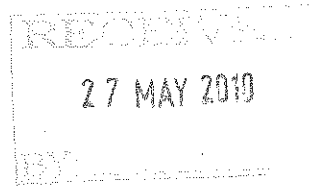




Mayor Kevin Heays  
P.O. Box 6  
KAIKOURA 7340



Dear Mayor Heays

Thank you for your letter of 19 April 2010 to Hon Dr Nick Smith, Minister for the Environment, regarding 'chem-trails'. The Minister has forwarded your letter to me for response on his behalf.

I note that there has been significant debate on the internet and in other media about 'chem trails', variously attributing them to geo-engineering, cloud seeding and spraying. However, I am not aware of any evidence to support these ideas. The 'chem-trails' that you describe are the result of normal air traffic. They are, in fact, trails of water droplets formed behind aircraft - more commonly called 'vapour trails'. The formation of vapour trails by aircraft depends on many factors, but is very sensitive to the moisture and stability of the atmosphere at the heights that the aircraft are travelling. Small changes in these parameters can strongly affect whether trails occur and how long they persist. The occurrence from day to day is dependent on the weather aloft.

I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the commitment that your community places on maintaining the quality of the wonderful Kaikoura environment.

Yours sincerely

Todd Krieble  
**Director, Information**