



4 February 2025

John Wilson
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Ref: OIA-2024/25-0470

Dear John Wilson

Official Information Act request relating to designation of Hezbollah as Terrorist Entities

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 20 November 2024. You requested:

Under the Official Information Act 1982, I am requesting the following:

1. All briefing documents related to the decision to designate Hezbollah in its entirety and Ansar Allah (also known as The Houthis) as terrorist entities.

Please also include related correspondence and documents, such as communications with the Attorney-General and the Prime Minister, National Security Board papers, and any communications or engagement plans.

Additionally, I request the following:

2. Any communications with foreign governments or non-governmental organisations regarding the designation of Hezbollah and the Houthis as terrorist organisations.

3. Information on when the process to designate Hezbollah and the Houthis as terrorist organisations was initiated, including details of the individuals, agencies, or departments responsible for starting the process.

4. Documentation or records detailing the initiation of this process, including internal communications, memos, or any other relevant materials.

5. Any documents or analysis that considered the acts of terror committed by the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) or Mossad against the Lebanese and Palestinian people concerning Hezbollah's actions, particularly in the context of the decision to designate Hezbollah as a terrorist entity.

Please note that I do not seek information already in the public domain, specifically the Statement of Case to Designate (Hezbollah/Houthis) As A Terrorist Entity.

On 3 December 2024, we wrote to you advising that the following parts of your request have been transferred:

- **Part [1]** of your request as it relates to information from Crown Law (CLO), including a letter from the Attorney-General in response to a consultation letter from the Prime Minister, has been transferred to CLO.
- **Part [2]** of your request as it relates to any relevant communications with foreign governments and any communications with foreign non-governmental organisations held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), has been transferred to MFAT.

- **Parts [3] – [4]** of your request about the initiation of the process for the designation of terrorist organisations has been transferred in full to NZ Police.

The time frame for responding to your request was extended under section 15A of the Act by 20 working days because consultations were needed before a decision could be made on the request. Following this extension, I am now in a position to respond.

Please note, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet does not hold any information relevant to **Part [5]** of your request. I am therefore refusing these aspects of your request under section 18(g), as the requested information is not held, nor do I believe it is held by another department or agency.

Information being released

In regard to **Part [1]**, I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed below, subject to information being withheld as noted.

Item	Date	Title or Document description	Decision
Item 1	21/08/2024	Cover Sheet for NSB Item 4	Release with some information withheld under: s6(a) s9(2)(g)(ii)
Item 2	21/08/2024	Considering terrorist designations of the entirety of Hizbollah and the Houthi under the Terrorism Suppression Act 2002	Release with some information withheld under: s6(a) 6(b)(i) s6(d) s9(2)(a) s9(2)(g)(i) s9(2)(h)
Item 3	17/09/2024	Briefing: Designation of Hizbollah and the Houthi as terrorist entities	Release with some information withheld under: s6(a) s6(d) s9(2)(a) s9(2)(g)(i) s9(2)(g)(ii)
Item 4	20/11/2024	Designation of Hizbollah and the Houthi as terrorist entities	Release with some information withheld under: s6(a) s9(2)(g)(i) s9(2)(g)(ii) s9(2)(h)
Item 5	Undated	Letter from the Prime Minister to the Commissioner of Police (filed 20 November 2024)	Release in full
Item 6	Undated	Letter from the Prime Minister to the Attorney-General (filed 20 November 2024)	Release in full
Item 7	Undated	Letter from the Prime Minister to members of the Intelligence and Security Committee (filed 20 November 2024)	Release in full

The relevant grounds under which information has been withheld are:

- Section 6(a), to protect the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand
- Section 6(b)(i), to protect the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by the Government of any other country or any agency of such a Government
- Section 6(d), to maintain the safety of any person
- section 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of individuals
- section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion
- section 9(2)(g)(ii), to prevent improper pressure or harassment
- section 9(2)(h), to maintain legal professional privilege

Information being withheld

We have identified two email threads relevant to your request. These are withheld in their entirety in accordance with section 9(2)(ba)(ii), to prevent damage to the public interest.

Also identified as relevant to your request are some briefings provided by the DPMC Policy Advisory Group to the Prime Minister. These briefings are provided to the Prime Minister in confidence to support him in his role as leader of the Government and chair of Cabinet. These briefings are withheld in their entirety under the following sections of the Act:

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

Where section 9 of the Act applies, in making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act. No public interest has been identified that would be sufficient to outweigh the reasons for withholding that information. You are entitled to ask the Ombudsman to review this response under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet'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

Bridget White
Executive Director
National Security Group