

The Honourable Mr Simon Bridges
Minister for Energy and Resources
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160
New Zealand

24th July 2013

To the Honourable Mr Simon Bridges

Re: Correspondence regarding meeting with Shell on 14 February 2013

Thank you for your letter of 17th July 2013 responding to our request that you release, completely un-redacted, all minutes from the meeting between Shell NZ and yourself on 14th February, including all introductory emails and follow up correspondence.

However, you have failed to do so and your response is completely inadequate.

We find it significant that you've failed to even confirm or deny if minutes of the February 14th meeting existed, let alone provide them.

Your failure leads one to ask why a Minister, who stands accused of misleading parliament over the contact he had with oil executives, would choose not to clear his name. It is only reasonable to conclude that you are wilfully and deliberately trying to withhold this information from the public.

It is evident from previously released documents that Shell lobbied for changes to legislation due to 'insufficient legal authority' to clamp down on offshore protests and that the Government 'has no teeth beyond 12 nautical miles to protect legitimate commercial activity'. It is clear that steps were taken by "upstream oil and gas industry" in seeking "a more robust government response to threats of, and actual, direct protest action".

And there is no question that you took a paper to cabinet two weeks after your meeting with Shell on 14th February that specifically stated that 'the upstream oil and gas industry has sought a more robust government response to threats of, and actual, direct protest action'.

This is in direct contrast to the statement in your 17 July letter that:

"Neither oil companies nor their representatives asked me for amendments to the Crown Minerals (Permitting and Crown Land) Bill regarding intentional damage or interference to be made."

It is clear from the contrast in your statements to cabinet and your statements to the public and parliament that you are deliberately seeking to create the public impression that there has been no lobbying by the oil industry for changes to laws on peaceful protests, when that is not correct.

Also, it is clear from materials that you have released that issues were raised at this meeting on 14th February, which were not set out in the Ministerial briefing of 7th February. To illustrate, I refer you to the follow up letter from Shell 19th February where it suggests that petroleum

prospecting in the New Caledonia Basin was discussed. This was not in the Feb 7th briefing notes provided to you.

Your continued failure to release all the relevant information reinforces the impression that you are hiding the true picture from the public. As a Minister the public expects transparency from you about lobbying that has resulted in legislative change. Without that transparency being provided voluntarily, there can be no confidence that you can properly perform the role of Minister.

It is therefore in your interests, in the interests of transparency, and in the continued reputation of your role of Minister that you provide, completely un-redacted, all minutes from the meeting with Shell on 14th February and the follow up correspondence.

I anticipate that you will suggest that we contact the Ombudsman to resolve this matter. That would be entirely inappropriate. This is a matter that requires resolving urgently, by you, Minister.

If you would like to discuss any of this in person, do please let me know.

Yours sincerely



Bunny McDiarmid
Executive Director
Greenpeace New Zealand

cc. Hon. John Key, Prime Minister
Hon. Steven Joyce