then seek your approval for the final levy request in early 2024.
2. Pending decisions on uncontracted projects Over the caretaker period and following Cabinet Office guidance, we paused our processing of existing applications for funding through the GIDI.	We are seeking an early decision from you on how to proceed with a small number of projects where processing is underway, but currently paused.
3. Biomass Supply Request for Proposals (RfP) This initiative is intended to support the development of several valuable biomass supply chain projects in the South Island. We would like to share more information about this RfP and our work programme to continue momentum in industrial renewable energy use.	We will seek an early decision from you on how to proceed with this initiative.

Decisions required to set strategic policy direction

Item and description	Action sought
1. Amendments to the New Zealand Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act 2000 A Bill is currently being prepared to modernise and future-proof the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act 2000. The amendments are aimed at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of EECA's regulation-making process, and ensure we are well-placed to benefit from international advancements in energy efficiency.	We understand that MBIE will provide you advice on the priority of this Bill, as part of broader advice on the Government's 2024 Legislative Programme. We would value an early conversation with you about these amendments as they are time-sensitive and critical to supporting rapid electrification and overall system efficiency.
2. New Zealand Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy EECA and MBIE are leading a joint programme to develop a revised New Zealand Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (NZEECS). NZEECS is a statutory medium-term strategy (required under the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act 2000) that guides the Government's work programmes in regard to energy efficiency. Publishing the strategy will provide clarity for industry and businesses on the Government's policies for efficiency, conservation, and use of renewable sources of energy to support their decision-making in the medium term.	We intend to brief you in early 2024, including advice on targeted engagement we plan to undertake over coming months.
3. Warmer Kiwi Homes expansion decisions EECA's Warmer Kiwi Homes programme delivers heating and insulation retrofits to low-income households. The programme was recently expanded and we are in the process of designing and planning for implementation of new programme elements.	Alongside MBIE, we will brief you and seek direction early in 2024 on the Warmer Kiwi Homes programme components.

Item and description	Action sought
4. Low Emissions Heavy Transport decisions We have a Low Emissions Heavy Transport initiative that is designed and ready to launch. We can provide you with advice on this initiative with scope to modify depending on your priorities.	Alongside MBIE and MoT, we will brief you and seek direction on EECA's Low Emissions Heavy Transport programme.
5. Public EV Charging decisions We will provide you with advice on EECA's current public EV charging and engagement programme and how this can support your priority of rapidly rolling out charging infrastructure across the country. This includes a summer charging campaign that is due to roll out to support public charging etiquette given highest ever numbers of EVs on the roads this summer.	Alongside MBIE and MoT, we will brief you and seek direction on the Public EV Charging programme components.
6. Advice on industrial decarbonisation and the GIDI Fund The Government has signalled its intention to reprioritise the GIDI fund. Alongside MBIE, we have prepared analysis of the resultant impact on emissions budgets, as well as possible options for continuing momentum in industrial renewable energy use.	Alongside MBIE, we expect to brief you on opportunities to further decarbonise industry, in keeping with your stated priorities.
7. Advice on the State Sector Decarbonisation Fund (SSDF) and future opportunities The State Sector Decarbonisation Fund has supported decarbonisation initiatives across the state sector and funding was recently fully committed.	Alongside MBIE and MfE, we will brief you and seek direction on opportunities for further decarbonisation of the State sector.

About **EECA**

EECA was established under the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act 2000 to promote renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) is EECA's monitoring agency and advises you on our performance. EECA is a Crown entity with 128 staff based in offices in Wellington (109), Auckland (14), and Christchurch (5).

EECA's strategy is informed by the New Zealand Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy 2017 – 2022 (NZEECS). The NZEECS is currently being refreshed, and intended to be completed by the end of 2024.

EECA's funding

EECA is funded through Energy and Resources appropriations within Vote Business, Science, and Innovation. Some of these appropriations include funding sourced from energy levies and the Climate Emergency Response Fund (CERF). Our 2023/24 budget is outlined in detail in our Statement of Performance Expectations, and summarised in the table below:

Revenue	Budget for 2023/24
Appropriation funding (baseline and programme specific)	**$292,064,000**
Other revenue (e.g. interest)	**$4,020,000**

Expenditure	Budget for 2023/24
Co-investment (e.g. WKH, GIDI, LETF)	**$252,536,000**
Other expenses (e.g. personnel, depreciation, fees)	**$43,123,000**

Council of Energy Regulators

The Council of Energy Regulators comprises EECA, MBIE (Chair), the Electricity Authority, the Gas Industry Company, and the Commerce Commission. The Council facilitates a uniquely whole-of-system approach to risks, issues and opportunities within the energy markets regulatory system. This collectively enables its members to meet the Government's Expectations for Good Regulatory Practice as they relate to the regulatory system. The Council convenes on a quarterly basis to coordinate and collaborate on their activities and those of other actors in the system; proactively monitor emerging risks (both within and outside of government); and exchange information on each other's work programmes. Over the next 12 months, the Council will be focusing on further strengthening its regulatory governance, with particular emphasis on specifying system outcomes, managing system risk and assurance, and ensuring capability.

EECA's Leadership Group

Dr Marcos Pelenur
Chief Executive

Brett Banner
Group Manager - Corporate Services

Jo Bye
Group Manager - Marketing & Communications

Murray Bell
Group Manager - Strategy Insights and Regulations

Nicki Sutherland
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Group Manager - Homes, Transport and Government

EECA's Board

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