



Reference: OIA-2017/18-0312

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act request relating to nuclear missile alerts in Hawaii and Japan

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 23 January 2018. You also addressed your request to the Prime Minister, the Minister for the Intelligence and Security Services, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, GCSB and NZSIS. This response is provided to you in reply to each of those requests and has been prepared in consultation with each of the addressees. You requested:

"I seek information about the two nuclear missile alerts issued for Hawaii (13 Jan 2018) and Japan (16 Jan 2018).

...

My questions in respect to the 13 January Hawaii and 16 January Japan Emergency alert;

- 1. Did the NZ Intelligence and Security services receive any reports of a missile threat (from other nations or NZ's independent intelligence collection service) at the time of or subsequent to a missile launch directed at or near Hawaii on Saturday 13 January 2018?*
- 2. Where there were reports received or generated by NZ intelligence, did they identify the agency, authority or entity that launched the missile or missiles?*
- 3. Was the missile launch from a submarine, a surface ship, an aircraft or from a land base?*
- 4. Do NZ authorities know who (which state, entity or organisation) controlled the submarine, surface ship, aircraft or land base at the time of launch?*
- 5. What was the location of the launch site and the trajectory or vector that the missile(s) traveled.*
- 6. Were any and all missiles that were launched destroyed?*
- 7. What was the location where the missile(s) were destroyed?*
- 8. Was the submarine, surface ship, aircraft or land base that launched the missiles destroyed?*

9. *What was the location of the launch entity at the point of its destruction?*

10. *Who or which entity destroyed the missile(s) and launch site?*

11. *Are the New Zealand Authorities and Intelligence Services confident or do you 'know' that the Hawaii 13 January 2018 missile Emergency Alert was a 'false alert'?*

12. *Are the New Zealand Authorities and Intelligence Services confident or do you 'know' that the Japan 16 January 2018 missile Emergency Alert was a 'false alert'?*

13. *What provisions are existent to ensure that the New Zealand Civil Defence Emergency Alert service will not issue false alerts?*

In response to question 1, I advise that there is no record of any missile threat reports having been received at the time of, or subsequent to, the alert in Hawaii on 13 January 2018. Accordingly, your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

As noted above, there were no reports received. There were also no reports generated by New Zealand intelligence as a consequence. Accordingly, your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

On that basis, I advise that no information can be located that would enable me to provide answers to your questions 3 to 10 inclusive. New Zealand government agencies do not hold any information to suggest that the alerts were activated following missile launches.

In response to questions 11 and 12, the New Zealand Government and its agencies have not seen any information to indicate that either missile alert was anything other than a false alarm.

Finally, in response to question 13, the New Zealand Emergency Mobile Alert system is governed by strict protocols that all user agencies have signed up to. A stand-alone training portal is not connected to the mobile network, and only trained users are given access to the production portal through two-factor authentication. The system also applies a two-step confirmation process before an alert is sent. Further information on the protocol can be found at <https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/emergency-mobile-alert/EMA-Protocol-for-User-Agencies-v1.0.pdf>

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 quarterly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

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

Yours sincerely



Howard Broad
Deputy Chief Executive, Security & Intelligence

