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[A1635680]

8 September 2017

Daniel Richards  
[fyi-request-6433-f2d6f5b2@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-6433-f2d6f5b2@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Mr Richards

**Official information request for the risk assessments that the New Zealand Information Security Manual is based on**

I refer to your official information request dated 17 August 2017 for:

*"a copy of the Risk Assessments carried out by the GCSB as per section 1.2.2 of the NZISM (Part 1) for all government information."*

*"..for any information that is processed, stored or communicated by government systems with corresponding risk treatments (controls) to reduce the level of security risk to an acceptable level".*

The New Zealand Information Security Manual (NZISM) provides a set of essential or baseline controls and additional good and recommended practice controls for use by government agencies for the protection of all New Zealand Government information and systems.

Section 1.2.2 of the NZISM states that *"the NZISM provides guidance and specific ICT controls that form part of a suite of requirements produced by GCSB relating to information security. Its role is to promote a consistent approach to information assurance and information security across all New Zealand Government agencies. It is based on security risk assessments for any information that is processed, stored or communicated by government systems with corresponding risk treatments (controls) to reduce the level of security risk to an acceptable level."*

As the NZISM is developed, judgements on risks to information security are made by drawing on a wide range of classified and publicly available information such as national and international standards, good practice, known threats and known vulnerabilities. The "context" and "references" sections in the chapters of the NZISM lead to the relevant guidance and standards that were used during the development of the NZISM.

Security risk assessments are not separately documented, but rather are an exercise of judgement in forming the NZISM controls. The "rationale" section accompanying control sets in each chapter explains the risk assessments that have been made, or reasoning behind, each set of controls and the compliance requirements that each control set are based on. More recent sections of the NZISM also provide open source threat and risk tables.

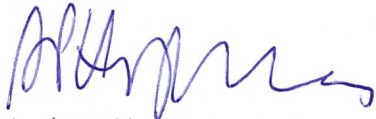
As a result, I would recommend that you refer to the above sections of the NZISM to understand how the NZISM has been developed.

I am, therefore, refusing your request for the risk assessments that the NZISM is based on under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act 1982, on the grounds that the information requested is not held by the GCSB and there are no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation, or by a local authority.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact [information@gcsb.govt.nz](mailto:information@gcsb.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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Hampton', written in a cursive style.

Andrew Hampton  
Director