



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

16 September 2022



Ref: OIA-2022/23-0095

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request: Documents that relate to the agreement between NZ and the Cook Islands Government in the awarding of the Queen's Service Medal

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received on 31 August 2022. You requested:

"With respect, I request the following information under the terms of the Official Information Act 1982:

Please provide any document(s) that pertains to the agreement/relationship between the New Zealand and Cook Islands Government in the awarding of the Queen's Service Medal.

I anticipate receiving the information under the terms of the act, which stimulates a maximum period of 20 business days. Written confirmation of receipt of this request would be appreciated.

If I can be of any assistance, please get in touch."

New Zealand and the Cook Islands do not have an agreement regarding the award of the Queen's Service Medal. Accordingly, there is no information relating to your request, and I have therefore refused your request under section 18(e) of the Act – that the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

Under the Cook Islands Honours Scheme approved by Queen Elizabeth II in 1984, Cook Islands residents are considered for British Royal honours based on an annual allocation of honours from the British government. Honours nominations are made by the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, and are submitted to The King by the New Zealand Prime Minister.

When New Zealand established its own honours system in 1996, the Cook Islands was invited to participate in the new system, but decided to remain with the British royal honours system. Cook Islands people resident in New Zealand, are eligible to be nominated for honours under the New Zealand Royal Honours System, which include awards of the Queen's Service Medal (QSM).

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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.

Nāku noa, nā



Rachel Hayward
Acting Clerk of the Executive Council