

Hon Judith Collins

Attorney General
Minister of Defence
Minister for Digitising Government
Minister Responsible for the GCSB
Minister Responsible for the NZSIS
Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology
Minister for Space
Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's Response to the
Royal Commission's Report into the Terrorist Attack on the Christchurch Mosques



Ms Anderson
fyi-request-25486-d99d2788@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Anderson

Thank you for your email of 23 January, in which you requested, pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

I would like to request the number of messages for and against intervention in Palestine and Yemen/the Red Sea that you and your office have received in your capacity as Minister of Defence. This includes emails, physical mail and phone calls (both that have been noted in any registry and to the best of your staff's recollections).

My office exchanged many emails and messages while formulating the response to Houthi strikes in the Red Sea. Noting the large amount of content in scope, I am declining your request pursuant to section 18(f) of the Act, as responding would require substantial collation.

Please note that, as much of this correspondence relates to official advice regarding the deployment of New Zealand Defence Force personnel to the Red Sea, a substantial amount of content would be withheld in order to protect national security information (section 6(a) of the Act) and the provision of free and frank advice between officials and Ministers (section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act).

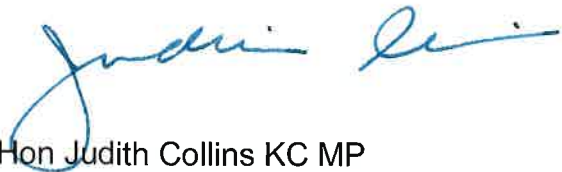
Recognising the high degree of public interest on this subject, information on the recent decision to deploy New Zealand Defence Force personnel to the Red Sea region has been made available online. This includes my press release and Ministerial Statement, which can be found at the following links:

- <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new-zealand-deploying-nzdf-team-protect-red-sea-shipping>
- https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/hansard-debates/rhr/combined/HansDeb_20240130_20240130_16

The Cabinet paper providing the substantive advice to Ministers on the deployment is being prepared for release and will be made available on the Ministry of Defence website shortly at the following link: <https://defence.govt.nz/publications/>.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Judith Collins', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Judith Collins KC MP
Minister of Defence