



8 August 2022

Sebastian

fyi-request-19355-xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx.org.nz

Ref: OIA-2021/22-1342

Dear Sebastian

Official Information Act request relating to Counter-Terrorism Coordination Committee and Counter-Terrorism documents

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 16 May 2022. You requested:

“This is a request for the Counter-Terrorism Coordination Committee.

I would like to make a request for copies of the following documents:

ONE: The Counter-Terrorism Work Programme 2022 (or otherwise the latest iteration of the CT work programme)

TWO: The Royal Commission report into the Christchurch terrorist attacks, Part 8 Chapter 3 para 39 refers to two earlier CT work programmes dated 2018: “After the role [of CTCC Specialist Coordinator] was filled, a high-level Counter-Terrorism Work Programme was developed and reported to the Security and Intelligence Board in July and September 2018.”

I would like to request copies of the CT work programmes referred to here.

THREE: A document published on the DPMC website refers to an “annual cycle of capability maturity evaluations” of the CT system, in order to “assess the progress being made and inform future updates to the CT Work Programme.”

This quote can be viewed here (p.33):

<https://dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2022-02/dpmc-roiar-oia-2020-21-0753-counter-terrorism-system-capability-review.pdf>

I would like to request a copy of the latest CT capability maturity evaluation.”

The time frame for responding to your request was extended under section 15A of the Act by 40 working days, to 10 August 2022, because consultations were needed before a decision could be made on the request. Following this extension, I am now in a position to respond.

Part ONE – 2022 counter-terrorism work programme

You requested the 2022 counter-terrorism work programme. This work programme is now publicly available on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) website at: dpmc.govt.nz/publications/counter-terrorism-work-programme-2022. As the information requested is publicly available, section 18(d) of the Act applies to this part of your request.

Part TWO – Versions of the 2018 counter-terrorism work programme

The counter-terrorism work programme was initially submitted to and was approved by the Security and Intelligence Board (SIB) in April 2018. Updates to the work programme were submitted to SIB in July and September 2018 for information as progress was made on the work programme and minor changes were made.

Please find enclosed all three versions of the 2018 counter-terrorism work programme:

- April 2018 (approved by SIB)
- July 2018 (update to SIB for information)
- September 2018 (update to SIB for information).

Part THREE – latest capability maturity evaluation

I can confirm that the latest counter-terrorism capability and maturity evaluations were undertaken in December 2021 and fed into the counter-terrorism work programme for 2022.

The evaluations are made in particular to identify any areas of weakness in the counter-terrorism system or where further work is needed to continue to strengthen the system. The report of evaluations made of capabilities and maturity in specific areas should not be made publicly available to protect the integrity of the evaluations as a mechanism for continuing to ensure the counter-terrorism system is current and fit for purpose to protect all New Zealanders. The evaluations will only be valid if officials and agencies contributing to them are able to offer honest, free and frank expression of opinion in terms of capabilities in the knowledge that these would not be made public but are for the purpose of strengthening the system as a whole.

Accordingly, I am withholding the latest capability maturing evaluation report in full under the following sections of the Act:

- section 6(a), to protect the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of New Zealand.
- section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion.

Where information has been withheld under section 9, no public interest in releasing the withheld information has been identified that would be sufficient to override the reasons for withholding it.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely

Tony Lynch
**Deputy Chief Executive
National Security Group**