

31 March 2022

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OIA 27963

Tēnā koe Adam Irish

I refer to your email of 17 March 2022 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

*I request under the Official Information Act if New Zealand is exploring alternative and additional formal defence agreements with partner democratic countries, such as a new form of the old Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO).*

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade does not hold information about New Zealand exploring further defence agreements, such as a new form of SEATO. Therefore, we are refusing your request under section 18(e) of the OIA because the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

Please note that we may publish this letter (with your personal details redacted) on the Ministry's website.

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



Julie-Anne Lee  
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade