

16 December 2025

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Redacted for proactive release

OIA 30476

Thank you for your email of 6 October 2025 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

Regarding the grounding and sinking of HMNZS Manawanui, please provide

Communications with Samoa

- Correspondence (letters, emails, meeting notes, cables, aide memoires) between the NZ Govt and Govt of Samoa relating to the incident, environmental response, compensation discussions and the payment decision.

Payment decision

- Cabinet papers, briefings, advice and cost assessments used to determine the \$6m payment, including how the sum was calculated and any alternative options considered.

- Any legal advice from treasury/finance guidance on the nature of the payment.

Response and follow up actions

- Updates, briefings or internal advice on plans for the wreck's future (removal, mitigation, monitoring)

- Any recommendations, policy changes or staff changes within NZDF or MFAT resulting from the incident.

Background

On 15 October 2025, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) contacted you to discuss the scope of your request, because as it was originally framed it captured a significant volume of information and would be likely to be refused under section 18(f) of the OIA. The Ministry followed up on 31 October 2025 with a phone call, which was not answered.

On 4 November 2025, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 30 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).

In the email dated 4 November 2025, you were also notified that your request had been refined to the following to address the issue of the Ministry potentially needing to refuse your request:

"Communications with Samoa

- *Letters from the Government of New Zealand (Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs) to the Government of Samoa which mention HMNZS Manawanui dated 6 October 2024 to 6 October 2025.*
- *Letters from the Government of Samoa to the Government of New Zealand which mention HMNZS Manawanui dated 6 October 2024 to 6 October 2025.*

Payment decision

- *Cabinet papers, briefings, advice and cost assessments used to determine the \$6m payment, including how the sum was calculated and any alternative options considered.*
- *Any legal advice from treasury/finance guidance on the nature of the payment.*

Response and follow up actions

- *Updates, briefings or internal advice on plans for the wreck's future (removal, mitigation, monitoring)*
- *Any recommendations, policy changes or staff changes within MFAT resulting from the incident."*

On 20 November 2025 the following part of your request was transferred under section 14(b) of the OIA to Maritime New Zealand for response "*Updates, briefings or internal advice on plans for the wreck's future (removal, mitigation, monitoring)*" It would have been necessary under section 14 of the OIA to transfer this part of your request to the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) because some of the information you requested is NZDF information. However, we are aware that you have already made your request to NZDF, and therefore it has not been transferred. You will receive a response from NZDF in due course.

Response to your request

Please see the following table for a list of documents in scope of part one of your request, for 'communications with Samoa':

Part one document schedule		
#	Title	Date
1.	[6(a); 9(2)(j)]	7 April 2025
2.	Rt Hon Winston Peters to Hon Fiame Naomi Mata'afa	19 May 2025
3.	Hon Fiame Naomi Mata'afa to Rt Hon Winston Peters	23 May 2025
4.	Rt Hon Winston Peters to Prime Minister Afioga Fiame Naomi Mata'afa	1 June 2025
5.	Rt Hon Christopher Luxon Letter to Hon Ponifasio	6 October 2025

Item one is withheld in full, including the title under section 6(a) of the OIA, to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government. The remaining four items have been released in full.

The following documents contain information in scope of part two of your request.

Part two document schedule		
#	Title	Date
1.	[6(a); 6(b)(i)]	14 February 2025
2.	HMNZS MANAWANUI Response – Samoa Financial Claim – Draft Exchange of Letters	30 April 2025
3.	[6(a); 9(2)(j)]	7 April 2025

Items one and three are withheld in full, including the titles, 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
- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis; and
- 9(2)(j): to avoid prejudice to negotiations.

Item two 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;
- 9(2)(a): to protect individuals' privacy;
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments;
- 9(2)(h): to maintain legal professional privilege;
- 9(2)(i): to enable a Minister, public service agency or organisation to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities and;

The following documents contain information in scope of part three of your request.

Part three document schedule		
#	Title	Date
1.	HMNZS Manawanui Response – Diplomatic Implications – 1 November 2024	1 November 2024
2.	Op RESOLUTION: Update On Strategic Issues	28 January 2025
3	New Zealand-Samoa High Level Consultations Briefing Pack	27 March 2025
4	Operation Resolution - Watch Group Tuesday 8 April 2025	8 April 2025
5.	HMNZS MANAWANUI Response – Samoa Financial Claim – Draft Exchange of Letters	30 April 2025

6. [6(a); 6(b)(i)]	21 October 2025
7. FADTC briefing Manawanui June 2025	12 June 2025

A summary of the information in scope of item one listed below is being provided under section 16(1)(e) of the OIA:

HMNZS Manawanui Response – Diplomatic Implications – 1 November 2024

Summary: This document advised of the diplomatic implications of the HMNZS Manawanui Response and sought approval for the principles that would underpin the diplomatic response. On the future of the Wreck, it noted that the environmental assessment and response and the salvage phase could take months.

Item three is provided as an extract under section 16(1)(e) of the OIA, as the majority of the document is outside the scope of your request. It is attached in Annex One at the end of this letter. Some information has been withheld under section 6(a) of the OIA, to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government; and section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA, to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments.

Item five has been released to you under part two of this request.

Item six is withheld in full, including the title, under section 6(a) of the OIA, to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government; and under section 6(b)(i), to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis.

The remaining items listed in the part three document schedule are attached. Some information has been 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;
- 9(2)(ba)(ii): to protect confidential information that would be likely to damage public interest;
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments;
- 9(2)(h): to maintain legal professional privilege;
- 9(2)(i): to enable a Minister, public service agency or organisation to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities and;
- 9(2)(j): to avoid prejudice to negotiations.

A further four documents are in scope of your request. In accordance with section 16(1)(e) of the OIA, a summary of some of the information you have requested is provided below. We have chosen to provide summaries as providing the information in another form would prejudice the interests protected by section 6, 7 or 9 of the OIA.

1. HMNZS Manawanui Response – Diplomatic Implications – 1 November 2024

Summary: This document advised of the diplomatic implications of the HMNZS Manawanui Response and sought approval for the principles that would underpin the diplomatic response. On the future of the Wreck, it noted that the environmental assessment and response and the salvage phase could take months.

2. Background Overview Brief - DPM CHOGM Manawanui - 23 October 2024

3. Background Overview Brief - CHOGM PM Manawanui - 23 October 2024.

4. CHOGM Leaders Retreat PM (overview brief Manawanui) - 22 October 2024

Summary: The environmental assessment and response and the salvage phases could take months.

As at midday 22 October, the priorities of Operation Resolution in Samoa were:

- o Fuel leak monitoring, with an Inter-Agency Task Force continuing to monitor and mitigate any fuel leak from HMNZS Manawanui.
- o Fuel extraction, with Defence negotiating a contract for a salvage company to remove the fuel and oil from HMNZS Manawanui.
- Options for Manawanui once fuel/oil removed, Defence was scoping out a range of options for the future of the HMNZS Manawanui.

In response to the final part of part three your request for *'Any recommendations, policy changes or staff changes within NZDF or MFAT resulting from the incident.'* The Ministry has not had any policy changes as a result of the sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui. There have been no permanent staffing changes in response to the incident.

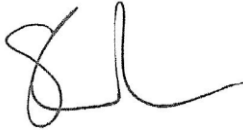
An existing surge support staff, in place to coordinate New Zealand's support to Samoa's hosting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2024, expanded the scope of their duties to include supporting the response, and surge support was provided to the Ministry's Apia post. This surge support consisted of 5 staff who were based in Apia from October to November 2024.

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', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Annex One: New Zealand-Samoa High Level Consultations Briefing Pack



**New Zealand-Samoa
High Level Consultations**

THURSDAY 27th MARCH 2025
Wellington, New Zealand

BRIEFING PACK

Released under the Official Information Act

RESTRICTED

Background Briefing: HMNZS Manawanui

Current Status of Operation Resolution

Out of scope

2 s6(a)

3 Out of scope

4 Out of scope

History of Operation Resolution

5 Out of scope

6 Out of scope

7 Out of scope

8 The New Zealand Defence Force has engaged a fuel salvor, who has completed the extraction of pollutants from the HMNZS Manawanui. The salvor is still onsite as they remove items from the vessel. A permanent solution for dealing with the Manawanui will be implemented s9(2)(g)(i) guided by the wishes of the Government of Samoa and the advice of a Wreck and Reef Assessment.

PACPF, March 2025.

RESTRICTED

19 May 2025

Hon Fiame Naomi Mata'afa
Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Samoa

Dear Prime Minister Fiame,

I have the honour to refer to the long established and respectful bilateral relationship between New Zealand and Samoa founded upon sovereign equality and governed by a spirit of close friendship, underpinned by the significant Treaty of Friendship. I reiterate New Zealand's deep regret regarding the sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui, and New Zealand's gratitude to Samoa for search and rescue efforts that helped avoid loss of life. New Zealand's priority remains to work with Samoa to assess and address any environmental risks.

I have the further honour to refer to Note 25/167 dated 7 April 2025 received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Samoa that requested a contribution of SAT\$10,000,000 from New Zealand following the sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui, and subsequent discussions about that request.

With reference to Note 25/167 and the subsequent discussions, I have the honour to make the following proposals:

1. The Government of New Zealand shall pay to the Government of Samoa SAT\$10,000,000.
2. The Government of New Zealand and the Government of Samoa mutually agree that:
 - (a) the payment of SAT\$10,000,000 resolves all issues arising from the sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui between the Government of New Zealand and the Government of Samoa (including those identified in Note 25/167) other than issues in relation to the anticipated wreck and reef assessments; and
 - (b) the Government of Samoa will not seek further payment from New Zealand in relation to these resolved matters.
3. The payment from the Government of New Zealand is offered in the context of the friendship between New Zealand and Samoa, and is made without reference to any questions of liability.

I also respectfully ask that practical steps be taken to direct any related claims by Samoan citizens to the Government of Samoa for consideration and settlement as appropriate.

If the proposals set out above are acceptable to the Government of Samoa, I have the honour to suggest that this letter and your reply accepting the above proposals shall constitute an agreement between our two Governments on this matter, which shall come into force on the date of your reply.

New Zealand remains committed to the Government of Samoa, its people and our ongoing development cooperation.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely



Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs
New Zealand

Released under the Official Information Act



Fax: (0685) 21 822

Telephone: (0685) 23 636

*Office of the Prime Minister
Apia, Samoa*

23 May, 2025

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs
New Zealand

Dear Minister Peters

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 19 May 2025 concerning Note 25/167 dated 7 April 2025 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade of Samoa that requested a contribution of SAT\$10,000,000 from New Zealand following the sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui, which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to refer to the long established and respectful bilateral relationship between New Zealand and Samoa founded upon sovereign equality and governed by a spirit of close friendship, underpinned by the significant Treaty of Friendship. I reiterate New Zealand's deep regret regarding the sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui, and New Zealand's gratitude to Samoa for search and rescue efforts that helped avoid loss of life. New Zealand's priority remains to work with Samoa to assess and address any environmental risks.

I have the further honour to refer to Note 25/167 dated 7 April 2025 received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Samoa that requested a contribution of SAT\$10,000,000 from New Zealand following the sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui, and subsequent discussions about that request.

With reference to Note 25/167 and the subsequent discussions, I have the honour to make the following proposals:

1. The Government of New Zealand shall pay to the Government of Samoa SAT\$10,000,000.
2. The Government of New Zealand and the Government of Samoa mutually agree that:
 - (a) The payment of SAT\$10,000,000 resolves all issues arising from the sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui between the Government of New Zealand and the

Government of Samoa (including those identified in Note 25/167) other than issues in relation to the anticipated wreck and reef assessments; and

(b) the Government of Samoa shall not seek further payment from New Zealand in relation to these resolved matters.

3. The payment from the Government of New Zealand is offered in the context of the friendship between New Zealand and Samoa, and is made without reference to any questions of liability.

