



13 July 2022

Scott

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Ref: OIA-2021/22-1037

Dear Scott

**Official Information Act request relating to Eight NSG Documents (Follow Up)**

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 25 February 2022. You requested:

*ONE: On page 4 of your release document, it is noted that: "Over the past few months, officials have undertaken a stocktake of New Zealand's approach to the prevention of violent extremism." I would like to request a copy of this stock*

*TWO: I would like to request copies of Appendix A and Appendix C of 1819NSPD/094, i.e., copies of "National Terrorism Threat Assessment (draft Cabinet paper)" and "Counter-Terrorism Strategic Work Programme (draft Cabinet paper) + Attachments" referred to on page 12 of your release document*

*THREE: On page 15 of your release document, it is noted that: "Officials from DPMC met with Facebook in early March 2019. At that meeting officials discussed their concern at the proliferation of terrorist content on social media platforms, and requested Facebook be more responsive to the legitimate safety and security expectations of the governments of countries where it operates. Officials also signalled interest in disinformation and the role of social media companies in combatting it. I request copies of all communications between DPMC and Facebook relating to this meeting, and copies of any minutes, notes or other records kept by DPMC for this meeting, and the briefing paper or aide memoire which resulted from it (if any)."*

On 24 March 2022 the time frame for responding to your request was extended under section 15A of the Act by 25 working days because consultations were needed before a decision could be made on the request. Due to an administrative error your request was overlooked in our system, and I apologise for the delay in providing you with a response.

Regarding part one of your request, DPMC has interpreted this to be for an assessment and record of New Zealand's approach to the prevention of violent extremism, generated before the date of the briefing you refer to. Please note that this stocktake was not formally recorded. I am therefore refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act as the information requested does not exist, or despite reasonable efforts, cannot be found.

I am withholding *Appendix A - Counter-Terrorism Strategic Work Programme* and *Appendix C - National Terrorism Threat Assessment* under the following sections of the Act:

- section 6(a) – the release of the information would be likely to prejudice national security;
- section 9(2)(g)(i) – the withholding of the information is necessary to allow the free and frank opinions of Ministers and/or officials.

Lastly, I am releasing to you email correspondence between the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) and Facebook Australia and New Zealand that is within scope of your request. Some information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act as the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of individuals.

I note that this was a courtesy call upon DPMC during a visit to New Zealand by one of Facebook's Public Policy team. The meeting occurred on Thursday 7 March 2019 and, in responding to Facebook's outline of its safety settings, DPMC raised the issues described in the subsequent briefing to the Prime Minister (*Memorandum: Social Media and Harmful Online Content*, dated 19 March 2019 refers). DPMC subsequently received a follow-up message from Facebook on 11 March (page three of the release document), setting out some of its policies in greater detail. In the normal course of events, DPMC would have prepared advice on the meeting after that, taking into account that follow-up. That tasking was subsequently overtaken by the events of 15 March 2019, including the Memorandum to the Prime Minister. DPMC was subsequently involved in detailed engagement with a number of firms – including Facebook - in the development of the Christchurch Call.

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

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

We do not intend to publish this response on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website.

Yours sincerely

Dan Eaton  
**Acting Deputy Chief Executive,  
National Security Group**