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New Zealand Defence Force
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OIA-2024-5110

4 September 2024

[REDACTED]@rnz.co.nz

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 7 August 2024 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), *comprehensive, accurate* information concerning the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) and space. This responses addresses your requests for NZDF information, the Ministry of Defence will provide its response accordingly.

1. *The latest two up-to-date substantive documents about the economic value of NZDF/MOD contracts with foreign militaries for the space sector.*
2. *The latest two up-to-date substantive documents about the timing of those contracts.*

The NZDF does not engage in contracts with foreign countries' military agencies in the space sector. These parts of your request are therefore declined in accordance with section 18(e) of the OIA as the information requested does not exist.

3. *Copies of any and all NZDF/MOD analysis since start of 2022 about the potential military risks to New Zealand from interactions to do with space with the US or Five Eyes defence or national security entities.*

The NZDF participates in the United States led Joint Commercial Operations initiative (JCO), a program to generate space domain awareness. An August 2023 Cabinet Paper concerning NZDF participation in the initiative is publicly available on the Ministry of Defence website¹. This part of your request is therefore declined in accordance with section 18(d) of the OIA.

4. *Copies of any and all documents generated since start of 2022 NZDF/MOD holds around concerns specific to NZ over counterspace including anti-satellite capabilities, including their potential to spill over to terrestrial domains.*

A Cabinet Paper is being prepared for proactive release on the Ministry of Defence website in the near future. This part of your request is therefore declined in accordance with section 18(d) of the OIA.

5. *Copies of any briefings, advice or directives between NZDF/MOD and the National Security and Intelligence network in govt (as led by DPMC) since start of 2022 about any aspect of defence/military space matters that pertain to national security*

¹ <https://www.defence.govt.nz/assets/publications/Redacted-JCO.pdf>

A 28 March 2024 Briefing to the Minister of Defence is withheld in full in accordance with sections 6(a), 6(b)(i), and 9(2)(f)(iv) of the OIA, to respectively: avoid prejudice to the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand; to maintain the confidentiality of information entrusted to the Government of New Zealand by the Government of another country; and, maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by officials.

6. *Comment on: Does New Zealand still affirm that space must be used for peaceful purposes, and if so, how does it reconcile this commitment to its relationships with the US military in this area?*

The New Zealand Government's position on the uses of space is contained in the National Space Policy. This is publicly available online on the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment website².

You have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to ask an Ombudsman to review this response to your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that responses to official information requests are proactively released where possible. This response to your request will be published shortly on the NZDF website, with your personal information removed.

Yours sincerely

AJ WOODS

Air Commodore

Chief of Staff HQNZDF

² <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/science-and-technology/space/national-space-policy>