I also respectfully ask that practical steps be taken to direct any related claims by Samoan citizens to the Government of Samoa for consideration and settlement as appropriate.

If the proposals set out above are acceptable to the Government of Samoa, I have the honour to suggest that this letter and your reply accepting the above proposals shall constitute an agreement between our two Governments on this matter, which shall come into force on the date of your reply.

New Zealand remains committed to the Government of Samoa, its people and our ongoing development cooperation.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration. "

I have the honour to confirm that the above proposals made in your letter dated 19 May, 2025 are acceptable to the Government of Samoa, and that your letter and this reply shall constitute an agreement between our two Governments on this matter, which shall come into force on the date of the signing of this letter.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely



Hon Flame Naomi Mata'afa
Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Samoa

Rt Hon Winston Peters

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Minister for Racing
Minister for Rail



1 June 2025

Prime Minister Afioga Fiame Naomi Mata'afa
Government Building
Apia
INDEPENDENT STATE OF SAMOA

Dear Prime Minister Afioga Fiame Naomi Mata'afa

On the occasion of the 63rd anniversary of Samoa's independence, the Government of New Zealand is pleased to extend to you our warmest congratulations and best wishes of good health and prosperity to the citizens of the Independent State of Samoa.

New Zealand and Samoa remain close partners under the Treaty of Friendship and our Statement of Partnership 2024-2028. Our relationship has reached new heights in the past year, with increased cooperation across a range of bilateral, regional and global issues. It was a pleasure to visit Samoa in October and to contribute to Samoa's hosting of CHOGM, which successfully platformed fa'asamoa, and Pacific and SIDS' interests on the global stage.

As well as reaffirming our commitment to work together on issues of mutual interest – such as security, climate change, and human and economic development - New Zealand reiterates its gratitude for Samoa's leadership of the response to the sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui, and reconfirms our commitment to working together to resolve the outstanding issues remaining for the benefit of the people of Samoa.

It is with sincere hope that the excellent relations between our countries will be further strengthened in the future. Your visit to Auckland for the USP Council Meeting was a valuable, welcome opportunity for us to connect in person, and we look forward to meeting in France.

Yours sincerely

Kind Regards

Winston Peters

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs



RT HON CHRISTOPHER LUXON
PRIME MINISTER

6 October 2024

Hon Tuala Ponifasio
Acting Prime Minister
SAMOA

Dear Acting Prime Minister

Thank you again for your government's support in recovering the crew of *HMNZS Manawanui*. The ship's foundering is tragic, but we are relieved and grateful that all onboard are safe.

I appreciate you have activated your all-of-government response to *HMNZS Manawanui*'s sinking, with you in the Chair. As I said over the telephone, my Government has likewise activated its systems and stands ready to be guided by your leadership in our own response to the situation at hand.

To that end, I acknowledge your request for support to undertake oil pollution response in the form of equipment, people and expertise. As you requested, we will send an oil pollution and environmental response team to work alongside your people to develop a rapid assessment and response plan. They will also bring a range of containment, response and potential clean-up equipment.

Thank you for acknowledging my offer to provide whatever other people and resources are needed to contain, manage and respond to the environmental consequences of the sinking. Please direct all requests through our High Commissioner.

Mr Acting Prime Minister, I regret that Samoa and New Zealand are again united in an emergency response. As you said, though, we have been here together before and will work as close friends to mount an effective response.

Yours sincerely

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister



30 April 2025

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For approval by

2 May 2025

HMNZS MANAWANUI Response – Samoa Financial Claim- Draft Exchange of Letters

BRIEFING Decision Submission

PURPOSE To seek your approval of a draft Exchange of Letters, facilitating a payment of SAT \$10,000,000.00 in response to the Government of Samoa’s financial claim following the grounding and sinking of HMNZS Manawanui in October 2024.

