

31 July 2023

s9(2)(a)



Thank you for your email dated 1 June 2023 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Under the Official Information Act, I'd like to request data on earthquake compliance on all Kainga Ora owned and operated buildings.

Please provide the most up-to-date information on how compliant each site is with earthquake safety standards, and please include the city or region in this data.

Please also provide any future plans around earthquake strengthening, if applicable.

Kāinga Ora has interpreted these questions as a request for detail on any Kāinga Ora owned or operated site that is considered earthquake prone in accordance with New Zealand legislation.

For context, the Building Code provides minimum standards required for new building construction, alongside other regulations to deal with specific issues, including seismic resilience. Buildings are regarded as earthquake-prone if they are assessed as being less than 34 percent of the strength required for a new build in the same location in moderate earthquake shaking. This is referred to as 34 percent NBS (New Build Standard). In general, these assessments are required for commercial or industrial buildings, and larger residential buildings that are multi-level and have three or more separate units. There is no Building Code requirement for single stand-alone residential houses to meet a minimum percentage of NBS.

All newly built or acquired properties delivered by our predecessor agency Housing New Zealand, and now Kāinga Ora, met the Building Code at the time of delivery. This also forms part of the building consent approved through local authorities, for new builds and significant updates to existing buildings.

Kāinga Ora is New Zealand's largest property owner with over 70,000 properties. The vast majority of these are standalone houses or other housing types that are not required to meet a minimum percentage of NBS.

Following the Christchurch earthquakes, Housing New Zealand undertook a stocktake of owned and operated buildings that were potentially earthquake-prone. It identified just over 1,000 buildings (owned, leased, offices) that required seismic assessment. In mid-2011, it commenced a programme of work to seismically assess and strengthen or demolish earthquake-prone buildings, in accordance with legislation.

Kāinga Ora has no earthquake prone office buildings.

Kāinga Ora records two public housing sites that we own, which currently have a seismic assessment rating below 34 percent NBS. One site is in Hamilton and has one building with a rating of 29 percent NBS. The second site is in Auckland and has four buildings with a rating of 23 percent NBS. For both of these sites, Kāinga Ora is undertaking a detailed seismic assessment to reconfirm the current NBS rating, and to understand any strengthening work that would be required.

Separately, Kāinga Ora owns one unit in a multi-unit building in Auckland that we record as having a rating of 31 percent NBS. And we own one unit in a second multi-unit building in Auckland, which our records show is currently unassessed. In each of these cases, Kāinga Ora is not the owner of the building. It is the responsibility of the building owner to undertake seismic assessments of the building and determine any strengthening work required, and we have reached out to the owner or Body Corporate to gather more information.

In addition, we lease properties from private owners across ten buildings (nine in Auckland and one in Wellington), for which we do not hold a record of the building's percentage-NBS rating. We are requesting more information from the owners of these buildings, too. Further information may return ratings above 34 percent NBS, so these properties cannot be counted as earthquake prone or potentially earthquake prone.

It is important to add that Kāinga Ora has an ongoing remediation programme for the older housing stock we own, where buildings undergoing significant remediation are re-assessed for seismic strength as a matter of routine. As we make investment decisions, we will consider whether a building would benefit from any seismic strengthening work.

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Contact details for the Ombudsman can be found at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz

Please note that Kāinga Ora proactively releases our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request may be published at kaingaora.govt.nz/publications/official-information-requests/ with your personal information removed.

Nāku noa, nā



Gareth Stiven
General Manager, Strategy Finance and Policy