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**MANATŪ KAUPAPA  
WAONGA**  
NEW ZEALAND  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

20 October 2025

## RESPONSE TO YOUR OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

Thank you for your email of 4 October 2025, in which you requested, pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information about Mr Richard Helms visit to New Zealand in 1972:

*The questions I ask, under the Official Information Act are as follows:*

*(i) Do financial records exist within the Department of Defence for this period?*

*(ii) If so, I ask that any extant details of financing of any or all of those flights be supplied to me.*

*(iii) Do records exist of the time of departure of the USAF aircraft from Ohakea bound for Fiji. If so, I request this small detail.*

The Ministry of Defence (the Ministry) is a civilian agency that is responsible for the development of defence policy, international defence engagements and the delivery of major military equipment.

The Ministry has undertaken a search for relevant information and identified no material within scope of your request. We have also reached out to the New Zealand Defence Force, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service. These agencies have confirmed they also do not hold any information in scope of your request. As such, your request is declined pursuant to section 18(g)(i), as the information requested is not held by the department or Minister of the Crown or organisation and the person dealing with the request has no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

For your awareness, we have identified the following newspaper articles online which reference Mr Helms visit to New Zealand in 1972 and may assist in your research:

- [Papers Past | Newspapers | Press | 15 July 1972 | C.I.A. visitor of 'great value'](#)
- [Papers Past | Newspapers | Press | 10 July 1972 | C.I.A. head at Mt Cook](#)
- [Papers Past | Newspapers | Press | 8 July 1972 | C.I.A. head on visit](#)

Under section 28(3) of the Act you have the right to request the Ombudsman to investigate and review this response.

Yours sincerely

Hamish Rogers  
**Deputy Secretary, Governance, People and Executive Services**