

Defence House
34 Bowen Street
Wellington, New Zealand

PO Box 12703
Molesworth Street
Wellington 6144, New Zealand

P +64 (04) 496 0999
E info@defence.govt.nz

www.defence.govt.nz



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

24 March 2026

RESPONSE TO YOUR OFFICIAL INFORMATION REQUEST

On 13 March 2026, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade partially transferred your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) for the following:

I am willing to significantly refine the scope to focus on the information that is of primary importance to me. My core interests are:

- 1. New Zealand's potential or actual involvement, whether direct or indirect, in the US and Israeli military actions against Iran.*
- 2. New Zealand's potential or actual involvement, whether direct or indirect, in the military actions in Gaza since 7 October 2023.*
- 3. The government's legal assessment of these actions under international law, including any assessments relating to allegations of genocide, crimes against humanity, or breaches of international humanitarian law.*

With this in mind, I propose the following refined request:

All briefings, reports, and advice prepared for the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of Defence between 7 October 2023 and the date of this request that specifically address either:

(a) Any potential or actual role for New Zealand, whether direct or indirect, arising from US and Israeli military actions, including but not limited to:

Military actions against Iran; and

Military actions in Gaza since 7 October 2023.

(b) A legal assessment of these actions under international law, including any advice regarding allegations of genocide, crimes against humanity, or breaches of international humanitarian law.

Specifically, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade transferred your request as it relates all briefings, reports and advice for the Minister of Defence.

New Zealand is not involved with military actions against Iran, or in Gaza. The Ministry of Defence has not prepared any briefings, reports or advice for the Minister of Defence regarding potential or actual involvement in military action against Iran, or in Gaza. As a consequence, no legal assessment has been prepared regarding any potential or actual military role against Iran or in Gaza.

As such, your request is declined, pursuant to section 18(e) of the Act, as no such information exists.

While it is out of scope of your request, you may be interested in New Zealand's engagement with the United States-led Civil-Military Coordination Centre, based in Israel. You can find more information in the Joint Ministerial Briefings on the deployment which are available from the Ministry's website: <https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/nzdf-liaison-officer-to-the-civilian-military-coordination-centre/>.

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

Yours sincerely

Richard Schmidt
Deputy Secretary Policy and Planning