



Te Tira Tiaki
Government Communications
Security Bureau



Te Pā Whakamarumarū
New Zealand Security
Intelligence Service

11 September 2023

ASE
fyi-request-22481-def5f8ac@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe ASE

Official Information Act request

We refer to your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 17 April 2023 to both the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) and New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) seeking the following information:

- all information held by GCSB/NZSIS relating to any correlations between COVID-19 “vaccines” and mortality.
- all information held by GCSB/NZSIS relating to any correlations between COVID-19 “vaccines” and morbidity.
- all information held by GCSB/NZSIS relating to causality between COVID-19 “vaccines” and mortality.
- all information held by GCSB/NZSIS relating to causality between COVID-19 “vaccines” and morbidity.
- all information relating to the status, release, management, and/or dissemination of such information, as requested herein.
- all information relating to any such information, as requested herein, that may have been passed from, to, or through GCSB/NZSIS channels.

We have prepared a joint response to your request.

As you did not confirm your eligibility to make an OIA request to either agency, we did not accept your request. On 30 June 2023 the Office of the Ombudsman confirmed to us that you were eligible and we started processing your request.

You were advised on 31 July 2023 that the time limit for responding to your request had been extended to 11 September 2023 because the request necessitated a search through a large quantity of information and meeting the original time limit would have unreasonably interfered with the operations of the department.

This extension was necessary as your request required a search of our document management and email systems. As I am sure you can appreciate, we hold a large number of documents that feature the words “COVID-19” and “Vaccines”. Due to the wording of your request, we had to review all these documents to determine whether they were in scope.

Response

We confirm that we hold information in scope of your request.

We hold copies of the following publicly available documents and have provided you the relevant link. As such, we are partially refusing your request pursuant to section 18(d) of the OIA, as the documents are publicly available.

Title/Link	Date	Relevant excerpt
Strategic Preparedness, Readiness and Response Plan (WHO)	March 2022	"Despite the continued evolution of SARS-CoV-2 variants, all vaccines approved through WHO's Emergency Use Listing (EUL) process show high effectiveness at preventing severe disease and death after a primary series. Booster vaccination is required to sustain a high level of effectiveness."
COVID-19 and other pandemics require a coherent response strategy (The Lancet)	Jan 2023	<p>"As COVID-19 has shown in several jurisdictions, particularly in the Asia- Pacific region, using an elimination strategy to delay widespread transmission of SARS-CoV-2 for 18 months or more allowed time for development and distribution of effective vaccines. This approach was particularly evident in New Zealand, Australia, and Singapore. The net effect was that such countries had relatively low cumulative COVID-19 mortality, less pressure on health services, and better economic outcomes, than most other high-income countries."</p> <p>"The Strategy to Achieve Global Covid-19 Vaccination lays out the different goals of the Covid-19 vaccination programme with a priority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) minimize deaths, severe disease and overall disease burden, and the impact on health systems, followed by ii) resume full socio-economic activity; and iii) reduce future risks, including the risk of new variants." <p>"Despite the continued evolution of SARS-CoV-2 variants, all vaccines approved through WHO's Emergency Use Listing (EUL) process show high effectiveness at preventing severe disease and death after a primary series. Booster vaccination is required to sustain a high level of effectiveness."</p>
Transforming or tinkering the world remains unprepared for the next pandemic threat (The Lancet)	May 2022	"Vaccination is essential to reduce severe disease and death. Yet the available COVID-19 vaccines seem to have limited effect on transmission, and boosters are required to continue to protect vulnerable populations. We need better, more accessible diagnostic tools, vaccines, and treatments and responsive public health strategies. Test and treat programmes must be implemented and accessible to prevent COVID-19 deaths."
The Global Risks Report (WEF)	2022	"Rapid and wholesale easing of constraints on social and economic activity often resulted in a steep rise in case

		numbers, although the impact on health systems and mortality was often mitigated by high vaccination rates.”
Strengthening Australia’s Pandemic Preparedness (CSIRO)	2022	“Vaccines are a key medical countermeasure for responding to a pandemic as they reduce disease transmission, which saves lives, keeps people out of hospital, and protects populations that are disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of disease. This reduces pressure on the healthcare system. Effective vaccines can also reduce pressure on development and scale-up of other medical countermeasures, including therapeutics.”

The remaining documents have been withheld under the following grounds of the OIA:

- section 6(a) the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand.
- section 6(b)(i), the making available of that information would be likely to prejudice the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on the basis of confidence by the Government of any other country or any agency of such a Government.

We can, however, confirm that none of the documents being withheld showed an increase in morbidity or mortality as a result of vaccine usage.

Review

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact information@gcsb.govt.nz or oia.privacy@nzsis.govt.nz.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi



Bridget White

Te Tumu Whakarae Rangitahi mō Te Tira Tiaki
Acting Director-General of the GCSB



Andrew Hampton

Te Tumu Whakarae mō Te Pā Whakamarumaruru
Director-General of Security