



17 February 2023

Ombudsman Ref: 589153
DPMC Ref: OIA-2021/22-1529

Harold

By email: fyi-request-19960-b87a5886@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Harold

**Official Information Act request for advice relating to Strengthening
New Zealand's Resilience to Misinformation and Disinformation**

I refer to your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) requests to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) relating to mis/disinformation. DPMC responded to your related requests on 26 July 2021, 26 May 2022 and 3 August 2022.

In our response we released a copy of DPMC briefing "*Strengthening New Zealand's Resilience to Mis/Disinformation*" (January 2021) with some redactions and withheld an initial, working draft of our strategic framework. You asked the Ombudsman to investigation information withheld from the briefing under section 9(2)(f)(iv) and the withholding of the initial working draft framework under section 9(2)(g)(i).

On 9 December 2022 we released some additional information to you:

- Document 1: A revised copy of the DPMC briefing "*Strengthening New Zealand's Resilience to Mis/Disinformation*" releasing information previously withheld under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act.
- Document 2: The initial working draft "*Strategic Framework for Strengthening New Zealand's Resilience to Mis- & Disinformation*".

You have asked the Ombudsman to continue the investigation in relation to the withholding of three paragraphs under section 9(2)(g)(i) and the withholding of details of potential stakeholders under section 9(2)(f)(iv).

DPMC has reassessed both the parts of the document that remain in dispute. Please find attached a revised copy of Document 1: the DPMC briefing "*Strengthening New Zealand's Resilience to Mis/Disinformation*" releasing information previously withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act.

The additional information released to you is Paragraph 19 of Attachment A under the heading "*Possible elements of a strategic framework on disinformation*". I have decided that we need to continue to withhold the examples given under this paragraph under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act, to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion.

As noted previously, some parts of these documents continue to be withheld under the following sections of the Act, as marked in the attached document:

- section 6(a), to protect the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of New Zealand.

- section 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of individuals.
- section 9(2)(b)(ii), to protect the commercial position of the person who supplied the information, or who is the subject of the information.
- section 9(2)(ba)(i), to protect the supply of similar information in the future, where information was provided in confidence.
- section 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the confidentiality of advice tendered by or to Ministers and officials.
- section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion.
- section 9(2)(j), to enable negotiations to be carried on without prejudice or disadvantage.

Where information has been withheld under section 9 of the Act, no public interest in releasing the withheld information has been identified that would be sufficient to override the reasons for withholding it.

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

This response may be published on DPMC's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Tony Lynch
Deputy Chief Executive
National Security Group

Enc: Release document 01 - revised copy of the DPMC briefing