



25 November 2024

James
fyi-request-28724-33a123a0@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: PMO OIA 138-2024-25

Dear James

Official Information Act request: Correspondence relating to the HMNZS Manawanui incident

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 10 October 2024. You requested:

“All communications including but not limited to emails, texts and records of phone calls to the incident involving the HMNZS Manawanui in Samoa between 5th October and 9th October.”

On 30 October 2024, I wrote to you extending the time limit for response by 27 working days. The additional time was needed as your request necessitated a search through a large quantity of information, and consultations needed to be undertaken before a decision could be made on the request. Following this extension, I am now in a position to respond.

We have completed the compilation of communications relevant to your request and held by this office. After further consultations, I have decided to withhold all relevant communications in full under section 9(2)(ba)(ii) of the Act, to prevent damage to the public interest. The information needs to be withheld to allow the Court of Inquiry to progress unhindered. You can find out more about the Court of Inquiry on the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) website at: www.nzdf.mil.nz/media-centre/news/nzdf-to-hold-court-of-inquiry-into-hmnzs-manawanui-sinking.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act. There is a clear public interest in understanding the sequence of events that ultimately led to the grounding and sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui. It has been announced that the findings of the Court of Inquiry will be made public in due course and, at this time, the need to protect this information outweighs the public interest in this information.

In the interim, you may be interested in updates provided by NZDF on the response to the grounding and sinking of the HMNZS Manawanui. These can be found on the NZDF website at: www.nzdf.mil.nz/media-centre/story-collections/hmnzs-manawanui-in-samoa.

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

Yours sincerely


Cameron Burrows
Chief of Staff