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

13 March 2023

Adam Irish

fyi-request-21811-b49b4cb4@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Adam

RESPONSE TO YOUR OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

Thank you for your email of 13 February 2023 in which you requested, pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

Any briefing, internal memos, or documents that have been created to review, model, or recommend improvements to the New Zealand military's capability in the event of a potential conflict with the People's Republic of China.

Defence (both the Ministry of Defence and the New Zealand Defence Force), in consultation with other New Zealand Government agencies, undertakes a range of analytical activities to understand New Zealand's changing strategic environment and prepare for a range of possible scenarios that would engage New Zealand's national security and defence interests. These analytical activities are used to inform our advice to Ministers on New Zealand's defence policy settings, including in relation to military capabilities.

We are withholding any such documents under section 6(a) of the Act, as disclosure would be likely to prejudice the security and defence of New Zealand, and the international relations of the Government of New Zealand. Disclosure of any such documents would show the nature of New Zealand's defence planning for such scenarios, prejudice New Zealand's ability to respond effectively, and hinder New Zealand's ability to contribute to maintaining international peace and security.

In December 2021, the Secretary of Defence publicly released *Defence Assessment 2021: he moana pukepuke e ekengia e te waka*. This Assessment presented the Ministry of Defence's perspective on New Zealand's strategic environment, including the key challenges facing New Zealand's defence and security interests, and recommends a more proactive strategic defence policy approach. Section 3.4.1 of the Assessment states that the most significant conflict risks in the Indo-Pacific include increasing cross-Strait tensions. You can access a copy of *Defence Assessment 2021* from the Ministry of Defence's website <https://defence.govt.nz/publications/publication/defence-assessment-2021>.

Is New Zealand's current defense budget as a percentage of GDP is in line with the recommended 2% for NATO partners? If not, I request the current percentage to be provided.

There is no official figure for New Zealand defence spending as a percentage of GDP. The New Zealand Defence Force calculates Defence spending as 0.9% of GDP in 2021/22.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Schmidt', written in a cursive style.

Richard Schmidt
Deputy Secretary, Policy and Planning