

29 January 2025

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RC

OIA 29813

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Tēnā koe RC

Thank you for your email of 29 October 2024, transferred from the Prime Ministers Office on 8 November 2024, in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

- 1- *What level of communication you had with the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States and the Secretary of State of the United States. Please details all levels of communication whether it be email, video conference calls, phone calls, texts, written letters or face to face meeting*
- 2- *How long each level of communication lasted*
- 3- *What was the key agenda items of the communication.*
- 4- *Any meeting minutes, transcript of the interaction or copies of letters or communications if available.*

On 15 November 2024 you agreed to refine the scope of your request to be for:

- 1- *What level of communication, that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade was involved in, has the current Prime Minister of New Zealand has had with the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States and the Secretary of State of the United States since 27 November 2023. Please details all levels of communication whether it be email, video conference calls, phone calls, texts, written letters or face to face meeting*
- 2- *How long each level of communication lasted*
- 3- *Copies of the key agendas prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for the aforementioned communications*
- 4- *Copies of meeting minutes, transcript of the interaction or copies of letters or communications held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.*

On 13 December 2024, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 20 working days due to the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request (section 15A(1)(b) of the OIA refers).

The following table contains the instances where the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) prepared advice and reporting for the Prime Minister in his meetings with President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken:

Date of coms	Rt Hon Christopher Luxon Met with	Type of coms	Length of coms	Brief for meeting	Reporting from meeting
11 July 2024 (NATO)	President Biden	In-person	10 minutes	Please see attached meeting briefing.	Please refer to annex 2.
11 July 2024 (NATO)	Secretary Blinken	In-person	15 minutes	N/A – no briefing was prepared.	
11 October 2024 (EAS)	Secretary Blinken	In-person	5 minutes	Please refer to annex 1.	Please refer to annex 3.

Please note that in addition to the above meeting, President Biden hosted a dinner for all NATO leaders on 10 July 2024 which was attended by Rt Hon Christopher Luxon. The formal note captured in **Annex 3** captures this meeting's record.

Some information is withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government;
- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis; 9(2)(f)(iv): to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials; and,
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website: www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Annex 1:

**Extract of "RT HON CHRISTOPHER LUXON PRIME MINISTER EAST ASIA SUMMIT, LAOS 9 – 12 OCTOBER 2024 EVENT BRIEFING MATERIAL" (section 16(1)(e) of the OIA refers)
Remainder of document out of scope of request.**

United States, Anthony BLINKEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Note recent New Zealand defence engagement, including Taiwan Strait transit and participation in the MCA exercise (Maritime Cooperation Activity).- Reiterate New Zealand's support for the IP4, including outside of NATO settings.- Note your discussion with Kurt Campbell at the Pacific Islands Forum and acknowledge the tremendous successes from the Biden Administration's increased attention to the region.
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Annex 2:

Extract of "FORMAL MESSAGE: UNITED STATES: VISIT TO WASHINGTON DC BY PRIME MINISTER LUXON" (section 16(1)(e) of the OIA refers)

Dated 16 July 2024

Remainder of document out of scope of request.

Prime Minister Luxon had engagements with President Biden at the White House dinner on 10 July and a brief pull aside on 11 July in the margins of the NATO Summit. Secretary of State Blinken was also present for the latter. [s6(b)(i)] Luxon praised the leadership of the President Biden and his administration on the US's increased engagement in the South Pacific and the wider Indo-Pacific.

Extract of "PM informal interactions at NATO" (section 16(1)(e) of the OIA refers)

Dated 14 July 2024

Remainder of document out of scope of request.

The President made a particular point of spending time with the IP4 leaders collectively. [s6(a) and s6(b)(i)]

Secretary of State Blinken grabbed the President and ensured PM Luxon had his own moment with the POTUS. [s6(b)(i)] The PM praised the leadership of the Biden Admin, not just in its return to the SW Pacific, but also in the wider Indo-Pacific.

Annex 3:

**Extract of "FORMAL MESSAGE: PRIME MINISTER AT EAST ASIA SUMMIT IN LAOS, 9-12 OCTOBER 2024" (section 16(1)(e) of the OIA refers)
Dated 17 October 2024
Remainder of document out of scope of request.**

In addition to the formal bilaterals, the Prime Minister also had *[out of scope]* short exchanges with *[out of scope]* US Secretary of State Blinken.