



31 May 2024

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

16 MAY 2024: OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

In your email dated 16 May 2024 you requested the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

I would like to request information from the NZFC regarding the forthcoming Warner Bros Discovery Lord of the Rings movie project, announced by WBD in May 2024. Please provide all information relating to:

meetings/correspondence between NZFC and the producers of the movie

Emails regarding the Lord of the Rings project.

Any details on the work to ensure the film is made in NZ.

Background information produced by NZFC regarding the Lord of the Rings project.

Any information relating to the economic impact of the forthcoming film

Analysis/information relating to the movie's use of the Screen Production Rebate or discussions over the SPR.

The information you have requested is attached at **Appendix 1**. Certain information has been withheld under the following grounds of the OIA:

- Section 9(2)(a): to protect the privacy of natural persons.
- Section 9(2)(b)(ii): to protect information where the making available of that information would be unlikely reasonable to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or is the subject of the information.
- Section 9(2)(g): to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions.

We will be publishing this letter (with your personal information removed) and **Appendix 1** on the NZFC website.

Please be aware that you have the right, by way of complaint to an Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the OIA to seek an investigation and review of our response.

Yours sincerely

Tayla Hancock

Tayla Hancock
Senior Advisor, Policy and Performance
New Zealand Film Commission

From: [Catherine Bates](#)
To: [Leadership Team](#); [Melissa Booth](#)
Subject: Lord of the Rings New Movies Set at Warner Bros - Variety
Date: Friday, 24 February 2023 12:37:15 p.m.

What makes this a little more interesting to s that we heard yesterday the WBros Discovery co chair may be in Wellington in April.

<https://variety.com/2023/film/news/lord-of-the-rings-new-movies-warner-bros-1235533672/>

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Released under the Official Information Act 1982

From: [Annie Murray](#)
To: [Mel Read](#)
Cc: [Karen Anslow](#)
Subject: Re: New LOTR movies
Date: Friday, 10 May 2024 1:33:10 p.m.
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)

Thanks Mel, I did wonder!

Ngā mihi,
Annie

Taima Anne Murray (Annie)
Chief Executive Officer
Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga
New Zealand Film Commission

From: Mel Read <mel.read@nzfilm.co.nz>
Sent: Friday, May 10, 2024 1:40:56 AM
To: Annie Murray <annie.murray@nzfilm.co.nz>
Cc: Karen Anslow <karen.anslow@nzfilm.co.nz>
Subject: FW: New LOTR movies

Kia ora Taima,

Just alerting you to these comms for your awareness. Heidi from MBIE rang me as it seems they are fielding some enquiries – it sounds like various assumptions are being made about where the films are being made, however we don't have any intel on this based on conversations I've had today. This of course may change in the coming days.

Cheers, Mel

From: Mel Read
Sent: Friday, May 10, 2024 12:33 PM
To: Heidi van der Watt <heidi.vanderwatt@mbie.govt.nz>
Cc: Philippa Mossman <Philippa.Mossman@nzfilm.co.nz>; Chris Payne <chris.payne@nzfilm.co.nz>
Subject: New LOTR movies

Kia ora Heidi,

My Attractions colleagues have supplied the attached communication from 2023 regarding an announcement around rights acquisition. However, we have not received any substantive information since that announcement.

I've cc'd Philippa and Chris, in case they happen to have heard anything more recently and/or ahead of the current media activity. (Note, they are both in London right now and may not be able to respond before COB).

Cheers, Mel

 **Mel Read** | Kaiwhakahaere Whiwhinga | Incentives Executive | [she/her](#)
Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga | New Zealand Film Commission
Level 3, 119 Ghuznee St, Wellington 6011 | PO Box 11546, Manners Street, Wellington 6142
Section 9(2)(a)
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To make sure that we're inclusive and accessible to all, please let us know if you require any adjustments or assistance ahead of a meeting with us, either in-person or online.

Click on the image below to learn more about He Ara Wakaurunga Kanorau | Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.



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From: [Jacqui Wood](#)
To: [Mel Read](#)
Cc: [Jane Sloane](#); [Philippa Mossman](#)
Subject: RE: New Lord of the Rings films in the works at Warner Bros
Date: Friday, 10 May 2024 12:20:57 p.m.
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[image002.jpg](#)

Kia ora Mel

Great to chat just now and please see internal email note from Jane below when Warners first signalled in the trades - February 2023 that they had secured the rights to make more films.

Warner's have not had any discussions about this filming in New Zealand with NZFC's International Attractions team and to date there is nothing confirming New Zealand as the filming base for these films.

Thanks

Jacqui

From: Jane Simons <jane.simons@nzfilm.co.nz>
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2023 1:55 PM
To: Jacqui Wood <jacqui.wood@nzfilm.co.nz>; Philippa Mossman <philippa.mossman@nzfilm.co.nz>
Subject: New Lord of the Rings films in the works at Warner Bros

[New Lord of the Rings films in the works at Warner Bros](#) | [Lord of the Rings](#) | [The Guardian](#)

Jane Simons | International Attractions Coordinator

New Zealand Film Commission | Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

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Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

From: [Melissa Booth](#)
To: [Philippa Mossman](#); [Annie Murray](#)
Subject: RE: LOTR
Date: Friday, 10 May 2024 8:18:00 p.m.
Attachments: [image002.jpg](#)
[image003.jpg](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image006.jpg](#)
[image008.png](#)
[image010.jpg](#)
[image013.jpg](#)
[image014.jpg](#)
[image015.jpg](#)
[image016.jpg](#)

As discussed, I've just published so we can get this up the day of the announcement. If there are any changes I can easily make them in the morning.

