

23 May 2024

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release

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OIA 29243

I refer to your email of 19 March 2024 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

1. *"All advice provided to Prime Minister Christopher Luxon regarding his meeting with Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in December from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.*
2. *All advice provided to Foreign Affairs Minister Winston Peters and Defence Minister Judith Collins regarding their meeting with Australian counterparts in January from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs."*

On 18 April 2024, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 30 working days due to the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request (section 15A(1)(b) of the OIA refers).

Part one of your request captures around 100 pages of material. We have assessed that the majority of this material is withheld under sections 6(a) and 6(b) of the OIA, and instead have made the decision to provide you with an overview of material under section 16(1)(e) of the OIA.

We also direct your attention to a submission titled "Our Australia Relationship" that has been proactively released on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) website here: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/media-and-resources/submission-our-australia-relationship-28-november-2023/>. This provides an overview of the trans-Tasman relationship and sets priorities that guide New Zealand's engagement with Australia.

Overview

On 20 December 2023, Prime Minister Luxon met with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in Sydney, Australia. This included a half hour bilateral meeting, a joint press conference, and a one-hour lunch at Kirribilli House (Prime Minister Albanese's official residence in Sydney).

In support of these meetings Prime Minister Luxon was provided with a master brief, visit programme and media pack. After the meeting Ministry officials produced a summary report and file note on the discussions.

Meeting objectives

Prime Minister Luxon was advised that the objectives for his first official visit to Australia included:

- Cementing his warm personal bond with Prime Minister Albanese;
- Injecting energy and urgency into the Government's engagement with Australia by confirming how Prime Minister Luxon and his Ministers will engage and on what priority issues; and
- Sending the message to Australian investors that New Zealand is open for business.

The visit took place toward the end of a year of key anniversaries for some of the framing architecture of the relationship: the 40th anniversary of CER, the 50th anniversary of the Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement, and the 80th anniversary of diplomatic representation.

Agenda

The agenda for the bilateral meeting included these topics:

- Bilateral architecture
- Defence
- Pacific; and
- Trade and economic cooperation.

Meeting brief

In advance of the meeting Prime Minister Luxon was provided advice on a range of issues including:

- General bilateral relationship and supporting architecture
- Defence and bilateral security issues
- Indo-Pacific (including South China Sea, East China Sea and the Taiwan Strait)
- China
- The Pacific
- Trade and economic cooperation
- People issues
- Indigenous cooperation
- Refugee resettlement
- Climate change
- India
- AUKUS
- CPTPP
- Indo-Pacific Economic Framework
- Israel/Gaza
- Russia/Ukraine; and

- Australia domestic political and economic situation.

Other material available

We also direct your attention to other relevant proactive releases:

- MFAT release:
 - AUKUS: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/OIA/OIA-2024/OIA-29100-AUKUS-8-April-2024.pdf>
- Ministry of Defence releases:
 - AUKUS:
 - AUKUS: Trilateral Enhanced Security Partnership – Implications for Aotearoa New Zealand <https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/publication/AUKUS-Trilateral-Enhanced-Security-Partnership-Implications-for-Aotearoa-New-Zealand>
 - AUKUS: Updating New Zealand’s Approach <https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/publication/AUKUS-Updating-New-Zealand-s-Approach>
 - AUKUS Pillar Two: Opportunities for New Zealand’s Research Community and Industry <https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/publication/AUKUS-Pillar-Two-Opportunities-for-New-Zealand-s-Research-Community-and-Industry>
 - AUKUS: Background and New Zealand Messaging <https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/publication/AUKUS-Background-and-New-Zealand-Messaging>
 - AUKUS: Managing New Zealand’s Strategic Interests <https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/publication/AUKUS-Managing-New-Zealand-s-Strategic-Interests>.
 - Australia-New Zealand Defence Ministers’ Meeting, 31 January – 1 February 2024: <https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/publication/Australia-New-Zealand-Defence-Ministers-Meeting>

Regarding **part two** of your request. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defence travelled to Australia on 31 January 2024 for meetings on 1 February 2024. The following briefings prepared for the Ministers is refused under section 18(d) as the information is publicly available on the MFAT website here: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/media-and-resources/anzmin-2-2-melbourne-1-february-2024>

- ANZMIN 2 + 2 Melbourne 1 February 2024
- Foreign Ministers’ Consultations, Melbourne 1 February 2024
- Programme for overseas visit to Melbourne 31 January to 1 February 2024.

The media pack prepared by MFAT for this meeting is withheld in full under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government; and

- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments.

Where the information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, we have identified no public interest in releasing the information that would override the reasons for withholding it.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the MFAT website: www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Corbett
for Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade