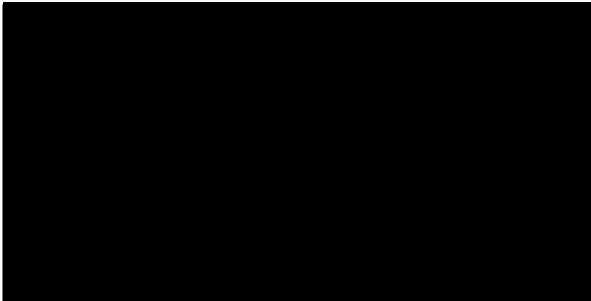


10 October 2018



Re Official Information request for Hunua 1080 poison request re April 1995 report by Dr Farhad Mahmood and the Medical Officer of Health's views on the sublethal fertility and teratogenic effects of 1080

I refer to your Official Information Request of 12 September 2018 for the following information:

- 1) *I would be grateful if you would be able to take urgent instructions advise:
 - a) *if Dr Mahmood prepared this report on behalf of the Auckland DHB (or its predecessor at the time) or on behalf of another interested stakeholder.*
 - b) *Either way are you please able to provide a clean copy of that report and any other similar reports which were prepared to assess compliance with the MoH's conditions of approval for that drop.*
 - c) *If Dr Sinclair understood when he prepared his evidence that the proposed exclusion - no fly zone – in the present proposal it to fly and deposit poison baits over the entire Hunua catchment (within the 22500 operational zone) that feeds into the reservoirs including streams and other water courses.**
- 2) *I refer you also to the affidavit of Alistair Fairweather (predator expert for DoC) and particularly paragraphs 64 to 67, and his annexure AACF-3, which he summarises the current view on the adverse health effects of 1080 poison including that it has sub-lethal effects on reproduction and is classified as a teratogen.*
- 3) *Please could you provide whatever research Dr Sinclair and the Auckland MoH team relied on to establish the 'safe level of exposure' to protect humans against the risk of sub lethal effects on reproduction and any teratogenic effects on human embryos and how safety margins were assessed for this, bearing in mind the array of different sensitivities between different species to 1080 poison and the obvious ethical difficulties testing humans.*
- 4) *Please could you also advise which if the incidents of known and suspected human poisoning from 1080 were considered by Dr Sinclair when a) the Auckland DHB gave consent for this aerial 1080 drop and b) when Dr Sinclair prepared his evidence.*
- 5) *Did Dr Sinclair have access to and take into account any or all of the cases in the Register of Unintended poisoning consequences from 1080 and other Vertebrate toxic agents that I provided by email to the DHB contact last week? I will forward a copy.*

- 6) ***Please could you also provide the relevant materials to show exactly when Dr Sinclair and his public health team did this analysis and what focus was given to protecting the community against effects on fertility and teratogenicity.***
- 7) ***Does Dr Sinclair agree that in the circumstances a precautionary approach should be adopted to the addition of this substance to public water drinking supplies, and if not, why not?***
- 8) ***I am advised that overseas chemical analysis is able to test water for contaminants such as 1080 and its metabolites (fluorocitrate) and breakdown products fluoride and fluorine down to parts per trillion – whereas the testing in New Zealand is only able to reliably assess to pp billion.***
- 9) ***Does Dr Sinclair agree that there is likely to be a public perception that it is noxious, dangerous, offensive and/or objectionable to add a substance that is recognised by the Crown experts to cause adverse fertility effects and teratogenicity effects intentionally into the main water supply of New Zealand's biggest city- and into other smaller private water supplies.***

We have provided the information below under each of your questions using the numbering and lettering contained in your request as follows:

1a. Dr Farhat Mahmood was one of the previous Medical Officers of Health for the then South Auckland Health District. The report would have been prepared for the Ministry of Health. Auckland Healthcare Ltd was the Crown Health Enterprise, equivalent now of the provider arm of the DHB.

1b. The various changes in regulatory and agency responsibilities since 1995 mean that records related to the 1994 operation are outdated and inappropriate to apply to current 1080 operations. While Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) does not keep the archived files for the 1994 aerial 1080 operation, they can be accessed if required. The files are held in the South Auckland health system and require access to the Counties Manukau Health Archives. This request is refused under section 18(f) where the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research. If you consider, despite its age, you still require Dr Mahmood's 1994 report, ARPHS can request the report. If the time taken exceeds five hours, we would need to consider fixing a charge under section 15 of the Act. Charges which apply are \$38 per half hour of staff time and 20 cents per page of photocopying in excess of 20 pages.

1c. The 2018 permit conditions are based on the Ministry of Health's national guideline model conditions "*Issuing Permissions for the use of Vertebrate Toxic Agents (VTAs). Guidelines for Public Health Units*". The permission conditions take into account a range of information on the Hunua catchment areas. Information related to the permit conditions and the Ministry guidance has been provided as disclosure to you on 12 September 2018 in the proceedings before the Environment Court heard on 13 September 2018. I understand you already hold this documentation.

2. We have interpreted this point as not containing a question nor requesting official information.

3. When setting conditions for VTA operations, Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (HSNO) officers in Public Health services rely on the Ministry of Health guide on VTA applications, the EPA/ERMA hazardous substance classification and toxicology summaries, and the DWSNZ guidelines for drinking water management, which are backed by available research. The Provisional Maximum Acceptable Value (PMAV) for 1080 in drinking water is described in the data sheets for pesticides in the Ministry of Health's Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality Management for New Zealand, which is available on the Ministry of Health's website¹.

4. Poisoning surveillance is undertaken by, or on behalf of, the Ministry of Health with information gathered from medical practitioners, the Poisons Centre, the public and other sources. The Ministry of Health's guidance takes into account poisoning surveillance information accumulated over several decades. Public health staff who deal with VTA applications are aware of the potential for adverse effects from 1080 and a small number of confirmed notifications. The last confirmed human death following exposure to 1080 was in the 1960s.

5. According to the Ministry of Health, most reported 1080 accidental poisonings are not confirmed after medical assessment for lack of either compatible symptoms or sufficient exposure. Staff at ARPMS have seen your register.

6 - 9. The information related to the relevant considerations taken into account to determine risk and set permit conditions for the 2018 1080 aerial operation has been fully provided by way of affidavit evidence disclosed to you on 12 September 2018 as part of proceedings before the Environment Court on 13 September 2018. The decisions made by authorised officers at ARPMS are consistent with current accepted standards and Ministry of Health guidance. Conditions required of the Hunua operation were more restrictive in several ways, as described in the evidence statement. I understand you already hold this documentation.

I trust this information answers your questions.

You are entitled under the Official Information Act section 28(3) to seek a review of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the Auckland DHB website.

Yours faithfully



Ailsa Claire, OBE
Chief Executive

¹ <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/guidelines-drinking-water-quality-management-new-zealand>