



7 April 2021



Ref: OIA-2020/21-0326

Dear 

Official Information Act request relating to foreign interference in NZ election

I refer to your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) on 27 January 2021 and my response of 25 March 2021 setting out my decision regarding your request. You requested:

"1) Please provide any written reports, comments, analysis, papers or collated data internal to DPMC developed or gathered since 2019 about the prospect or reality of interference by foreign state or non-state actors in the 2020 New Zealand general election.

2) Please provide any written reports, comments, analysis, papers or collated data provided to any governmental or private organisations or groups external to DPMC since 2019 about the prospect or reality of interference by foreign state or non-state actors in the 2020 New Zealand general election.

3) Please list any meetings (the individuals and organisations involved, the date of the meeting, whether it was conducted at the request of DPMC) between employees of DPMC and external public servants or politicians where concerns, warnings, information or analysis relating to interference by foreign state or non-state actors in the 2020 New Zealand general election were raised."

Please find **attached** the document with extracts of information relevant to your request. As set out in my letter of 25 March 2021 (copy **attached** for ease of reference), some information in the relevant extracts of documents to be released to you has been withheld (as marked) under the following sections of the 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"*; and
- Section 9(2)(g)(i) as withholding the information is necessary to *"maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty."*

Where the information has been withheld under section 9 of the Act, no public interest in releasing the 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 Act.

This response will be published on DPMC's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Tony Lynch
**Deputy Chief Executive
National Security Group**

Enc:

- Copy response letter (25 March 2021) setting out decisions
- Release document of extracts of relevant information



25 March 2021



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I refer to your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) on 27 January 2021. You requested:

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I note the time limits for responding to your request were extended on 24 February 2021 by 20 working days, to 25 March 2021. The additional time was needed to complete consultations before a final decision was made on your request. I am now in a position to respond.

Although I have made a decision on your request, the information I have decided to release to you is still being prepared for release and has not been enclosed with this response. It will be forwarded to you as soon as it is ready.

I have taken the scope of your request to be for any relevant information generated by DPMC. If you are seeking any information from other agencies, you may wish to consider making a request directly to that agency. In particular, Part 2 of your request has been interpreted to be for any documents authored or created by DPMC to any governmental or private organisations or groups external to DPMC.

With regard to Part 3 of your request, seeking information on any meetings where concerns or information about foreign interference in the 2020 New Zealand general election were raised, best endeavours were made to identify any meetings where these matters were discussed. However, it is possible that this topic may have arisen in additional meetings not readily identifiable. There is no easy way to ensure every meeting where the subject may have arisen outside of the documentation of those meetings.

You will shortly be sent a document containing relevant extracts from documents identified as being in scope of Parts 1 and 2 of your request, together with the list of meetings identified as in scope of Part 3 of your request.

DPMC documents identified as being relevant to Parts 1 and 2 of your request were, for the most part, difficult to separate into internal or external documents, as many were written and provided for DPMC officials with input from officials from other government agencies. Accordingly, these two parts of your request were considered together. Where information was identified as in scope of Part 3 of your request, but related to Parts 1 and 2, this information will be grouped with the relevant meeting when provided to you.

Some information in the relevant extracts of documents to be released to you has been withheld (as marked in the release document) under the following sections of the 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*”; and
- Section 9(2)(g)(i) as withholding the information is necessary to “*maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty.*”

One document “*Principles and Protocols for GCSB and NZSIS in managing foreign interference and cyber security threats to the 2020 General Election*” is publicly available on the New Zealand Intelligence Community (NZIC) website and can be accessed at: www.nzic.govt.nz/assets/assets/publications/principles-protocols-gcsb-nzsis-2020-election.pdf.

To the extent that your request is for this document, it is refused under section 18(d) of the Act on the basis “*that the information requested is ... publicly available.*”

In addition, some documents identified as relevant to your request have been withheld in full under the following sections of the Act (as set out above):

- Section 6(a); and
- Section 9(2)(g)(i).

Also identified as relevant to your request are some briefings provided by the DPMC Policy Advisory Group to the Prime Minister. These briefings are provided to the Prime Minister in confidence in order to support her in her role as leader of the Government and chair of Cabinet. These briefings are withheld in their entirety under the following sections of the Act:

- Section 9(2)(f)(ii) as withholding the information is necessary to “*maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect collective and individual ministerial responsibility*”;
- 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*”; and
- Section 9(2)(g)(i) (as above).

