



## Prime Minister

Minister for Arts, Culture & Heritage

Minister for Child Poverty Reduction

Minister for National Security & Intelligence

27 JUL 2020

Mx Watson

By email: [fyi-request-13184-a7886c68@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-13184-a7886c68@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Ref: PMO 2020-129

Dear Mx Watson

### Official Information Act request relating to a trans-Tasman bubble

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, received on 29 June 2020. You requested:

*“Our government describes itself as open and transparent, in that vein, I am requesting more transparency with regards to what requirements we are looking for in Australian COVID case numbers and the characteristics of those cases.*

*More specifically, I am asking for clarification on the guidelines given to Australia which Jacinda Ardern referenced in the 29/06/2020 post-cabinet press conference. The Prime Minister mentioned that there were two proposals, one state-specific, and one Australian wide. New Zealanders who have split families, separated loved ones, or even those with business which spans the Tasman are all interested in the movement towards feasible open borders, and any timeframe this may occur within. Being able to openly discuss both the merits of New Zealand's requirements and Australia's progress towards them will provide more certainty and reassurance to distressed family members and the New Zealand public.*

*I have also sent this OIA to the Office of Prime Minister and Cabinet so there is no need to extend the timeline should one office be more suited to respond.”*

I have decided to withhold a Cabinet paper captured by your request under the following sections of the Act, as applicable:

- section 6(a), to protect the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand; and
- section 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the confidentiality of advice tendered by or to Ministers and officials.

However, this Cabinet paper will be considered for release at a later date when it is appropriate to do so, as a part of the Government's COVID-19 Proactive Release process. The documents released under this process are made available at the following web page:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/updates-and-resources/legislation-and-key-documents/proactive-release/>

I can advise that the Prime Minister, Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern expanded on her comments at her post-cabinet press conference, which you have referenced, in her answer to Oral

Questions on 30 June 2020. The Prime Minister stated that whether Australia opens at a state-by-state or a federal level is a matter for them to determine, not New Zealand, and the criteria for both situations are: "whether or not there is community transmission and how long states have been free of that, whether or not there is adequate contact tracing, testing capacity, and things that indicate a similar system and regime to ours that can give us confidence that if an area is declaring itself free of community transmission that that is the case." You can read more on this exchange at the following address:

[https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/hansard-debates/rhr/document/HansS\\_20200630\\_050400000/1-question-no-1-prime-minister](https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/hansard-debates/rhr/document/HansS_20200630_050400000/1-question-no-1-prime-minister)

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Raj Nahna', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Raj Nahna  
**Chief of Staff**