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

4 February 2026

RESPONSE TO YOUR OFFICIAL INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your email of 26 January 2026, in which you requested, pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following:

1. *The total number of meetings, discussions, or briefings held by the Chief Executive (or their office) since 1 January 2024 relating to waiata and karakia groups, practices, or proposed changes to the frequency of sessions.*
2. *Copies of any agendas, minutes, notes, or summaries from these meetings.*
3. *Any correspondence (including emails and messages) between senior leadership and the Public Service Association (PSA) regarding groups or proposed changes to how or when they operate.*
4. *Any internal communications, reports, or advice provided to or from the Chief Executive regarding participation, workplace time allocation, or cultural engagement policies.*
5. *Any decisions, policies, or guidance issued about waiata group operations, including any review or proposed limitation of sessions.*

The separate elements of your request have been numbered for administrative purposes.

Parts of two documents have been identified as in scope the fifth element of your request, both of which are dated 18 March 2024:

- *Hīnātore Rōpū – Strengthening Ministry Te Ao Māori and Te Tiriti Practices Update (March 2024)*
- *Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) meeting minutes.*

In accordance with section 16(e) of the Act, a summary of the information in scope of your request is below:

Hīnātore Rōpū – Strengthening Ministry Te Ao Māori and Te Tiriti Practices Update provided the Ministry's SLT an update on the Rōpū's work programme to strengthen Te Ao Māori and

Te Tiriti Practices within the Ministry. It contains two recommendations relating to waiata practice:

- the Rōpū would divest its ownership of the waiata practice; and
- the Rōpū's SLT Sponsor's division should be assigned responsibility for waiata practice.

On 18 March 2024, SLT agreed that – due to the improved cultural competence within the Ministry – responsibility for continuing to encourage the practice of waiata, karakia and other tikanga, become the responsibility of individual business units within the Ministry.

No funding has been directed towards these activities and they are encouraged but not mandatory.

No information has been identified in scope of the other elements of your request – so these are declined pursuant to section 18(e) of the Act.

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

Yours sincerely

Anton Youngman
Deputy Secretary Strategy Management and Assessment.