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

10 February 2026

RESPONSE TO YOUR OFFICIAL INFORMATION REQUEST

On 16 January 2026 the Office of the Minister of Defence transferred your Official Information request, in which you requested, pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following:

- *All briefings, cabinet papers, reports and ministerial advice on the workshops talked about in this story**
- *The list of organisations and people that are set to attend the workshops*
- *All communications between the defence minister's office and the defence ministry regarding the workshops*

* <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/political/584070/ministry-of-defence-seeks-advice-for-plan-to-have-drones-scour-pacific>

The following entry in the *Defence Weekly Report* (27 Nov – 03 Dec 2025) was considered in scope of your request:

Persistent Surveillance Industry Engagement

1. The Persistent Surveillance (Air) Project – Phase 1 is aiming to deliver enhanced airborne Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, and response capability for the New Zealand Defence Force to increase maritime domain awareness. This project is captured in the *2025 Defence Capability Plan*.
2. To inform the development of the Indicative Business Case, the project is inviting industry (New Zealand and overseas) and academia to a series of workshops from 20-23 January 2026. These are intended to increase the overall understanding of platform supply, technology applications, training, through-life support, and other potential areas of value for the project.
3. To organise these workshops, a notice seeking registrations will be posted on the Government Electronic Tender Service (GETS) in the week commencing 8 December. This notice will be publicly visible and may generate media interest. The notice and workshops do not imply a commitment to go to market.

Attendee Information

The workshops represent the very early, information gathering and industry engagement stage of the Persistent Surveillance (Air) project. The workshops will inform thinking on the range of options available to increase the New Zealand Defence Force's capability to provide long duration intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance across the South-West Pacific and Southern Ocean.

The workshops are designed to be brainstorming sessions that will identify innovative and viable opportunities to address the above objective. Defence anticipates that there may be a range of different technologies available that can deliver the required solution.

No decisions were made at these workshops, and a small amount of public money was spent to facilitate the workshops.

As such, the names of individuals who attended the workshops are withheld, pursuant to section 9(2)(a), in order to protect the privacy of natural persons.

The names of organisations who attended the workshops are withheld, pursuant to the following grounds of the Act:

- Section 9(2)(b)(ii), to protect information that would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.
- Section 9(2)(i), to enable a Minister of the Crown or any department or organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.
- Section 9(2)(j), to enable a Minister of the Crown or any department or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).

Where information is withheld in accordance with section 9(2) of the Act, the public interest is not considered to outweigh the need to withhold that information at this time.

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

Yours sincerely

Sarah Minson
Deputy Secretary Capability Delivery