



Headquarters
New Zealand Defence Force
Defence House
Private Bag 39997
Wellington Mail Centre
Lower Hutt 5045
New Zealand

OIA-2024-4906

4 April 2024

[REDACTED]@rnz.co.nz

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 24 January 2024 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), the following information:

Any and all correspondence, documents and communications about New Zealand's response to the Houthi's between November 2023 and 24th Jan 2024.

This could include but is not limited to briefings, meeting minutes, texts and proposed plans, and expert advice, between NZDF and the Minister of Defence, Minister of Foreign Affairs and MFAT.

Any and all correspondence, documents and communications about New Zealand's decision to send NZDF personnel to the Middle East in response to the Houthi's attacks. This could include but is not limited to briefings, meeting minutes, texts and proposed plans, expert advice, between NZDF and the Minister of Defence, Minister of Foreign Affairs and MFAT.

How many people did the government/NZDF consult with before deciding to send personnel to the Middle East in response to the Houthi's. If applicable, please name the people.

Recognising the high degree of public interest in this subject, information on the recent decision to deploy New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel to the Red Sea region is available online¹.

A Cabinet paper and associated minute providing the substantive advice to Ministers on the deployment is available on the Ministry of Defence website at the following location:
<https://defence.govt.nz/publications/>.

Emails relevant to your request are at Enclosure 1. Where indicated, information is withheld in accordance with section 6(a) of the OIA so as not to prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand. Other information has been withheld in accordance with section 6(b)(i) so as to not prejudice the entrusting of information to New Zealand on a basis of confidence by another country; and

¹ <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

in accordance with section 9(2)(g)(i) to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the provision of free and frank expression of opinion. Contact and personal information is withheld in accordance with sections 9(2)(a), 9(2)(g)(ii), and 9(2)(k) to protect individuals' privacy, safety from harassment, and to avoid the the malicious or inappropriate use of staff information, such as phishing, scams or unsolicited advertising.

With regard to part 3 of your request, a number of agencies were consulted during the course of developing advice to Cabinet on the Red Sea deployment. These agencies were: the Ministry of Defence; the NZDF; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade; the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet; the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service; the Government Communications Security Bureau; and, the Treasury.

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

Enclosure:

1. Emails

Archive Manager

Export

From: Evans, Rhys, WGCDR

Sent: Thu, 14 Dec 2023 21:11:24 GMT

To: s.9(2)(a)

CC: s.6(a); s.6(a) RNZN

Subject: SEEMAIL: Virtual Defence Ministerial with US

s.9(2)(a)

As discussed with ACSCE this morning the Minister has been invited to attend a virtual Defence Ministerial at 1900 on the 19th of December (NZDT). The multilateral meeting will be hosted by the U.S. Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin and will focus on security in the Red Sea. Washington has requested a response as soon as possible, given the timing of the meeting.

s.6(a)

The virtual meeting will take place in Defence House and the Minister will be accompanied by CDF and support staff as required. I have included some supporting information below. We (SCE and MOD) will provide additional resources and briefing material should the Minister decide to attend.

Can you please advise whether the Minister wishes to participate? If not, we will ensure appropriate Defence representation.

Potential Approval Pathways

- Operation Prosperity Guardian is a CMF CTF153 operation, and falls under the existing Op PUKEKO mandate. If we were to contribute to a CMF/CTF153 headquarters role then up the deployment of up to six personnel could be approved by CDF. If it were not a HQ role (but still aligned with NZ policy settings) then MWPTA (PM, MFA, MinDef) would be required. If it were not aligned with NZ policy settings (see two key considerations below) then we'd need to go back to Cabinet.

Policy considerations

- This operation has a strong anti-Houthi focus, we will be in the process of determining with MFAT what our stance on the Houthi Rebels is (currently unclear) and if any activity against them could be considered/perceived as state facing (given CMF's mandate is strictly non-state facing). RFI has been lodged with MFAT.

s.6(a)

Operational considerations

- The request asks for personnel, Air and Naval contributions, HQJFNZ are only considering the former (personnel)

Ngā Mihi | Kind Regards,


WGCDR Rhys Evans, DSD (he, him)

Acting Director Strategic Engagements

Strategic Commitments and Engagement Branch

Te Ope Kātua o Aotearoa | New Zealand Defence Force

s.9(2)(k)

 ATT03945.jpg

Archive Manager

Export

From: Shaw, Andrew, BRIG Sent: Tue, 02 Jan 2024 07:40:48 GMT
 To: s.9(2)(a); Kevin Short
 CC: Woods, Andy, AIRCDRE; TAYLOR, Kevin; Berry, Greer; Davies, Tony, AVM; s.6(a)
RNZN
 Subject: RE: Unclassified FW: Request for support of US statement against Houthis attacks
 Ack and thanks s.9(2) We are updating the brief. Please stay in lock-step with s.9(2)(a)
 ()

From: s.9(2)(a) s.9(2)(a)
 Date: Tuesday, 02 Jan 2024 at 8:39 PM
 To: Shaw, Andrew, BRIG <s.9(2)(k)>, Kevin Short s.9(2)(a)
 Cc: Woods, Andy, AIRCDRE s.9(2)(k), Taylor, Kevin s.9(2)(a), Berry, Greer
s.9(2)(a), Davies, Tony, AVM s.9(2)(k)
 Subject: Re: Unclassified FW: Request for support of US statement against Houthis attacks

Ack Sir.

s.9(2)(a) has already reached out to the office re the joint statement.

Further, the Minister has the brief that was prepared before Christmas regarding the potential timelines for NZDF options.

s.9(2)(a)**NZDF Private Secretary | Office of 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

s.9(2)(a)

Email: s.9(2)(a) Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
 Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

From: Shaw, Andrew, BRIG <ANDREW.SHAW@NZDF.mil.nz>
 Authorised by Hon Judith Collins MP, Parliament Buildings, Wellington
 Sent: Tuesday, January 2, 2024 7:10:06 PM
 To: Kevin Short <s.9(2)(a)>
 Cc: Woods, Andy, AIRCDRE s.9(2)(k), Taylor, s.9(2)(a); Berry, Greer
s.9(2)(k), Davies, Tony, AVM <s.9(2)(k)>
 Subject: Unclassified FW: Request for support of US statement against Houthis attacks

Sir,

Below message is to SECDEF and proposes NZ support to the international statement, US led, condemning Houthis action in the RED SEA.

This will be included in your read ahead prior to your call with CJCS and is sent FYSA.

Of note, I see on unclassified open source, reports of an Iranian warship entering the Red Sea. s.9(2)(g)(i)

We continue to track closely.

s.9(2)(a) please work closely with s.9(2) and ensure MINDEF is aware.
 ()

Respectfully

Andy

From: Pearce, Kathleen <s.9(2)(a)>
Date: Tuesday, 02 Jan 2024 at 6:49 PM
To: Bridgman, Andrew <s.9(2)(a)>
Cc: Shaw, Andrew, BRIG <s.9(2)(k)> Schmidt, Richard <s.9(2)(a)>

Subject: Request for support of US statement against Houthis attacks

Hi Andrew,

Further to my text – grateful any thoughts from you tonight, although Ill check in again in the morning.

(Andy for feeding up through NZDF channels as required)

The US has asked for quick turnaround indications of support for a further statement against Houthi attacks. It has been edited following our (and presumably other partner) feedback. See text below. Few points:

s.6(b)(i), s.6(a)

- I have given s.9(2) a heads up to ask MINDEF's appetite to review a statement tomorrow morning and am liaising with MFAT on what advice they put up to OMFA.

EDITED DRAFT (see highlighted text):

s.6(b)(i), s.6(a)

[END DRAFT]

**Kathleen Pearce**

Head International Branch

International Branch, Policy and Planning Division

Defence House, 34 Bowen Street, PO Box 12703, Wellington 6144, New Zealand

s.9(2)(a)nz www.defence.govt.nz

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Archive Manager

Export

From: s.9(2)(a)

Sent: Sun, 07 Jan 2024 20:15:06 GMT

To: s.9(2)(a)

Subject: RE: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

All good. s.9(2)(a)

From: s.9(2)(a) s.9(2)(a)**Date:** Monday, 08 Jan 2024 at 9:11 AM**To:** s.6(a) <s.9(2)(k)>**Subject:** Re: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

No update yet. We are just juggling another issue.

Will get something to you shortly. I actually think/feel like this will be next week.

s.9(2)(a)**NZDF Private Secretary | Office of 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

s.9(2)(a)Email: s.9(2)(a) | Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

From: s.6(a)*Authorised by Hon Judith Collins MP, Parliament Buildings, Wellington***Sent:** Monday, January 8, 2024 8:58:07 AM**To:** s.9(2)(a) s.9(2)(a)**Subject:** RE: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

*** [SEEMAIL] This message may contain classified information ***

Happy Monday.

Any update? I can get people started on preparing things.

Good to clarify the clearances too. Will need some checks done to get them in for the first time. This may not be simple if people aren't around or up and running yet.

As mentioned, the later in the week the better.

s.9(2)(a), s.6(a)

From: s.9(2)(a) s.9(2)(a)
Date: Sunday, 07 Jan 2024 at 8:56 AM
To: s.9(2)(a), s.9(2)(k)
Subject: Re: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

Let me check with the office tomorrow. I think we'll have a clearer picture then given the amount of 'traffic' on this topic lately.

Plus, I can get a clearer idea of where/what security clearances are in place for the Ministers staff. Key one is s.9(2)(a) her SPC. I think it's critical s.9(2)(a) is there.

More to follow but appreciate the email reply while your on leave.

s.9(2)(a)

NZDF Private Secretary | Office of 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

s.9(2)(k)

Email: s.9(2)(a) Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

From: s.9(2)(a) s.9(2)(k)
Authorised by from [redacted] Parliament Buildings, Wellington
Sent: Saturday, January 6, 2024 3:39:00 PM
To: s.9(2)(a) s.9(2)(a)
Subject: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

*** [SEEMAIL] This message may contain classified information ***

s.9(2)(a)

Thanks for heads-up. Quick question.
What timeframe (day/date) are the current options for a brief? Pers are still on leave, but available as required.

s.9(2)(a)

From: s.9(2)(a) s.9(2)(a)
Date: Saturday, 06 Jan 2024 at 1:21 PM
To: s.9(2)(a) s.9(2)(k)
Subject: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

Helps if I add you in mate...

s.9(2)(a)**NZDF Private Secretary | Office of 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

s.9(2)(k)

Email **s.9(2)(a)** | Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
 Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

From: **s.9(2)(a)** <**s.9(2)(a)**>
Authorised by Hon Judith Collins MP, Parliament Buildings, Wellington
 Sent: Saturday, January 6, 2024 11:23:13 AM
 To: Woods, Andy, AIRCDRE <**s.9(2)(a)**, **s.9(2)(k)**>; Beck, Darren <**s.9(2)(a)**>
 Cc: Ministerial Services <ministerialservices@nzdf.mil.nz>; **s.9(2)(a)**
 Subject: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

Sir, Darren

FYI. I would imagine these discussions will gather momentum next week.

s.9(2)(a)

On Monday, can I please discuss the preparation of a classified brief on this topic/operational area for the Minister. We discussed it early last month but given developments I think the timing is now good to ensure the Minister has good background.

s.9(2)(a)**NZDF Private Secretary | Office of 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

s.9(2)(k)

Email: **s.9(2)(a)** | Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
 Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

From: **s.9(2)(a)** <**s.9(2)(a)**>
Authorised by Hon Judith Collins MP, Parliament Buildings, Wellington
 Sent: Saturday, January 6, 2024 9:57:37 AM
 To: **s.9(2)(a)** <**s.9(2)(a)**>
 Subject: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

FYI too

s.9(2)(a)**Private Secretary (Defence) | Office of Hon Judith Collins KC MP**

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

s.9(2)(a)
Email: [redacted] Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

Authorised by Hon Judith Collins KC MP, Parliament Buildings, Wellington

SENT FROM A MOBILE DEVICE

From: s.9(2)(a)
Sent: Saturday, January 6, 2024 9:52:52 AM
To: s.9(2)(a)
Pearce, Kathleen
Cc: s.9(2)(a) ; s.9(2)(g)(ii)
s.9(2)(g)(ii) ; s.9(2)(a)
s.9(2)(a) ; s.9(2)(g)(ii)
Subject: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

Hi s.9(2)(a) Kathleen,

s.6(a), s.9(2)(g)(i)

[Large redacted block]

Cheers

s.9(2)(a)

[Redacted signature]


[Seemail] [Restricted]

From: WASHINGTON <WSH@mfat.govt.nz>
Sent: Saturday, January 6, 2024 7:48 AM
To: s.9(2)(g)(ii) ; FM.Defence (Seemail)
s.9(2)(k)
Cc: s.9(2)(g)(ii)

[Large redacted block]

Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

s.6(a), s.6(b)(i)



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Export

From: Short, Kevin, AM

Sent: Thu, 11 Jan 2024 19:14:55 GMT

To: s.9(2)(a)

Subject: RE: Note for Ministers: recommendation to support US-led statement following military action to protect Red Sea shipping [SEEMAIL][RESTRICTED]

Jason

Can you send this again but with attachments please (ie the proposed US statement).

Air Marshal Kevin Short, AO (he/him)

Chief of Defence Force

NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE

www.nzdf.mil.nz

 cid:image007.jpg@01D78F55.BE9C1090

From: s.9(2)(a)

Sent: Thursday, 11 January 2024 9:42 p.m.

To: Short, Kevin, AM <s.9(2)(k)>

Cc: Woods, Andy, AIRCDRE <>

Subject: Fwd: Note for Ministers: recommendation to support US-led statement following military action to protect Red Sea shipping [SEEMAIL][RESTRICTED]

Sir,

As discussed.

Enjoy the rest of your evening.

s.9(2)(a)

NZDF Private Secretary | Office of 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

DDI: s.9(2)(a)

Email <> Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz

Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

Authorised by Hon Judith Collins MP, Parliament Buildings, Wellington

From: s.9(2)(a)

Sent: Thursday, January 11, 2024 9:33:11 PM

To: s.9(2)(a)

Cc: s.6(a)

Kathleen <s.9(2)(a)>

s.9(2)(a)

Taylor, Kevin <s.9(2)(k)>

Berry, Greer <s.9(2)(k)>

s.6(a)

s.6(a) s.9(2)(a)
 Bridgman, Andrew

Subject: RE: Note for Ministers: recommendation to support US-led statement following military action to protect Red Sea shipping [SEEMAIL][RESTRICTED]

SEEMAIL RESTRICTED

Good evening s.9(2)(a)

We just been advised that the Minister concurs with Minister Peters and agrees to having New Zealand sign on to the US-led **joint statement**. The Minister also agrees on a **standalone New Zealand press release**, but would like to sight the amended version before it is finalised. Grateful if you could advise MFAT accordingly.

Ngā mihi, s.9(2)(a)



s.9(2)(a)
 Private Secretary (Defence) | Office of Hon Judith Collins KC MP
 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
 s.9(2)(a)
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From: s.9(2)(a)
Sent: Thursday, 11 January 2024 6:45 PM
To: s.9(2)(a)
Cc: s.6(a) Schmidt, Richard <s.9(2)(a)> Pearce, Kathleen s.9(2)(a)
 Taylor, Kevin s.9(2)(k)
 Berry, Greer s.9(2)(k) ; s.6(a)
 s.6(a) ; s.9(2)(a)
 Bridgman, Andrew

Subject: FW: Note for Ministers: recommendation to support US-led statement following military action to protect Red Sea shipping [SEEMAIL][RESTRICTED]

*** [SEEMAIL] This message may contain classified information ***

Kia ora s.9(2)(a)

s.6(b)(i)

It is anticipated this statement would be released as soon as a US/UK strike on Houthi targets occurs.

MFAT has developed advice for Ministers to consider, in relation to **joining the draft statement** and/or **releasing a standalone NZ press statement** relating to any US/UK action. Defence contributed to and was consulted on this advice.

For simplicity, I am forwarding that advice to you – both attached and set out in MFAT’s email to its Minister’s office below.

Please let me know if you have any further questions; in due course welcome your advice on how the Minister would like to proceed.

Ngā mihi,

s.9(2)(a)



s.9(2)(a)

Director, Global and Deployments
International Branch, Policy and Planning Division
Defence House, 34 Bowen Street, PO Box 12703, Wellington 6144,
New Zealand

s.9(2)(a)

www.defence.govt.nz

From: s.9(2)(a)

Sent: Thursday, 11 January 2024 6:35 p.m.

To: ... s.9(2)(a)

Cc: ...

SEED, Chris (CEO s.9(2)(g)(ii))

Andrew, BRIG s.9(2)(a); Shaw,
Pearce, Kathleen

s.9(2)(a); s.9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: Note for Ministers: recommendation to support US-led statement following military action to protect Red Sea shipping

[SEEMAIL] [RESTRICTED]

Kia ora korua s.9(2)(a)

[Note that a copy of this note will be sent separately to the Office of the Minister of Defence by colleagues from MOD.]

Please find attached a Note on the s.6(b)(i) on the ongoing threat to commercial shipping in the Red Sea posed by the Houthis, and which makes the case for US and UK-led strikes against Houthi capability to launch these attacks.

A copy of the proposed US statement is attached.

Also attached is a draft press release for the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence that articulates New Zealand’s support. This would be for release shortly after the US-led statement (over which we may have no advance warning when it will be released).

For those reading on their devices, the text of the Note is copied below.

Informal Note — Options for Formal Statements on Houthi Actions in the Red Sea

Recommendation

1. That Ministers agree to join the attached US-led statement to be released following US and UK-led strikes against Houthi-controlled sites in Yemen tied to attacks on commercial shipping in the Red Sea;
2. That Ministers agree to issue a joint press release (Foreign Affairs and Defence) in support of the US-led statement that articulates New Zealand's position

s.6(a)

Background

- On 10 January, Houthi forces launched 18 drones and 3 missiles at commercial shipping vessels in the Red Sea. This serious incident follows over two-dozen previous attacks by Houthi forces, including another serious incident on 31 December when Houthi forces fired on US military assets responding to a request for assistance by the Singapore-flagged Maersk Hangzhou vessel, which was under threat of hijacking. In response, the US Navy sunk 3 Houthi vessels and killed 10 militants.
- New Zealand joined a US-led statement of 43 countries on 19 December and a further statement on 3 January condemning Houthi actions and calling on the group to immediately cease its attacks. This followed a United Nation Security Council statement on 1 December condemning the attacks.
- Further background is available in the Informal Note sent to Ministers' Offices yesterday.

Situation

s.6(b)(i)

- Houthi attacks on commercial shipping are clear breaches of international law.

s.6(b)(i)

- In addition, a United Nations Security Council Resolution was adopted this morning NZT. The resolution affirms that the exercise of navigational rights and freedoms by merchant and commercial vessels, in accordance with international law, must be respected, and takes note of the right of Member States, in accordance with international law, to defend their vessels from attacks, including those that undermine navigational rights and freedoms.

New Zealand interests

- Our assessment is that agreement to join the proposed US statement aligns with New Zealand interests outlined in yesterday's Informal Note. At a high level these are:
 - protecting the free flow of trade to and from New Zealand; and,
 - demonstrating our support for freedom of navigation, and of the international rules-based system.

s.6(b)(i)

- As yesterday's Informal Note outlined:

- Houthi actions jeopardise the free flow of trade through the Red Sea and Suez Canal. As a trading nation with high reliance on stable and predictable shipping lanes, restricting Houthi actions in the Red Sea aligns with New Zealand's interests in international commerce and maritime security. Some exporters in the primary sector have already reported lost orders due to the delay added by diverting around southern Africa. Transport and insurance costs have increased with anticipated implications for the competitiveness of New Zealand exports and the prices consumers will pay for imported goods.
- Although no data is available on New Zealand exports/imports specifically, the Suez Canal is an important shipping route for our goods trade with Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. The European region is a sizeable market for New Zealand's agriculture exports, (especially lamb, wine, butter, and fruit). For instance, 16% and 28% of New Zealand's meat and wine exports respectively went to Europe in the year ending September 2023. In addition, Algeria imported \$1.1bn of milk powder from New Zealand over the same period.
- New Zealand has a clear interest in the rules-based international order and freedom of navigation, which the Houthi threaten by illegally hijacking and targeting commercial ships and civilian crews. The Houthi have shown no respect for international law. **s.6(b)(i)**
- Some of New Zealand's key international partners are participating in the proposed military action, including the US and UK, which have deployed military platforms. Canada has agreed to contribute military planning personnel, and the Netherlands, Bahrain and Denmark are contributing in a non-operational capacity.

s.6(b)(i)

Legal considerations

s.9(2)(h)

Risks and implications

s.6(a)

s.6(a)



Middle East and Africa Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
11 January 2024

s.9(2)(a)



Divisional Manager
Middle East and Africa Division
New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade | Manatū Aorere

s.9(2)(a)



195 Lambton Quay, Private Bag 18901, Wellington 5045, New Zealand
www.mfat.govt.nz | www.safetravel.govt.nz



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Archive Manager

Export

From: s.6(a)
To: s.9(2)(a)
CC:

Sent: Mon, 15 Jan 2024 19:38:17 GMT

Subject: RE: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

Hi s.9(2)(a)

Yes – sounds good.

1030 to 1130 is out.

I'm meeting the ICC people this afternoon at 1400.

Cheers

P

From: s.9(2)(a)
Sent: Monday, 15 January 2024 10:11 p.m.
To: s.6(a)
Cc: s.9(2)(a)

Subject: Re: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

Hey s.6(a)

Apologies I'm only getting to this now. Mad day...
Happy to pop in tomorrow if that works?

s.9(2)(a)

NZDF Private Secretary | Office of 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

s.9(2)(a)

Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz

Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

Authorised by Hon Judith Collins MP, Parliament Buildings, Wellington

From: s.9(2)(a)
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 1:56:39 PM
To: s.9(2)(a)
Cc:

Subject: RE: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

*** [SEEMAIL] This message may contain classified information ***

Hi s.9(2)(a)

I'm meeting with Intelligence Customer Centre tomorrow to talk about what everyone's intention is with them disseminating reports/products going into the Beehive.

Good to have a chat with you about this.

Cheers

s.6(a)

From: s.9(2)(a)
Sent: Monday, 8 January 2024 10:07 p.m.
To: s.6(a)
Cc: s.9(2)(a)
Subject: Re: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHU ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

Monday is fine mate. Let's talk then.

s.9(2)(a)

NZDF Private Secretary | Office of 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

s.9(2)(a)

Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

Authorised by Hon Judith Collins MP, Parliament Buildings, Wellington

From: s.6(a)
Sent: Monday, January 8, 2024 5:03:43 PM
To: s.9(2)(a)
Cc:
Subject: RE: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHU ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

*** [SEEMAIL] This message may contain classified information ***

I'm currently in Tauranga. Can get s.9(2)(a) to look at some written reports for you tomorrow if you would like. But I'm back in the office on Monday if you want to sit down and go over all options/topics.

s.6(a)

From: s.9(2)(a)
Date: Monday, 08 Jan 2024 at 3:51 PM
To: s.6(a)
Cc: s.9(2)(a)
Subject: RE: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

Sounds like an excellent plan. I'll pop in next time I'm over in DH. Probably tomorrow if your around?

Re written reports – Minister is in and out of the office for most of Jan. However, I will raise this with the s.9(2)(a) and get her thoughts.



s.9(2)(a)
 NZDF Private Secretary | Office of Hon Judith Collins KC MP

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

s.9(2)(a) SEEMAIL
 Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
 Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

Authorised by Hon Judith Collins MP, Parliament Buildings, Wellington

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From: s.6(a)
Sent: Monday, 8 January 2024 3:39 PM
To: s.9(2)(a)
Cc:
Subject: RE: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

*** [SEEMAIL] This message may contain classified information ***

Thanks for the progress report. We have a number of topics that are in a similar priority for briefs. Maybe we can discuss the sequence as the office settles. And the clearances are sorted. Can also look to getting some written reports for the Minister to fill some gaps while we wait if that helps. s.6(a)

From: s.9(2)(a)
Date: Monday, 08 Jan 2024 at 1:18 PM
To: s.6(a)

Cc: s.9(2)(a)

Subject: RE: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

s.6(a)

Further to this, we can hold on this brief.

The office staff are at various places in requesting/processing their security clearances. The bureau is working on them with urgency as we speak, but there is no time frame on when they will be finished.

Therefore, can work be started on preparing a brief with the expectation that it be delivered as soon as the clearances are in place.

Are you happy with that approach?



s.9(2)(a)

NZDF Private Secretary | Office of Hon Judith Collins KC MP

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

s.9(2)(a)

SEEMAIL

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From: s.6(a)

Sent: Monday, 8 January 2024 9:15 AM

To: s.9(2)(a)

Subject: RE: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

*** [SEEMAIL] This message may contain classified information ***

All good. s.6(a)

From: s.9(2)(a)

Date: Monday, 08 Jan 2024 at 9:11 AM

To: s.6(a)

Subject: Re: SEEMAIL RE: Fwd: FORMAL MESSAGE: RED SEA/HOUTHİ ATTACKS: US REQUEST FOR NZ SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS, POTENTIAL LIMITED MILITARY ACTION

No update yet. We are just juggling another issue.

Will get something to you shortly. I actually think/feel like this will be next week.

s.9(2)(a)

NZDF Private Secretary | Office of 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

s.9(2)(a)

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Achive Manager

Export

From: s.6(a) [redacted] RNZN
 To: [redacted] s.9(2)(a)
 CC: Woods, Andy, AIRCDRE
 Subject: RE: Fwd: Comms plan initial feedback RE: NZDF/Houthi [SEEMAIL][RESTRICTED]
 Yes, we're onto this.

Sent: Tue, 16 Jan 2024 08:26:50 GMT

Nga mihi,
 s.6(a) [redacted]
 Captain, RNZN
 Director Strategic Commitments

s.6(a) [redacted]

From: Shaw, Andrew, BRIG s.6(a) [redacted]
 Date: Tuesday, 16 Jan 2024 at 9:25 PM
 To: s.9(2)(a) [redacted]
 Cc: Woods, Andy, AIRCDRE s.9(2)(k) [redacted] s.6(a) [redacted]
 s.6(a) [redacted]
 Subject: RE: Fwd: Comms plan initial feedback RE: NZDF/Houthi [SEEMAIL][RESTRICTED]

Thanks s.9(2) [redacted] I understand s.9(2) [redacted] with s.6(a) [redacted] support, is working the answer to these questions.

Cheers

AS

From: s.9(2)(a) [redacted]
 Date: Tuesday, 16 Jan 2024 at 9:23 PM
 To: Shaw, Andrew, BRIG s.6(a) [redacted]
 Cc: Woods, Andy, AIRCDRE s.9(2)(k) [redacted] s.6(a) [redacted]
 s.6(a) [redacted]
 Subject: Fwd: Comms plan initial feedback RE: NZDF/Houthi [SEEMAIL][RESTRICTED]

Sir,

For your visibility noting CAPT s.6(a) [redacted] s already on the distribution list.

s.9(2)(a) [redacted]

NZDF Private Secretary | Office of 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

s.9(2)(a) [redacted]

Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
 Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

From: Mark Talbot [DPMC] s.9(2)(a) [redacted]
 Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 9:13:34 PM
 To: s.9(2)(a) [redacted]

Cc: s.9(2)(a)

; s.9(2)(g)(ii)

Pearce, Kathleen s.9(2)(a)
s.6(a)

; s.9(2)(g)(ii)

s.9(2)(a)

s.9(2)(a)

Taylor, Kevin <s.9(2)(k)

Berry, Greer <s.9(2)(k)

Subject: Re: Comms plan initial feedback RE: NZDF/Houthi [SEEMAIL][RESTRICTED]

Hi all,

s.6(a), s.9(2)(g)(i)

Thanks in advance,

Mark Talbot
s.9(2)(a)

[Seemail] [Restricted]

From: s.9(2)(a)

Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 5:22:33 PM

To: s.9(2)(a)

Cc:

s.9(2)(g)(ii)

; Pearce, Kathleen

s.9(2)(a)

s.6(a)

s.6(a)

s.9(2)(a)

s.9(2)(a)

Taylor, Kevin <s.9(2)(k)

Berry, Greer <s.9(2)(a)

; s.9(2)(a)

Subject: Comms plan initial feedback RE: NZDF/Houthi [SEEMAIL][RESTRICTED]

Kia ora koutou,

s.9(2)(g)(i), s.6(a)

s.6(a), s.9(2)(g)(i)

With sincere apologies and many thanks in advance, we'd appreciate a revised comms pack for no later than 3pm tomorrow please. Mark and I are happy to jump on a call at any point if that would be useful.

We've slightly slimmed this distro but please feel free to add in others who are working on this.

Ngā mihi nui,

s.9(2)(a)

s.9(2)(a)

Foreign Policy Analyst
Policy Advisory Group
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

s.9(2)(a)



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From: s.9(2)(a)

Sent: Tuesday, 16 January 2024 11:58 am

To: Mark Talbot [DPMC] s.9(2)(a)

Cc: s.9(2)(a)

s.9(2)(a)

s.9(2)(a)

s.9(2)(g)(ii)

Short, Kevin, AM

s.9(2)(k); Shaw, Andrew, BRIG s.6(a)

Bridgman, Andrew

s.9(2)(a)

s.9(2)(g)(ii)

s.9(2)(g)(ii)

s.9(2)(a)

Rebecca Kitteridge [DPMC]

s.9(2)(a)

s.9(2)(g)(ii)

; Pearce, Kathleen

> s.6(a)

s.6(a)

s.9(2)(g)(ii)

s.9(2)(g)(ii)

s.9(2)(a)

Taylor, Kevin s.9(2)(k)

Berry, Greer <s.9(2)(k)

s.9(2)(a)

Subject: RE: NZDF/Houthi [SEEMAIL][RESTRICTED]

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jemma.lala@defence.govt.nz. [Learn why this is important](#)

*** [SEEMAIL] This message may contain classified information ***

Kia ora Mark,

As requested, please see attached a draft comms pack relating to the proposed deployment.

This comprises:

- Draft PR
- Draft media talking points
- Draft QA
- Draft Fact Sheet

We welcome any updated advice on timing for consideration of the Cabinet paper, and associated proposed announcement timings, when available.

Ngā mihi

s.9(2)(a)

From: Mark Talbot [DPMC] s.9(2)(a)

Sent: Monday, 15 January 2024 3:51 p.m.

To: s.9(2)(a)

Pearce, Kathleen

s.6(a)

s.6(a)

Cc: s.9(2)(a)

Short, Kevin, AM

s.9(2)(k)

Shaw, Andrew, BRIG s.6(a)

; Bridgman, Andrew

s.9(2)(a)

Subject: NZDF/Houthi

Importance: High

[SEEMAIL][RESTRICTED]

s.6(a), s.9(2)(g)(i)

Best wishes,

Mark Talbot

Foreign Policy Adviser

Policy Advisory Group

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

s.9(2)(a)

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