Recommended referrals

Prime Minister

For approval by

7 May 2025

Minister of Defence

For information by

7 May 2025

Contact details

NAME	ROLE	DIVISION	WORK PHONE
Zoe Coulson-Sinclair	Unit Manager, Samoa Tonga and Tuvalu Unit	Pacific Polynesia and French Pacific Division	s9(2)(a)
Jeremy Salmcnd	Corporate Counsel	Corporate Legal Division	

Minister’s Office to complete

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Noted | <input type="checkbox"/> Referred |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs amendment | <input type="checkbox"/> Declined | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events | <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister’s notes | |

Comments

HMNZS MANAWANUI Response – Samoa Financial Claim– Draft
Exchange of Letters

Key points

- The Government of Samoa has formally registered a claim with the New Zealand Government regarding the grounding and sinking of HMNZS Manawanui on 5 October 2024. s6(a)
s6(a)
The total cost of the request is SAT \$10,000,000.00 (approximately NZ \$6,000,000.00).
- On 28 April, Ministers with Power to Act reported to Cabinet on their decision to meet this request from Vote Defence Force, and approved full payment of the claim following discussion with Samoa, and a mutual understanding recorded in an Exchange of Letters.
- s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)
- s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)
- s9(2)(h), s9(2)(i)
- s9(2)(h), s9(2)(i)
- Following the signing and exchanging of Letters, it is proposed that the payment be jointly announced by the Governments of New Zealand and Samoa.



Bernadette Cavanagh
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

HMNZS MANAWANUI Response – Samoa Financial Claim– Draft Exchange of Letters

Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- | | | |
|---|--|----------|
| 1 | Approve the attached draft Exchange of Letters between ^{s6(a)} s6(a) and Prime Minister Fiame, agreeing to pay SAT \$10 million (approx. NZ \$6 million) to the Government of Samoa in response to the Government of Samoa's claim in Note 25/167 following the grounding and sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui. | Yes / No |
| 2 | Agree that New Zealand sign the Exchange of Letters, after sharing the draft Letters with Samoa and agreeing the text with Samoa. | Yes / No |
| 3 | Authorise officials to make any necessary minor or technical amendments to the draft Exchange of Letters. | Yes / No |
| 4 | Note that the Exchange of Letters will enter into force on the date Samoa signs its reply letter that constitutes part of the Exchange of the Letters. | Yes / No |
| 5 | s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h) | Yes / No |
| 6 | s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h) | Yes / No |
| 7 | s9(a)
s9(2)(h), s9(2)(i) | Yes / No |
| 8 | Agree that the Exchange of Letters is not a "major bilateral treaty of particular significance", and therefore not subject to the Parliamentary Treaty Examination process under Standing Order 405. | Yes / No |
| 9 | Refer a copy of this submission to Prime Minister Luxon for approval and once agreed with Samoa, s9(2)(g)(i) and to the Minister of Defence for information. | Yes / No |

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Date: / /

Date: / /

HMNZS MANAWANUI Response – Samoa Financial Claim– Draft Exchange of Letters

Report

1. On 8 April 2025, the Government of Samoa provided New Zealand with a formal request for a financial payment following the grounding and sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui. Samoa requested SAT 10,000,000.00 (approximately NZ \$6 million) to cover:

- s6(a)

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

3. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

4. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

Draft Letters of Exchange

5. On 28 April, Ministers with Power to Act reported to Cabinet on their decision to meet Samoa's request from Vote Defence Force. It was agreed this would be done through an Exchange of Letters with Samoa recording mutual understandings about the terms of the payment.

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

HMNZS MANAWANUI Response – Samoa Financial Claim– Draft
Exchange of Letters

6. Officials have prepared draft Exchange of Letters texts (attached) s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)
s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)
s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

7. s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

8. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

9. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

10. s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

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

s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

HMNZS MANAWANUI Response – Samoa Financial Claim– Draft
Exchange of Letters

Next Steps

13. s6(a)

14. Upon conclusion and signing of these Letters s6(a) the Exchange of Letters would then facilitate the immediate payment of SAT 10,000,000.00 from New Zealand to Samoa.
15. It is proposed that there be a joint announcement by the Governments of New Zealand and Samoa, once complete. A bilateral communications plan will be developed with Samoa officials.

