

4 June 2025

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Personal details removed for proactive release

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Thank you for your email of 31 March 2025 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

please supply the summary, report, and comment sections of formal messages from the following meetings:

- 1. A phone call between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Alcide Ponga, President of the Government of New Caledonia, held on 3 March 2025.*
- 2. A meeting between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Dalton Tagelagi, Prime Minister of Niue, held on 5 March 2025.*
- 3. A phone call between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Marc Ati, Foreign Minister of Vanuatu, held on 6 March 2025.*
- 4. A Talanoa On The Principles For The Ocean of Peace Declaration, held from 10-12 March 2025.*
- 5. A meeting between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Mike Walz, National Security Advisor of the United States, held on 18 March 2025.*
- 6. A meeting between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Peter Marocco, Director of the Office of Foreign Assistance of the United States, held on 18 March 2025.*
- 7. A meeting between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Marco Rubio, United States Secretary of State, held on 19 March 2025.*
- 8. A meeting of the Forum Subcommittee on Regional Security (FSRS), held during the week of 24 March 2025.*
- 9. A meeting between Rt Hon Winston Peters and James Marape, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, held on 26 March 2025.*
- 10. A phone call between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa, Prime Minister of Samoa, held on 26 March 2025.*
- 11. A meeting between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Noumea Simi, CEO of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Samoa, held on 27 March 2025.*

You request has been numbered for administrative convenience.

On 1 May 2025, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 23 working days because responding to your request necessitated the review of a large quantity of information, and due to the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request (section 15A(1)(a) and (b) of the OIA refers).

I note that no Formal Messages, in scope of your request, were sent as a result of the following events. Accordingly, these parts of your request are refused under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information requested does not exist:

1. *A phone call between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Alcide Ponga, President of the Government of New Caledonia, held on 3 March 2025.*
3. *A phone call between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Marc Ati, Foreign Minister of Vanuatu, held on 6 March 2025.*
8. *A meeting of the Forum Subcommittee on Regional Security (FSRS), held during the week of 24 March 2025.*
9. *A meeting between Rt Hon Winston Peters and James Marape, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, held on 26 March 2025*
10. *A phone call between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa, Prime Minister of Samoa, held on 26 March 2025.*
11. *A meeting between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Noumea Simi, CEO of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Samoa, held on 27 March 2025.*

Information relevant to part 2 of your request is attached. This Formal Message contains information relating to the meeting between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Dalton Tagelagi, Prime Minister of Niue, held on 5 March 2025. Some information is marked as out of scope as it does not relate to the 5 March 2025 meeting and other information, including the title, 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;
- 7(a)(ii): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of the self-governing State of Niue;
- 7(b): to avoid prejudicing relations between any of the Governments of New Zealand: the self-governing State of the Cook Islands: and the self-governing State of Niue;
- 7(c)(i): to avoid prejudicing the international relations of the Governments of the self-governing State of the Cook Islands; and
- 7(c)(ii): to avoid prejudicing the international relations of the Governments of the self-governing State of Niue.

Information relevant to part 4 of your request is attached. This Formal Message contains information relating to the Talanoa on the Principles for the Ocean of Peace Declaration, held from 10-12 March 2025. Some information, including part of the title, 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;
- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis;
- 6(b)(ii): to protect the passing of information from an international organisation on a confidential basis;
- 7(b)(i) and 7(b)(ii): to avoid prejudicing relations between any of the Governments of New Zealand: and the self-governing State of the Cook Islands.
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments.

A single Formal Message titled FORMAL MESSAGE: DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER VISIT TO WASHINGTON DC: 16-19 MARCH was created to report on the following parts of your request.

5. *A meeting between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Mike Walz, National Security Advisor of the United States, held on 18 March 2025.*
6. *A meeting between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Peter Marocco, Director of the Office of Foreign Assistance of the United States, held on 18 March 2025.*
7. *A meeting between Rt Hon Winston Peters and Marco Rubio, United States Secretary of State, held on 19 March 2025.*

This document is attached. Some information 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, no public interest in releasing the information has been identified 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/

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', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Out of scope

SUMMARY

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii), s7(c)(ii) Niue Prime Minister Tagelagi visited Wellington s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii), s7(c)(ii)

s7(a)(ii), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

Out of scope

PURONGO – REPORT

1. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

The Prime Minister was accompanied by Secretary of Government (Peleni Talagi), Chief of Staff (Tagaloa Morrissey), Financial Secretary (Doreen Siataga) and Deputy Crown Counsel (Elizabeth Bestgen).

