



Office of the Prime Minister

Prime Minister

Minister for National Security and Intelligence

Minister of Tourism

Minister Responsible for Ministerial
Services

7 DEC 2015

Alex Harris

Email: fyi-request-3358-6d4ca1c1@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Alex Harris

Official Information Act Request for Information on Panda Bears

I refer to your request of 12 November 2015 which requested under the Official Information Act the following information on the economic benefit to New Zealand of obtaining Pandas for a New Zealand Zoo:

- *“all the international evidence the Prime Minister referred to in his comment;*
- *all the advice, formal or informal, from government agencies the Prime Minister referred to in his comment.”*

Identified as being relevant to your request is an inter-departmental report to the Prime Minister from August 2010 where officials were asked by the Prime Minister to investigate the requirements to acquire a pair of giant pandas from China for a suitable New Zealand zoo. This report has been withheld in its entirety under the following sections of the Official Information Act:

- Section 6(a) as the making available of that information would be likely *“to prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand”*.
- Section 6(b)(i) as the making available of that information would be likely *“to prejudice the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by- the Government of any other country or any agency of such a Government.”*
- Section 9(2)(b)(ii) as withholding the information is necessary to *“protect information where the making available of the information... would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.”*
- Section 9(2)(f)(iv) as withholding the information is necessary to *“maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.”*
- Section 9(2)(j) as withholding the information is necessary to *“enable a Minister of the Crown or any department or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).”*

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

You are entitled to ask the Ombudsman to review this response under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Yours sincerely



Wayne Eagleson
Chief of Staff