Resourcing

16. As approved by Ministers with power to act for Cabinet, the SAT 10 million payment will be made from the Vote Defence Force, Response to the Sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui MYA, through reprioritisation between output classes. The final NZD conversion of the payment will depend on currency fluctuations and the exchange rate on the date of payment. The adjustments will be fiscally neutral, with nil impact on the operating balance or net core Crown debt.
17. There are no resourcing (personnel or prioritisation) implications of this Submission.
18. NZDF has been consulted in the drafting of this submission and concurs with its recommendations. s9(2)(h)

s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

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s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(g)(i)

5. The Strategic Implications Working Group, consisting of representatives of agencies supporting the Op RESOLUTION response, are working to the following guiding principles s9(2)(g)(i)

- a. Respect for the GoS leadership of the response while proactively offering assistance and support.
- b. Minimising the ecological impacts in accordance with our ambition for a safe and prosperous Blue Pacific.
- c. s9(2)(g)(i)
- d. Ensuring an enduring and sustainable response in line with our "spirit of close friendship", with support to Samoa for as long as it takes.
- e. s9(2)(g)(i)

7. In addition to these principles, consideration s9(2)(h)

s9(2)(h), s9(2)(i)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(h), s9(2)(i)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(h), s9(2)(i)

Part Two: Wreck salvage, environmental issues and financial implications

Current wreck salvage approach

19. The salvage activity is phased. The first phase is a pollutant lightering process involving the Salvor tapping into the *Manawanui* to remove fuel and oil. This began on 1 January, and will continue over the coming weeks as removal cycles are completed, which includes return trips of the Salvor's barge to the Port of Apia to offload fuel and pollutants. Progress is based on a range of assumptions, with a range of variable factors, including weather and sea conditions, how fuel tanks can be accessed by the Salvor, whether certain tanks can be accessed (and checked by the Salvor), and the amount and type of fuel or pollutant that is contained in the tanks.

20. s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

21. s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(ba)(ii)

s6(a)

22. s9(2)(h), s9(2)(i)

23. s9(2)(h)

24. s9(2)(g)(i)

25. s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(j)

s9(2)(j)

³s9(2)(h)

27. s9(2)(h)

Environmental issues

28. The highest risk registered for Op RESOLUTION is the impact of a significant uncontained pollution spill impacting the environment. The treatment of this risk is to salvage the pollutants and wreck. Mitigation measures include assisting Samoa to prepare and execute their National Action Plan for a tier three pollution response. Further mitigation for a tier one and two response is provided by the Salvor, with New Zealand assistance if required.

29. The characteristics of the main pollutant (volatile light grade fuel) coupled with the effects of nature (prevailing winds, current, and wave action) provide additional treatment in the case of a spill. There are also risks of other waste impacting the environment if the ship should there be any form of hull or structural integrity failure, and the smaller volumes of persistent oils present onboard the ship that will not be as easily remediated by weather conditions in the case of a spill.

30. New Zealand is assisting the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa (SROS) with their water monitoring and testing plan to determine the extent of any pollution and effects on the biota. s6(a)

31. s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

32. s6(a)

33. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

Financial implications

34. NZDF has consulted with Treasury to manage the financial implications of the response. NZDF is currently incurring costs relating to Operation RESOLUTION against an appropriation within Vote Defence Force⁴ The scope of this appropriation allows for

⁴ Output 4.3 – Assistance to the Civil Power and Provision of a Public Service in Emergency Situations and, specifically, Output 4.3.10 – Availability of specialised military capabilities to assist the civil power to respond to a maritime disaster and mitigate the effects of degradation of the marine environment.

NZDF related costs but does not allow third party costs or any potential compensation payments.

35. Therefore, Treasury advise that a new appropriation should be created. NZDF are in the process of requesting a new multi-year appropriation, through the March Baseline Update. Treasury are supportive of the proposal.