2. Out of scope

3. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

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s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

4. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

5. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii), s7(c)(ii)

6. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

7. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(b)(iii)

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

8. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

9. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii) both New Zealand and Niue
reiterated the importance of ongoing and regular bilateral engagement, Out of scope

Out of scope

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s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii), s7(c)(ii)

15. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii), s7(c)(ii)

16. Out of scope

...and how we can (further) support Niue

17. Minister Peters announced during the visit that New Zealand will be funding the design and construction of a [new justice building for Niue](#). Out of scope

18. Out of scope

19. Out of scope

20. Out of scope

TAKUPU – COMMENT

21. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(b)(iii)

22. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(b)(iii), s7(c)(i), s7(c)(ii)

23. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

24. Out of scope

MUTU – ENDS

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

s6

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FORMAL MESSAGE: INFORMAL TALANOA ON PROPOSED PIF LEADERS' DECLARATION: s6(a)

Out of scope

SUMMARY – RĀPOPOTO

During an informal talanoa from 10 – 13 March, Pacific Islands Forum officials s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) on the "Ocean of Peace Declaration", planned for adoption at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in September. Officials will reconvene formally on 28 March to consider the draft declaration text.

Out of scope

REPORT – PŪRONGO

We (PACREG: McIvor, Fitzgibbon; and SVA: Bennet) attended the Pacific Islands Forum Informal Talanoa on the Ocean of Peace Declaration, held in Suva from 10 – 13 March. The *talanoa* marked the transition of the Ocean of Peace from a Fiji-led concept to a Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) initiative.

2 The meeting was originally conceived as a discursive and informal *talanoa* to build a shared understanding of what an Ocean of Peace declaration could consist of, prior to formal discussions within Forum processes. s6(b)(i), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

3 s6(b)(i)

s6(b)(i)

4 s6(b)(i)

s6(a)

5 s6(b)(i)

Discussion on the draft declaration

6 s6(b)(ii)

s6(b)(i)

7 s6(a)

s6(b)(i)

8 s6(b)(i)

9 s6(b)(i)

s6(b)(i)

s6(a)

s6(b)(i)

10 The Forum Officials Committee Sub-Committee on Regional Security (FSRS) will meet on 28 March to formally consider the draft text, with drafting to be completed prior to the July meeting of the FSRS. The declaration would then be considered by the Forum Officials Committee and Forum Foreign Ministers, before final endorsement by Leaders in September 2025.

COMMENT – TĀKUPU

11 s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

12 s6(a)

13 s6(a)

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Out of scope

RĀPOPOTO – SUMMARY

- Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Winston Peters visited Washington DC from 16-19 March, the first in-person Ministerial engagement for New Zealand under the second Trump Administration.
- Meetings with key US interlocutors, including Secretary of State Marco Rubio and National Security Adviser Mike Waltz, were positive and warm.
- The US recognised New Zealand's value as a strategic partner, our role in the Pacific, and our commitment to addressing mutual security challenges in our region.
- s6(a)

• s6(a)

• s6(a)

• s6(a)

• s6(a)

HOHENGGA – ACTION

For information.

PŪRONGO – REPORT

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Winston Peters (DPM) visited Washington DC from 16-19 March 2025. This was New Zealand's first in-person Ministerial-level engagement with the second Trump Administration. The programme included:

- Engagements with key Administration officials, including Secretary of State Marco Rubio, National Security Adviser (NSA) Mike Waltz s6(a)
State
Department Director of Foreign Assistance Peter Marocco, s6(a)

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

Context and objectives

2 The DPM's strategy for the visit was a culmination of 16 months of planning in preparation for a possible second Trump Administration, focused on protecting and advancing New Zealand's interests. His objectives included:

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

3 s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(a)

4 s6(a)

5 s6(a)

6 s6(a)

7 s6(a)

8 s6(a)

9 s6(a)

10 s6(a)

The Pacific Islands region, including development assistance

11 s6(a)

s6(a)

12 s6(a)

13 s6(a)

14 s6(a)

15 s6(a)

16 s6(a)

17 s6(a)

18 s6(a)

s6(a)

Defence spending: high and rising expectations

19 s6(a)

20 s6(a)

A "balanced" trade and economic relationship: tariffs, space and emerging tech

21 s6(a)

22 s6(a)

23 s6(a)

24 s6(a)

Major international conflicts: Israel/Gaza and Russia/Ukraine

25 s6(a)

26 s6(a)

27 s6(a)

28 s6(a)

29 s6(a)

The second Trump Administration: s6(a)

30 s6(a)

31 s6(a)

s6(a)

32 s6(a)

Media coverage

33 The visit attracted positive media coverage in New Zealand. The Minister had several interviews/stand-ups with the two accompanying New Zealand media organisations (TVNZ and RNZ) and delivered a statement on the visit. s9(2)(g)(i)

For his part, Rubio released a read-out and a tweet about his engagement with DPM, both of which emphasised "burden sharing" and strategically aligned cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

TĀKUPU- COMMENT

34 The DPM has been travelling to Washington as Foreign Minister on and off for 20 years, since the second term of the George W Bush Presidency. This week's visit was his ninth visit as Foreign Minister to the US and reflected the DPM's long-standing views on New Zealand's relationship with the US:

- s6(a)
-
-

35 In positioning New Zealand as a positive partner for the US, the DPM is keenly focused on building personal relationships with his counterparts. s6(a)

36 s6(a)

37 It remains early days for the second Trump Administration, which is this week reaching its three-month mark. s6(a)

MUTU - ENDS

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