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

withholding it. As noted above, the information to be released to you will be sent to you shortly.

You are entitled to ask the Ombudsman to review this response under section 28(3) of the Act. You can contact the Ombudsman online via the Ombudsman website, by email (info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by post to The Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143. Further details can be found on the Ombudsman website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

This response will be published on DPMC's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Tony Lynch
Deputy Chief Executive
National Security Group

Information, including relevant extracts, relevant to request

Acronyms for Government Departments and Agencies

- Combined Threat Assessment Group (CTAG)
- Department of Internal Affairs (DIA)
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)
- Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ)
- Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB)
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)
- Ministry for Culture and Heritage (MCH)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT)
- Ministry of Health (MoH)
- Ministry of Justice (MoJ)
- Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)
- Ministry of Transport (MoT)
- National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC)
- New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF)
- New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS)
- New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE)
- New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) – now Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency
- State Services Commission (SSC) – now Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission

Part 1 – DPMC Internal documents

Please provide any written reports, comments, analysis, papers or collated data internal to DPMC developed or gathered since 2019 about the prospect or reality of interference by foreign state or non-state actors in the 2020 New Zealand general election.

Part 2 – DPMC External documents

Please provide any written reports, comments, analysis, papers or collated data provided to any governmental or private organisations or groups external to DPMC since 2019 about the prospect or reality of interference by foreign state or non-state actors in the 2020 New Zealand general election.

Copied below are relevant extracts from DPMC documents identified as being in scope of Parts 1 and/or 2 of your request.

Title of Document: General Election Security Strategic Framework

Date: 25 September 2020

Extract:

1. In light of recent attempts by foreign states to intervene in elections in liberal Western democratic nations, the New Zealand Government is undertaking mitigation activity to ensure that a free and fair General Election is delivered in 2020. Accordingly, it is critical that the national security system's efforts are coordinated to ensure that the risk of foreign interference and cyber security threats are effectively responded to. The risks could manifest as a threat to the electoral process itself, a wider influence campaign or a 'hack and leak' scenario.

Risks

7. The Electoral Commission is responsible for developing and maintaining the General Election Risk Register (Profile). The risks of most significance to security agencies relate to:

- Foreign interference;
- Malicious cyber activity;
- Misinformation and disinformation;
- Unlawful and violent protest; and
- Terrorism.

9.The New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) is responsible for the following:

- Collecting, analysing and assessing intelligence about foreign interference activities in New Zealand, with a particular focus on understanding the activities and motivations of foreign state actors operating in, or seeking to influence, New Zealand institutions, processes and individuals.

Title of Document: HRB Brief: General Election

Date: 2 July 2020

Extract:

Opening

- a. I would just like to introduce this item by saying that NZ' s security environment has shifted significantly since the last General Election in 2017. In the last 15 months we have experienced a terrorist attack, a volcanic eruption and pandemic. On top of this has been Russian interference in the 2016 US Election – something that the EC is extremely concerned with.
- b. Accordingly, the Major Event Security Committee has been working closely with the Electoral Commission to ensure the threat of FI and terrorism in particular are being mitigated. Our support to Elections is likely to be enduring into the future.
- c. Despite the aforementioned focus, the EC are aware that the most likely disruptions/events happen in the all-hazards space and accordingly are seeking HRB agencies support Readiness
- d. The EC has conducted a number of Desk-top exercises covering:
 - (a) FI
 - (b) Cyber attacks
 - (c) Misinformation/disinformation
 - (d) Natural disasters
 - (e) A resurgence of COVID-19

Conclusion

- e. In conclusion, Russian interference in the 2016 US Elections has been the stimulus for the EC to pay greater attention to the FI risk in particular and all-hazards risks in general. We can anticipate that this will be an enduring part of the Elections landscape into the future.

Title of Document: Memo: Invitation to attend a meeting of Chief Executives to discuss risk and security issues should they occur over the election period

Date: 12 June 2020

Copy of this memo is included at the end of this document. Some information has been withheld under section 6(a) of the Act as marked.

Title of Document: ODESC SIB 2020-03-11 Item 2C General Election (MESC)

Date: 3 March 2020

Extract:

9. Of the 24 risks in the Risk Profile, six are the direct responsibility of the security agencies to mitigate. The risks are:
 - (a) misinformation/disinformation - GCSB/NZSIS (if state interference is involved)
 - (b) State interference - GCSB/NZSIS
10. A review of security agency activity illustrated that agencies are well advanced in terms of either their planning to reduce risk or respond. Significant risk reduction activity to date includes:
 - (a) briefing key stakeholders of foreign interference

Some additional information in this document withheld in full under section 6(a).

Title of Document: 2020-02-12 SIB Item 2B Discussion Paper and Appendix

Date: 4 February 2020

Extract:

“General Election 2020, which the Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission has already noted is likely to be one of New Zealand’s most complex general elections to date; with the risk of foreign interference and unwelcome involvement from foreign non-state actors before and during the election;” AND
“connecting the Electoral Commission with the Major Events and Security Committee (MESC) to manage risks associated with General Election 2020”.

Title of Document: 2020-03-11 SIB Item 3B Paper - Responsibility for mis/disinformation

Date: 6 March 2020

Extract:

12. A draft risk assessment of the 2020 general election has identified misinformation and disinformation as a critical risk. This rating of ‘critical’ does not take account of the various mitigations that are or will be in place during the election.
13. While we anticipate foreign interference in New Zealand politics in the lead-up to the general election, we do not consider there to be a significant risk of state-back disinformation activity targeting the election. By contrast, there are several reasons that non-state actors may have an interest in influencing New Zealand’s information sphere, including through spreading disinformation. This includes:
 - (a) The subjects of the referendums (euthanasia and cannabis).
 - (b) Far right/white nationalist or other issue-motivated groups with an interest in New Zealand politics because of the terrorist attack on Christchurch mosques and the semi-automatic weapon ban.
14. The Electoral Commission, supported by several agencies, is working to ensure there is an adequate range of measures to manage disinformation in the 2020 election.

Some additional information in this document withheld in full under section 6(a).

Title of Document: PM Brief Managing
Date: 12 June 2020

Extract:

Managing election issues.

- f. Agencies have developed protocols for how they will work together to manage security issues relating to the Election.
- g. The protocols aim to provide transparency, at a high level, about how agencies will act in the event of foreign interference in the election.
- h. The protocols do not alter the roles or obligations of agencies. This includes recognising the statutory roles of the Electoral Commission and other agencies, the obligation on all public servants and particularly the intelligence agencies to be politically-neutral, the no surprises policy, etc.
- i. NZSIS has a role to collect information on foreign interference in New Zealand, including during an election period. GCSB monitors for cyber-security risks. Other agencies will share information if they become aware of a foreign interference or cyber-security threat to the election.
- j. Agencies will follow established escalation processes as much as possible. Not all activity will require action. For example, one Russian actor tweeting about New Zealand politics might not justify action.
- k. Where the agencies consider that an emerging risk or event amounts to a possible disruption to the general election process, the National Security System will be activated. The National Security system provides for strategic governance and coordination of activity as required.
- l. The protocols state that the intelligence agencies may need to engage with Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition, and affected entities that could include political parties and candidates.
- m. The Electoral Commissioner is the spokesperson for issues relating to the election. Intelligence agencies will generally avoid making any public comment on security threats to the election; any public disclosure of a foreign interference or cyber threat would be discussed by ODESC.
- n. In the specific case of misinformation and disinformation, agencies will work together to ensure the right agency handles the issue. This could be:
 - o The Electoral Commission, for misinformation about the conduct of the election;

Some additional information in this document withheld in full under section 6(a).

Part 3 – Meetings

Please list any meetings (the individuals and organisations involved, the date of the meeting, whether it was conducted at the request of DPMC) between employees of DPMC and external public servants or politicians where concerns, warnings, information or analysis relating to interference by foreign state or non-state actors in the 2020 New Zealand general election were raised.

Listed below is information about meetings attended by DPMC officials where documentation suggests that state interference in the 2020 general election was discussed. Relevant meetings are listed below together with extracts of any documentation for the meeting generated by DPMC, for instance Minutes of the meeting.

Major Events Security Committee meetings

The Major Events Security Committee meets monthly. The General Election was classed as a major event to ensure appropriate all of government support for the event from a security perspective. Risk and threat assessments were carried out for a range of security threats including foreign interference. Any specific reference to the prospect or reality derives from other agencies' assessments.

Meeting: Major Events Security Committee
Date: 19 June 2019
Requested: Scheduled
Participants: DPMC (1), NZDF (1), CTAG (1), NZSIS (1), GCSB (1), MFAT (2), Police (2), MBIE (1), MCH (3), Electoral Commission (1)

Relevant extract from the Minutes:

General Election

1. s9(2)(g)(i)



Accordingly, the EC wanted to engage early with security agencies to ensure that they had robust risk mitigations in place before the 2020 General Election. The EC said that it is critical that the NZ public has confidence in the electoral system and that any perception that this was not the case had the potential to undermine our democratic process.

