

25 June 2012

**COPY**

Joshua Grainger  
22 Taurima Street  
Hei Hei  
CHRISTCHURCH 8042

Dear Mr Grainger

### **Official Information Act Request**

1. Thank you for your e-mail of 13 June requesting, under the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information relating to Top Secret (Special) security clearances conducted by the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS).

2. In your e-mail you ask:

- (a) "What a top secret special security clearance enables you to do that a "top secret" security clearance won't satisfy for."

A Top Secret (Special) security clearance is required of the staff members of intelligence organisations who may have frequent access to the highest levels of national security information. The clearance is unique in that it does not align to the security classification of material to be accessed. There is no security classification above Top Secret, and the Top Secret (Special) clearance does not by itself permit the holder to access any particular type of material.

- (b) "The job title of each current holder of a top secret special security clearance, and the agency that they work for."

This information is withheld pursuant to section 6(a) [prejudice security] of the OIA.

- (c) "How the vetting for a top secret special security clearance differs from the vetting for other security clearances."

Vetting for a Top Secret (Special) security clearance requires considerably more personal information to be disclosed by the candidate, more extensive background enquiries are undertaken by the NZSIS and the threshold for a satisfactory assessment is higher than that for a Top Secret security clearance.

3. Where information has been withheld you have the right, under section 28(1) of the OIA, to make a complaint to an Ombudsman and seek an investigation of my decision.

Yours sincerely

Dr Warren Tucker  
Director of Security