36. A robust forecast of future costs and the identification of funding options is required to set up the appropriation. Options that may be considered for funding and will be discussed between NZDF leadership and Treasury include:

- a. Insurance recoveries,
- b. Reprioritisation of operating expenditure from the *Manawanui* which is no longer required,
- c. Remaining depreciation from the *Manawanui* that will no longer be incurred,
- d. Other options to be explored

37. s9(2)(j)

38. s9(2)(j)

Rough order of magnitude costs

39. Approximately \$12m of costs have been incurred to date. s9(2)(j)

s9(2)(h)

s9(2)(h)

42. s6(a)

s6(a)

43. s6(a)

44. s6(a)

Current bilateral assistance to Samoa

45. A summary of existing assistance provided to the Government of Samoa (relevant to the *Manawanui* response) can be found at Annex D.

s9(2)(h)

s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(h)

s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

Next steps

53. If the Watch Group endorses the framework, the Strategic Implications Working Group will develop criteria to guide specific decisions under s9(2)(g)(i) and progress advice for relevant decision-makers in due course. If significant risks are identified as part of this process, they will be brought back to the Watch Group as needed.
54. If the Watch Group does not endorse the framework, or provides significant feedback requiring amendments, the Strategic Implications Working Group will revert with further overall advice.

Recommendations

55. It is recommended that the Watch Group:

- a. **Note** the strategic context for Op RESOLUTION, s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)
- b. **Note** the current complexities relating to wreck salvage, s9(2)(g)(i)
- c. **Note** the update on environmental issues;
- d. **Note** the update on financial implications to date;
- e. s6(a), s9(2)(h)
- f.
- g.
- h. **Note** that New Zealand currently provides a range of assistance to the Government of Samoa that is relevant to the HMNZS *Manawanui* response, as detailed at Annex D
- i. s9(2)(h)
- j.
- k. **Note** that the Strategic Implications Working Group will develop criteria to guide specific decisions under the s9(2)(g)(i) and progress advice to relevant decision-makers; and

I. s9(2)(g)(i)

Annexes

- s9(2)(h)
- Annex D: Bilateral assistance to Samoa

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s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(h)

Released under the Official Information Act

Annex D: Bilateral assistance to Samoa

Current assistance provided to the Government of Samoa (relevant to the Manawanui response):

Option	Description	December Update
<p>Capacity Building – NEMA Secondment into Samoa's National Disaster Management Office (NDMO)</p>	<p>The Ministry is currently funding one NEMA staff member into Samoa's NDMO in Apia for an initial secondment of one year from December 2024 with an option to extend another two years. This programme is targeted at bolstering NDMO staffing capability in-country through providing technical expertise in emergency management practices across risk reduction, readiness, response, and recovery.</p>	<p>NEMA secondee has been selected, and likely to deploy Jan/Feb 2025</p>
<p>Capacity Building – Maritime New Zealand's (MNZ) Pacific Maritime Safety Programme</p>	<p>MNZ's existing Pacific Maritime Safety Programme works with the Government of Samoa to support search and rescue and oil spill response capability. MNZ also focus on delivering community education and awareness, regulatory strengthening, maritime training and domestic vessel safety.</p> <p>s9(2)(g)(i)</p>	<p>No further action; PMSP continues into 2025.</p>
<p>Enabling Samoa to access international assistance– International Charter for Space and Major Disasters</p>	<p>New Zealand is a signatory to the International Charter for Space and Major Disasters, which can provide satellite imagery of s9(2)(g)(i) HMNZS <i>Manawanui</i> in Samoa. Samoa is not a member of the charter; however New Zealand's membership allows us to activate the charter in support of Pacific nations. The activation of the charter is in progress.</p>	<p>Activated 17th October 2024, ongoing</p>

Additional IDC assistance options:

Option	Description	
<p>s6(a)</p>		

<p>Financial – New Zealand High Commission Fund (HEF)</p>	<p>s6(a)</p> <p>The New Zealand High Commission Fund (HEF) has been increased from NZ\$0.55million to NZ\$1million for this triennium (2024-2027).</p> <p>s9(2)(g)(i)</p>	<p>s6(a)</p> <p>No action taken</p>
<p>s9(2)(g)(i)</p>	<p>s9(2)(g)(i)</p>	<p>No action taken</p>
<p>Capacity Building – Samoa's Office of the Legislative Assembly</p>	<p>The New Zealand Parliamentary Counsel office is currently assisting Samoa's Office of the Legislative Assembly for a six-month period, due to end in December 2024.</p> <p>s9(2)(g)(i)</p>	<p>Extension of current contract through to March 2025; further 12-month contract under bilateral programme pending approval.</p>

