

22 August 2024

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Tēnā koe

We refer to your email of 24 July 2024 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

*'Briefings, papers, reports, memos, cabinet papers, submissions, and other documentation produced regarding AUKUS, in the past four weeks.'* [26 June 2024 to 24 July 2024]

In scope of your request is one document titled "*NSB Briefing for CE*". This document primarily provides advice to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Chief Executive on the Ministry's internal perspectives on interagency coordination processes relating to the Government's workstream exploring how New Zealand could potentially participate in AUKUS Pillar Two.

In accordance with section 16(1)(e) of the OIA, please see the following excerpts of *NSB Briefing for CE*:

#### **Excerpt one**

The Ministry continues to work closely with MoD and NZDF on efforts to explore potential New Zealand participation in AUKUS Pillar II. Recent (joint MFAT-MoD) advice to Ministers has outlined:

- Specific areas of likely interest to New Zealand to be further explored;
- Key information gaps on the mechanics and costs of participation;
- Foreign and national security policy considerations;
- And next steps in terms of continued engagement with the AUKUS partners.

#### **Excerpt two**

The inherently interwoven foreign, defence and national security policy dimensions of AUKUS means that, [*withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i)*]. Previous substantive papers to Ministers (including the most recent one attached) have been joint papers to MFA and MinDef.

The remainder of this document is withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

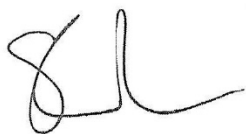
- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government; and
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments.

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 Ministry website: [www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/](http://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](mailto: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](http://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 Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade