



8 November 2022



Ref: OIA-2022/23-0240

Dear 

Official Information Act request for material related to The Disinformation Project and COVID-19 Interagency Disinformation Group

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 17 October 2022. You requested:

Thank you for your response. I would like to make a follow up request for the following:

ONE: In response to an OIA requested I submitted to DPMC earlier this year (Ref: OIA-2021/22-1563), I was told:

“In the last month, DPMC contracted The Disinformation Project... for two landscape reports and one deep dive report on a topic of choice.”

Quote from this response letter:

<https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ffyi.org.nz%2Frequest%2F20099%2Fresponse%2F76770%2Fattach%2F4%2F4600004%25201%2520OIA%2520202122%25201563%2520Harold.pdf&data=05%7C01%7Cinformation%40dpmc.govt.nz%7C3dd7f88dddb0467fe5ab08daafab2c0c%7Ceea6053309ef4b7a94060f38551cc613%7C0%7C0%7C638015450098530355%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000%7C%7C&sdata=zZXGwe2N6f3sKzBApIGHXJImF9Dm1CrHkon8Mq5z3rY%3D&reserved=0>

If this “deep dive report on a topic of choice” has been completed, I would like to request a copy of it.

TWO: I would like to request copies of the agenda and minutes (if any) for all meetings of the COVID 19 interagency disinformation and online harms group held since 28 July 2022.

THREE: I would like to request a copy of the current COVID 19 interagency disinformation and online harms group action log. For clarity, I mean the action log released to me in your 5 October response, here (pages 1 to 6):

<https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ffyi.org.nz%2Frequest%2F19609%2Fresponse%2F78142%2Fattach%2F5%2FRelease%2520Document%25205%252010%252022.pdf&data=05%7C01%7Cinformation%40dpmc.govt.nz%7C3dd7f88dddb0467fe5ab08daafab2c0c%7Ceea6053309ef4b7a94060f38551cc613%7C0%7C0%7C638015450098530355%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000%7C%7C>

C%7C&sdata=ZPTM1ab6cdyavlyJjEKZVqAhp%2BXezZJJ290j%2FiOVZMw%3D&reserved=0

But the action log as it currently stands, including closed and completed action points.

FOUR: On page 3 of the above document a “draft paper on the proposal for government response to misinformation” is referred to (action point 16):

“21-October-2021: Circulate to attendees draft paper on the proposal for government response to misinformation”

I would like to request a copy of the “draft paper” referred to here.

FIVE: On page 7 of the above document a “regular update to the system on false information key themes, media updates and tools available” is referred to, scheduled to be implemented by DPMC COVID-19 Group Comms Team beginning mid-March 2022. If these “regular updates” were produced, I would like to request the dates that they were issued.

SIX: On page 8 of the above document, “comms planning on the impacts of Russian disinformation given the Ukraine situation” by DPMC National Security Group is referred to. I would like to request a copy of this Russian disinformation-related “comms planning”. “

I have decided under section 15A of the Act to extend the time limits for deciding on your request by an additional 25 working days. Consequently, the extended due date for your response will be Tuesday, 20 December 2022.

The extension is required because of the consultations needed to make a decision on your request. Despite the extension, we are able to respond to parts Two and Three of your request (bolded) which I will do so in turn and will endeavour to respond to the remainder of your request as soon as possible.

TWO: I would like to request copies of the agenda and minutes (if any) for all meetings of the COVID 19 interagency disinformation and online harms group held since 28 July 2022.

I can confirm that since 28 July 2022 there have been no further minutes or agendas produced by the COVID-19 interagency disinformation and online harms group. Your request is therefore declined under section 18(e), as the documents alleged to contain the information requested do not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate them, cannot be found.

THREE: I would like to request a copy of the current COVID 19 interagency disinformation and online harms group action log. For clarity, I mean the action log released to me in your 5 October response

I can confirm that the COVID 19 interagency disinformation and online harms group action log provided to you in our response dated 5 October 2022 is the most up to date version and no further updates / iterations have been produced. I am therefore declining your request under 18(e), as the updated document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet'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