2. Risks. The EC identified the following potential risks:
 - Foreign interference
 - Public safety and security
 - A nationally significant event
 - The perception that the EC isn't neutral
3. The EC has been in close contact with their Australian counterpart which has been sharing information with them about their experiences from Australia's recent general election. It is the EC's intent to conduct a fact finding trip to Australia this year and thought it would be useful for other agencies to join them.
4. DPMC outlined the process for developing a security arrangement in support of the 2020 General Election;
 - Assessments by CTAG and NAB
 - Development of a risk register by MCH
 - Production of a strategic Security Framework by DPMC
5. The process would be underpinned by a governance structure to ensure oversight of risks and a security working group led by EC but support by risk mitigation agencies.
6. In general discussion it was agreed that the assessments should be produced by the final quarter of 2019 (Oct-Dec) and that a security working group would be established about the same time however this would be confirmed by EC.
7. DPMC and the EC would work together to design the process.

Meeting: Major Events Security Committee
Date: 16 October 2019
Requested: Scheduled
Participants: DPMC (4), CTAG (3), GCSB (1), MFAT (1), Police (3), NZDF (1), NZTE

Relevant extract from the Minutes:

1. s6(a) [REDACTED] joined the meeting for this item. They provided a classified overview of the preliminary assessment, with a final version expected to be produced by mid-November.
2. s6(a) also provided some key points:
 - There has been heightened interest in foreign interference since the 2016 US election.
 - The NZ election will likely occur around the same time as the US election, with attending implications.
 - There are a number of referenda that could take place that could serve as a lightning rod
 - There is a need to ensure appropriate physical security at polling places

Meeting: Major Events Security Committee

Date: 15 July 2020


Requested: Scheduled

Participants: DPMC (5), CTAG (1), Electoral Commission (1), GCSB (1), MBIE (2), MFAT (1), NCSC (2), NZDF (1), NZSIS (2), Police (3)

Relevant extract from the Minutes:

4. NZSIS provided an overview of their foreign interference assessment, which was published on 26 June 2020. noting this is under constant review.

s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)



7. Action: NCSC to follow-up on distribution, ensuring agencies' Chief Security Officers received this assessment. Police suggested consideration around a metric or advice for agencies to provide a baseline for any wrap-up or post-activity report.

Meeting: Major Events Security Committee
Date: 16 September 2020
Requested: Scheduled
Participants: DPMC (2), Electoral Commission (1), CTAG (1), GCSB (1), MBIE (2), MFAT (1), NCSC (1), NZSIS (2), Police (3)

Relevant extract from the Minutes:

13. The Chair provided an overview of the draft Strategic Security Framework:
- This is heavily focused on the threat of foreign interference and cyber. However, future frameworks will take an all hazards, all risks approach, including natural hazards.

Major Events Security Committee – General Election Specific

Meeting: Major Events Security Committee – General Election Specific
Date: 29 January 2020
Requested: Recommended
Participants: DPMC, Electoral Commission, CTAG, GCSB, MFAT, NCSC, NZDF, NZSIS, Police.

Meeting: Major Events Security Committee – General Election Specific
Date: 24 February 2020
Requested: Recommended
Participants: DPMC (5), Electoral Commission (2), CTAG (1), GCSB (1), MFAT (2), NZDF (1), NZSIS (3), Police (2)

Relevant extract from the Minutes withheld in full under section 6(a) of the Act.

Security Intelligence Board

In the lead up to the Elections, the General Election was a regular agenda item for the Security and Intelligence Board. While foreign interference itself was not explicitly mentioned, it was considered as part of the comprehensive assessment and arrangements.

Meeting: Security Intelligence Board
Date: 9 October 2019
Requested: Scheduled
Participants: DPMC, GCSB, MBIE, MoD, MFAT, Customs, NZDF, Police, NZSIS, Electoral Commission, MoJ.

Meeting: Security Intelligence Board
Date: 11 March 2020
Requested: Scheduled
Participants: DPMC, GCSB, MBIE, MoD, MFAT, Customs, NZDF, Police, NZSIS, DIA, EC, MoJ.

Meeting: Security Intelligence Board
Date: 27 May 2020
Requested: Scheduled
Participants: DPMC, GCSB, MBIE, MoD, MFAT, Customs, NZDF, Police, NZSIS, Crown Law, DIA, EC, MoJ, MSD, SSC.

Meeting: Security Intelligence Board
Date: 8 July 2020
Requested: Scheduled
Participants: DPMC, GCSB, MBIE, MoD, MFAT, Customs, NZDF, Police, NZSIS, Electoral Commission, MoJ, Crown Law, DIA, MoJ, MPI, MoT, SSC.

Meeting: Security Intelligence Board
Date: 9 August 2020
Requested: Scheduled
Participants: DPMC, GCSB, MBIE, MoD, MFAT, Customs, NZDF, Police, NZSIS.

Relevant extract from the Minutes has been withheld in full under section 6(a) of the Act.

Risk and Security Working Group

These meetings were organised by the Electoral Commission. The working group considered a range of risks including foreign interference and developed risk assessments for these.

Meeting: Risk and Security Working Group
Date: 12 December 2019
Requested: Invited
Invitees: Electoral Commission, NEMA, NCSC, MoJ, Police, DPMC, NZSIS.

Meeting: Risk and Security Working Group
Date: 4 February 2020
Requested: Invited
Invitees: Electoral Commission, NCSC, MoJ, Police, DPMC, NZSIS.

Meeting: Risk and Security Working Group
Date: 18 February 2020
Requested: Invited
Invitees: Electoral Commission, NEMA, NCSC, MoJ, Police, DPMC, NZSIS.

Meeting: Risk and Security Working Group
Date: 4 March 2020
Requested: Invited
Invitees: Electoral Commission, DIA, MoH, Police, MoJ, NCSC, NEMA, MFAT, NZSIS, MCH, NZTA, DPMC, NZSIS.

Meeting: Risk and Security Working Group
Date: 1 April 2020
Requested: Invited
Invitees: Electoral Commission, DIA, MoH, Police, NCSC, NEMA, MFAT, NZSIS, DPMC, MCH, NZTA.

Meeting: Risk and Security Working Group
Date: 21 May 2020
Requested: Invited
Invitees: Electoral Commission, DIA, MoH, Police, NCSC, NEMA, MFAT, NZSIS, DPMC, MCH, NZTA.

Meeting: Risk and Security Working Group

Date: 3 June 2020
Requested: Invited
Invitees: Electoral Commission, DIA, MoH, Police, NCSC, NEMA, MFAT, NZSIS, DPMC, MCH, NZTA.

Meeting: Risk and Security Working Group
Date: 24 June 2020
Requested: Invited
Invitees: Electoral Commission, DIA, MoH, Police, NCSC, NEMA, MFAT, NZSIS, DPMC, MCH, NZTA.

Meeting: Risk and Security Working Group
Date: 16 July 2020
Requested: Invited
Invitees: Electoral Commission, DIA, MoH, Police, NCSC, NEMA, MFAT, NZSIS, DPMC, MCH, NZTA.

Meeting: Risk and Security Working Group
Date: 9 September 2020
Requested: Invited
Invitees: Electoral Commission, MoJ, NZTA, MCH, NZSIS, NCSC, Police, Health, MFAT, NEMA, MPI, FENZ.

Electoral Commission / Intelligence Community catch-up meeting

Meeting: Electoral Commission / Intelligence Community Catch-Up
Date: 28 May 2020
Requested: Organised
Attendees: NZSIS, GCSB, NCSC, DPMC, Electoral Commission.

Coordination meeting

Meeting: Coordination meeting
Date: 10 June 2020
Requested: Organised
Attendees: Intelligence Community, DPMC.

General Election 2020 table top exercise with Intelligence Community

Meeting: General Election 2020 Intelligence Community meeting
Date: 22 June 2020
Requested: Organised
Attendees: DPMC, Electoral Commission, Intelligence Community.

General Election 2020 Senior Officials' Committee

DPMC was invited to attend these working group meetings which were organised by the Electoral Commission. DPMC does not hold a complete record of meetings held, including a record of attendees.

Meetings: General Election 2020 Senior Officials' Committee meeting

Dates: 20 February 2020, 11 June 2020, 10 September 2020.
Requested: Invited

Meetings on Principles and Protocols for foreign interference and cyber security threats to the 2020 General Election

These were a series of meetings of officials to discuss the development of principles and protocols for GCSB and NZSIS with managing foreign interference and cyber security threats to the 2020 General Election

Meeting: Officials' principles and protocols meeting
Date: 15 October 2019
Attendees: DPMC, MoJ.