International assistance options:

Option	Description	
<p>Assistance from another Metropolitan Government under PACPLAN</p>	<p>Under the Pacific Islands Regional Marine Spill Contingency Plan (PACPLAN), each Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) Island member is</p>	<p>Assistance from the United States Coast Guard sought and confirmed in November; USCG assistance in place from December 2024.</p>

	<p>allocated a SPREP Metropolitan Member Government as primary and secondary source of assistance. New Zealand is the primary source of assistance to Samoa and PACPLAN specifies the US Government is as the secondary source of assistance. However, this is only a guide and the Samoan Government is able to request assistance from any Metropolitan member.</p> <p>s9(2)(g)(i)</p>	
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Operation Resolution - Watch Group Tuesday 8 April 2025

Purpose:

s6(a)

Out of scope

Talking Points

- Welcome the near completion of Phase 2, with s9(2)(g)(i) and debris now removed, and the salvors now sealing up the wreck.
- We understand that the Wreck and Reef Assessment s9(2)(g)(i). Then, s6(a) will need time to consider this and other reports, and come to a position. s9(2)(g)(i)
- Out of scope
- [If raised] We should not expect, or push for, a decision on the disposal of the HMNZS Manawanui until after the Wreck and Reef assessment has been received and reviewed by the Government of Samoa. This report is vital for ensuring an informed, scientifically-robust decision is made.
- Out of scope
- Out of scope

Back round

Out of scope

The removal of pollutants and other items has been completed. The salvage contract for Phase 2 has been extended 8 days (ending 14 April) to ensure that the

wreck is sealed and debris removed. s9(2)(g)(i)

Out of scope

The Wreck and Reef Assessment report, led by s9(2)(g)(i)
and supported by s9(2)(g)(i)
Once the report has been received, s6(a) will also need time to discuss,
s9(2)(g)(i)

Out of scope

Out of scope

Out of scope

s9(2)(g)(i)

1. s9(2)(g)(i)
2. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)
3. s9(2)(g)(i)
4. s9(2)(g)(i)

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s9(2)(g)(i)

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Pacific Polynesia and French Pacific Division

April 2025

RISK-10409541.38-125

IN-CONFIDENCE

HMNZS Manawanui

Contact point: Lucy Coghill, Senior Policy Officer Samoa, PACPF Division

Talking points

- The Samoan Government is managing the overall response and New Zealand is working closely with them. NZDF is the lead New Zealand agency.
- Our focus continues to be on minimising any possible environmental impacts and supporting the response. These are our absolute priorities. The full recovery efforts will take time, but New Zealand is committed to doing the right thing.
- Work to retrieve important equipment, weapons, ammunition and some debris from in and around the HMNZS Manawanui is now complete. This follows the successful removal of diesel fuel, oil and other pollutants from the ship.
- [Apology, if raised] Reiterate that New Zealand is sorry this unfortunate accident happened, and we will work together to assess the environmental impact and manage the next steps, including assessing and addressing any further environmental risks.
- [Cause, if raised] The Court of Inquiry has determined the cause to be human error. The Inquiry made nine recommendations to rectify the deficiencies and risks, many of which are already implemented or are in progress.
- [Compensation, if raised] That is a matter for the Government of Samoa and not something I can currently comment on.

Background - Restricted

1. The sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui off the south coast of Upolu on October 6 2024 resulted in all 75 souls on board making it safely to shore. s9(2)(g)(i)
2. A permanent solution for dealing with the Manawanui will be decided following the completion of an engineering/scientific assessment. s9(2)(g)(i)
s6(a)
3. **[RESTRICTED]** At Samoa's request, New Zealand (NZDF) made a payment of \$10 million tala (\$6 million NZD) to the Government of Samoa, via Exchange of Letters, s9(2)(g)(i) s6(a)