



Office of the Prime Minister

Prime Minister

Minister for National Security and Intelligence

Minister of Tourism

Minister Responsible for Ministerial
Services

10 JUN 2016

Emma Cullen

Email: fyi-request-4085-f8ccf0dc@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Emma Cullen

Official Information Act Request Relating to Australian Offshore Detention Centres

I refer to your Official Information Act request of 30 May 2016 for *“all correspondence that the Right Honourable Prime Minister John Key has in regard to Australian offshore detention centres while serving as Prime Minister of the country, and the replies to that communication if available.”*

To respond to your request, searches have been undertaken of records of correspondence received by this Office. It should be noted that the electronic searches undertaken of correspondence received by this Office are limited by the information stored relating to that correspondence when it is originally filed. For instance, whether the correspondence was identifiable as relating to offshore detention centres depends on the keywords assigned to correspondence at the time.

These searches have identified the following numbers of pieces of correspondence:

- 112 relating to Nauru
- 222 relating to Christmas Island
- 81 relating Manus
- 22 relating to offshore detention.

The correspondence listed above was all acknowledged by this Office and referred to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Any responses to that correspondence would have come from that Minister. This correspondence, and any responses to it, is both held by and more closely related to the functions and responsibilities of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Accordingly, to the extent that your request is for this correspondence and any responses to it, I am transferring this part of your request to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The only other correspondence identified as relevant to your request was a total of 1,770 emails that this Office received which contained the following standard wording:

“Dear Prime Minister

We ask that you urgently call on Prime Minister Turnbull not to send the 267 vulnerable men, women, and children currently in Australia back to Nauru or Manus Island. They will face a future of indefinite detention on tiny islands with no prospect of a decent life. They will be at serious risk of physical and sexual assault.

Please urge Mr Turnbull to #LetThemStay”.

Names and contact details in the 1,770 emails have been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act as withholding the information is necessary "to protect the privacy of natural persons..."

These emails were acknowledged by this Office with the following standard reply:

"On behalf of the Prime Minister, Rt Hon John Key, thank you for your email. The fact that you have taken the time to write is appreciated.

While the Prime Minister considers all correspondence to be important, if you are writing to express a personal view, your opinion will be noted but a response beyond this acknowledgement may not necessarily be sent.

*Yours sincerely
The Office of the Prime Minister".*

Where information has been withheld, I have not identified any public interest in releasing the withheld information that would be sufficient to override the reasons for withholding it.

You are entitled to ask the Ombudsman to review this response under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act. You can contact the Ombudsman online via the Ombudsman website, by email (info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by post to The Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143. Further details can be found on the Ombudsman website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely



Wayne Eagleson
Chief of Staff