Ngā mihi nui

Melissa

Melissa Booth | Senior Communications Advisor
New Zealand Film Commission | Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga
Level 3, 119 Ghuznee St, Wellington 6011 | PO Box 11546, Manners Street, Wellington 6142
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Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

From: Philippa Mossman <philippa.mossman@nzfilm.co.nz>
Sent: Friday, May 10, 2024 7:27 PM
To: Melissa Booth <melissa.booth@nzfilm.co.nz>; Annie Murray <annie.murray@nzfilm.co.nz>
Subject: RE: LOTR

Hi Mel

Good to chat just now. I see you've made a couple of good tweaks. Checking in with you Annie for anything additional/different?

Let's prepare to get this on the website tonight (NZT) Mel - and you can refer media to it, ahead of us potentially having more to say via WB for next week. As mentioned I've reached out for a conversation with them

p

From: Philippa Mossman
Sent: Friday, May 10, 2024 7:45 AM
To: Melissa Booth <melissa.booth@nzfilm.co.nz>; Annie Murray <annie.murray@nzfilm.co.nz>
Subject: RE: LOTR

PS

This was signalled in Feb 23 which is when we first became aware of it:

[New Lord of the Rings films in the works at Warner Bros | Lord of the Rings | The Guardian](#)

From: Philippa Mossman

Sent: Friday, May 10, 2024 7:41 AM

To: Melissa Booth <melissa.booth@nzfilm.co.nz>; Annie Murray <annie.murray@nzfilm.co.nz>

Subject: RE: LOTR

Agree re strong acknowledgement of Andy Serkis, Mel. Your draft is great I think - although I can't advise with certainty what NZFC has used in the past.

I hope to have more directly from Warners around 12 hours from now (it's nearly midnight in LA)

I have also had a query from Tourism NZ, looking for intel. **Section 9(2)(b)(ii), 9(2)(g)(i)**

From: Melissa Booth <melissa.booth@nzfilm.co.nz>

Sent: Friday, May 10, 2024 4:20 AM

To: Annie Murray <annie.murray@nzfilm.co.nz>; Philippa Mossman <philippa.mossman@nzfilm.co.nz>

Subject: RE: LOTR

I've started a rough draft but defer to Philippa who is the expert on this topic for NZFC.

☐ [LOTR Announce.docx](#)

Ngā mihi nui

Melissa

Melissa Booth | Senior Communications Advisor

New Zealand Film Commission | Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

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Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

From: Annie Murray <annie.murray@nzfilm.co.nz>
Sent: Friday, May 10, 2024 2:36 PM
To: Melissa Booth <melissa.booth@nzfilm.co.nz>; Philippa Mossman
<philippa.mossman@nzfilm.co.nz>
Subject: Re: LOTR

Is what's on the website OK? We should get it out today.

Ngā mihi,
Annie

Taima Anne Murray (Annie)
Chief Executive Officer
Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga
New Zealand Film Commission

From: Melissa Booth <melissa.booth@nzfilm.co.nz>
Sent: Friday, May 10, 2024 3:27:40 AM
To: Annie Murray <annie.murray@nzfilm.co.nz>; Philippa Mossman
<philippa.mossman@nzfilm.co.nz>
Subject: RE: LOTR

Yes, very happy to draft something up.

Philippa, what studies/reports does the NZFC use in relation to LOTR to reference these numbers? There are so many different sources and studies and I'm thinking we need to be consistent with the narrative and numbers we have used in the past?

I also think we should maybe acknowledge Andy Serkis who is the director and such a huge advocate of NZ.

Ngā mihi nui

Melissa

Melissa Booth | Senior Communications Advisor
New Zealand Film Commission | Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga
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Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

From: Annie Murray <annie.murray@nzfilm.co.nz>
Sent: Friday, May 10, 2024 1:44 PM
To: Melissa Booth <melissa.booth@nzfilm.co.nz>; Philippa Mossman
<philippa.mossman@nzfilm.co.nz>
Subject: Re: LOTR

It sounds amazing, can we put out an upbeat statement that acknowledges the news and the importance of the franchise to the nz industry. While we don't have details, we welcome the news etc.

Economic value of the earlier films was \$x, x number of jobs, value to economy, Oscars, tourism, put nz on the map etc etc. Our thanks on behalf of the NZ industry to Sir Peter and Dame Fran who are steadfast supporters of the New Zealand industry etc.

Ngā mihi,
Annie

Taima Anne Murray (Annie)
Chief Executive Officer
Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga
New Zealand Film Commission

From: Melissa Booth <melissa.booth@nzfilm.co.nz>
Sent: Friday, May 10, 2024 1:09:53 AM
To: Annie Murray <annie.murray@nzfilm.co.nz>; Philippa Mossman
<philippa.mossman@nzfilm.co.nz>
Subject: LOTR

Kia ora both

We have had a number of media enquiries about the new LOTR project mainly around the benefit to the industry, what we know about the project, incentives etc. They want interviews. I've acknowledged emails and said it's probably too early for us to comment but that I would look into it and come back to them. Please let me know if we have any comments to make.

Ngā mihi nui

Melissa

Melissa Booth | Senior Communications Advisor
New Zealand Film Commission | Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga
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