

Defence House  
34 Bowen Street  
Wellington, New Zealand

P +64 (04) 496 0999  
E [info@defence.govt.nz](mailto:info@defence.govt.nz)

PO Box 12703  
Molesworth Street  
Wellington 6144, New Zealand

[www.defence.govt.nz](http://www.defence.govt.nz)



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

26 February 2026

## RESPONSE TO YOUR OFFICIAL INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your email of 28 January 2026, in which you requested, pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following:

*It is in regard to the NOI- Persistent Surveillance (Air) Project Opportunities Workshop.  
For your reference, a link to it is below:*

<https://www.gets.govt.nz/MD/ExternalTenderDetails.htm?id=33203317>

*Under the "Overview" heading, this is stated: "New Zealand Defence is inviting industry and academia to contribute to a series of workshops in late January 2026. The workshops will inform early 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."*

*Please show what consultations New Zealand Defence Force officials have had with representatives of Pacific Island Forum nations, as well as any other Pacific nations that are not Pacific Island Forum member countries.*

*For each of those consultation instances, please show:*

- When it occurred*
- How the interaction occurred (i.e face to face meeting, phone call, email exchange).*
- Who was involved*
- What was discussed*

*Please also provide:*

- Any briefings provided for the consultation instance*
- Any agenda set out for the interaction*
- Any documents produced following the interaction*

The Persistent Surveillance (Air) Project Opportunities Workshops were organised as part of the early, exploratory phase of the Project, as outlined in the *2025 Defence Capability Plan (DCP)*.

The Ministry of Defence is seeking information on how we might respond to the challenge of maritime domain awareness, with a particular focus on New Zealand's Exclusive Economic Zone and our wider area of search and rescue responsibility.

While the DCP itself has been widely discussed with Pacific partners at both a Ministerial and official level, there have been no consultations with international partners on the Persistent

Surveillance (Air) Project Opportunities Workshops at this early stage of the Project. As such, your request is declined, pursuant to section 18(e) of the Act, as the information requested does not exist.

Information gathered from the workshops will inform the Persistent Surveillance (Air) Project, which is in the early pre-acquisition phase. Cabinet has not yet made any decisions on what this Project will ultimately deliver. While the DCP outlines indicative spending, all Projects remain subject to government approval of individual business cases which justify the investment and to funding being made available through the annual Budget process.

The Ministry is a civilian agency that is responsible for the development of defence policy, international defence engagements and the delivery of major capability projects. We are a separate agency from the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF). The Ministry's Persistent Surveillance (Air) Project involves an Integrated Project Team made up of both Ministry and NZDF employees, but please note that this response relates only to information held by the Ministry. Requests regarding the operations of the NZDF should be made directly to that agency.

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

Yours sincerely

RS

Richard Schmidt  
**Deputy Secretary Policy and Planning**