Meeting: Officials' principles and protocols meeting
Date: 29 October 2019
Attendees: DPMC, MoJ.

Meeting: Officials' principles and protocols meeting
Date: 13 December 2019
Attendees: DPMC, MoJ, NZSIS, GCSB.

Meeting: Officials' principles and protocols meeting
Date: 7 January 2020
Attendees: DPMC, NZSIS, GCSB.

Meeting: Officials' principles and protocols meeting
Date: 16 January 2020
Attendees: DPMC, NZSIS, GCSB.

Meeting: Officials' principles and protocols meeting
Date: 24 January 2020
Attendees: DPMC, NZSIS, GCSB.

Meeting: Officials' principles and protocols meeting
Date: 19 February 2020
Attendees: DPMC, NZSIS, GCSB.

Meeting: Officials' principles and protocols meeting
Date: 5 May 2020
Attendees: DPMC, GCSB, NZSIS.

Meeting: Officials' principles and protocols meeting
Date: 15 May 2020
Attendees: DPMC, GCSB, NZSIS.

Meeting: Officials' principles and protocols meeting
Date: 22 May 2020
Attendees: DPMC, GCSB, NZSIS.

Meeting: Officials' principles and protocols meeting
Date: 10 June 2020
Attendees: DPMC, GCSB, NZSIS.

Chief Executive meeting on protocols

Meeting: Chief Executive meeting on protocols
Date: 19 June 2020
Attendees: DPMC, Electoral Commission, NZSIS, GCSB, MFAT, MoJ.

Record of meeting withheld in full under section 6(a) of the Act.

Officials' meeting on protocols

Meeting: Officials' meeting on protocols
Date: 12 September 2019
Requested: Invited
Attendees: MoJ, DPMC, Electoral Commission, SSC.

NZ approach to election interference meeting

Meeting: NZ approach to election interference meeting
Date: 12 November 2019
Requested: Organised
Attendees: DPMC, Electoral Commission, MFAT, s6(a)



Memo: Invitation to attend a meeting of Chief Executives to discuss risk and security issues should they occur over the election period

Date: 12 June 2020

To: Brook Barrington, Chief Executive

Copy to: Tony Lynch, Deputy Chief Executive, National Security Group

From: National Security Policy Directorate

1. The Chief Electoral Officer has invited you to attend a meeting of Chief Executives in the week of 15 June to discuss how you can work collectively to consider important risk and security issues should they occur over the election period. This note provides relevant background ahead of this meeting, should you choose to attend.

Election protocols

2. The Electoral Commission has, with a core group of agencies including DPMC, developed a suite of draft protocols for the 2020 General Election and the referendums (the General Election process). The protocols clarify the relationship between the Electoral Commission and government agencies by setting out respective roles and responsibilities for the delivery of, and support to, the General Election process.
3. The protocols include:
 - a. *Introduction to inter-agency protocols for New Zealand's 2020 General Election;*
 - b. *Protocol on the management and response to election disruptions;*
 - c. *Protocol on communications related to the 2020 General Election process; and*
 - d. *Principles and Protocols for GCSB and NZSIS in managing foreign interference and cyber security threats to the 2020 General Election.*

Protocol for managing foreign interference and cyber security threats

4. In close consultation with GCSB and NZSIS, DPMC has led the revision of the protocol *Principles and Protocols for GCSB and NZSIS in managing foreign interference and cyber security threats to the 2020 General Election*. A similar document was produced for the General Election 2017 and published on DPMC's website.

5. The revised document sets out principles and protocols to support GCSB and NZSIS in performing their mandated functions during the election period in relation to managing foreign interference and cyber security threats to the General Election process.

s6(a)



8. The Electoral Commission has offered to host this meeting with support from officials from the GCSB, NZSIS and DPMC. In addition to DPMC, we understand the Chief Electoral Officer has extended this meeting invitation to Chief Executives from the Ministry of Justice, Crown Law, the State Services Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

s6(a)



Sign off and publication of the election protocols

10. We understand that the Chief Executives of the agencies that have led the development of each protocol will sign off on the documents. As Chief Executive, DPMC, you will be asked to approve each of the documents once they are ready to be finalised.
11. A process is being determined through which Ministers will be made aware of the documents. It is then proposed that the final documents will be released for use to officials, and for public information on an appropriate agency website.