



NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE



New Zealand Ministry of
Foreign Affairs and Trade
Manatū Aotearoa

18 January 2018

James Burke
fyi-request-6914-c2c88c35@requests.fyi.org.nz

195 Lambton Quay
Private Bag 18-901
Wellington 6160
New Zealand

T +64 4 439 8000
F +64 4 472 9596

Dear James Burke,

I refer to your email of 29 November 2017 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

1. *"A list of all reports, briefings and memoranda that the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Trade have received since being sworn in.*
2. *A list of all meetings that the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Trade have had with officials of the Government of the Russian Federation since being sworn in, broken down by subject matter and date, and copies of any documents created from those meetings.*
3. *A list of meetings that Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials have had with officials of the Government of the Russian Federation since the current New Zealand Government was sworn in, broken down by subject matter and date, and copies of any documents created from those meetings.*
4. *A list of meetings that Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials have had had with officials of the European Union since the current New Zealand Government was sworn in, broken down by subject matter and date, and copies of any documents created from those meetings.*
5. *A list of all meetings that the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Trade have had with officials of the European Union since the current New Zealand Government was sworn in, broken down by subject matter and date, and copies of any documents created from those meetings.*
6. *Copies of any and all correspondence (internal and external), briefings, reports and memoranda (internal or delivered to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and/or the Minister for Trade), of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade regarding New Zealand-Russia economic and/or diplomatic relations since the current New Zealand Government was sworn in.*
7. *Copies of any and all correspondence (internal and external), briefings, reports and memoranda (delivered to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and/or the Minister for Trade) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade regarding a potential FTA with the Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan Customs Union since the current New Zealand Government was sworn in.*

8. *Copies of any and all correspondence between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Trade and European Union officials regarding New Zealand-Russia economic/diplomatic relations and a potential FTA with the Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan Customs Union.*
9. *Copies of any and all correspondence between Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials and European Union officials regarding New Zealand-Russia economic/diplomatic relations and the potential FTA with the Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan Customs Union.*
10. *Copies of any and all correspondence (both internal and external), reports, memoranda and briefings (internal and those delivered to the Minister of Foreign Affairs) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade regarding UNSC2334 since the new Government was sworn in."*

For ease of reference we have numbered each part of your request.

I also refer to my letter of 13 December 2017 in which questions 1, 2, 5, and 8 were transferred to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Trade and Export Growth. The Ministry retained questions 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10.

In my letter of 13 December 2017, the Ministry provided an answer to question 8 and asked for clarification on questions 3, 4, and 6. We followed up with you on 10 January 2018.

This letter responds to questions 3 and 4, partially responds to question 6 and extends the time limit for responding to questions 6, 7 and 10.

Question 3 and 4 – This part of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the OIA as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

As required by section 18A, we have considered:

- Fixing a charge under section 15 of the OIA. Charging would not address the fundamental difficulty of the extensive scope of your request.
- Extending the time limit of this part of your request.

Question 6 – As per my letter of 13 December 2017 *"...We could interpret your request to be for final versions of these documents."* Since we have not heard from you, we will proceed with this interpretation.

Attached are the documents relevant to this part of your request: "Russia Relationship" and "Bilateral meeting brief: Russia". Some portions of the documents are withheld under the following sections of the Act:

- s6(a): to avoid prejudicing the international relations of the New Zealand Government;
- s6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis;
- s6(b)(ii): to protect the passing of information from an international organisation on a confidential basis;
- s6(e)(vi): to avoid damage to the New Zealand Economy by the premature disclosure of decisions relating to entering into of overseas trade agreements; and
- s9(2)(a): to protect individuals' privacy.

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

I also draw your attention to the recently released, "Briefings to Incoming Ministers" available at:

<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/feature/briefings-incoming-ministers-foreign-affairs-security>.

We are continuing to work on this part of your request.

Questions 6, 7 and 10 – This letter advises that due to the necessity for further consultation, we will need to extend the time limit for responding to questions 6, 7 and 10 by 30 working days, to 16 March 2018. It is possible however, that even with this extension, we may be unable to release material relevant to your request.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the OIA to seek a review of this response by the Ombudsman.

Yours sincerely



Wendy Adams
for Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade