



**Te Pā Whakamarumarū**  
New Zealand Security  
Intelligence Service

PO Box 900, Wellington 6140  
P +64 4 472 6170, F +64 4 472 8209  
www.nzsis.govt.nz

11 August 2023

[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

### **Official information request**

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 20 June 2023 to the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) seeking information in relation to ChatGPT.

You were advised on 19 July 2023 that the time limit for responding to your request had been extended to 16 August 2023 due to the volume of information being assessed for possible relevance to your request. Following this, I am now in a position to respond.

### **Response**

In considering the scope of your request, we took *“ChatGPT or similar language models”* to be for large language models (LLMs). Searches were accordingly undertaken of records in our document management system for *“ChatGPT”, “chatbot”, and “large language model”* from 1 January 2019 to 20 June 2023 (the date of your request). Please find responses to your questions below.

#### ***How the ministry utilises ChatGPT or similar language models in its operations, and the specific tasks or purposes ChatGPT is used for.***

The NZSIS does not use ChatGPT or similar LLMs in our operations. Some of our staff are considering the use of LLMs as part of ongoing work to ensure the NZSIS understands the power and limitations of such emerging technologies, however there are careful controls around this research.

#### ***How ChatGPT is integrated into the ministry's workflow and processes.***

LLMs are not integrated into our workflows and processes.

#### ***Any internal correspondence, assessments or evaluations of the accuracy and effectiveness of ChatGPT's responses in various operational contexts.***

Searches of our document management system identified two items partially relevant to your request. I am unable to release one of the documents in its entirety, as doing so would be likely to prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand, or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand, as protected by section 6(a) of the OIA. Instead, as allowed for under section 16(1)(e) of the OIA, this material has been summarised below.

The item relates to a staff member's approach to translating overseas media articles written in a language other than English. The item, dated 14 April 2023, outlines the staff member considering the potential use of LLMs as a translation aid for media articles, where the staff member would then make their own amendments to the translated text.

In addition, the following excerpt from some internal correspondence also dated 14 April 2023 was identified as in scope of your request. Some information is withheld under section 6(a) of the OIA, as outlined above.

*"We did get a bit of a laugh today when seeing the output from ChatGPT when asked to write a Security Risk Management Plan for [s6(a)]. No need to worry about job security yet!"*

***Any limitations or ethical considerations associated with the use of ChatGPT by the ministry, especially concerning privacy, data security, or potential biases in responses.***

We recognise the power of LLMs, as well as the many risks associated with generative AI. We are also mindful of the sensitivity of the information our agency holds. When considering LLMs as outlined above, our staff did not use any personal data or agency-specific input. The potential adaption of new technology for any purpose by the NZSIS is approached with caution and involves an evaluative process and risk assessment.

***How does the ministry plan to keep the public informed and address any questions or concerns regarding the use of ChatGPT in its services?***

As the NZSIS has not integrated LLMs into our services, we do not currently have any plans to communicate with the public specifically regarding its use. However, we regularly publish information on our website (<https://www.nzsis.govt.nz>) and respond to questions and concerns from members of the public through [uia.privacy@nzsis.govt.nz](mailto:uia.privacy@nzsis.govt.nz). We are also subject to robust oversight, including from the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security and Parliament's Intelligence and Security Committee.

***Are there any guidelines or policies in place regarding the use of ChatGPT by staff?***

We do not currently have any guidelines or policies in place regarding the use of LLMs by NZSIS staff. Any guidance material developed by the NZSIS around the use of artificial intelligence by staff would reflect our ethical and legislative responsibilities.

***Has the ministry sought external or independent assessments of ChatGPT's performance, effectiveness, or any potential risks associated with its use?***

We have taken this part of your request to relate to "potential risks associated with [LLM] use by the NZSIS". We have neither sought nor received any relevant assessments.

## **Review**

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact [uia.privacy@nzsis.govt.nz](mailto:uia.privacy@nzsis.govt.nz).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that the NZSIS proactively publishes OIA responses in accordance with the expectations of Te Kawa Mataaho/the Public Service Commission. We intend to publish this letter (with your personal information removed) on the NZSIS website. Publication of such responses is done on a quarterly basis.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Hampton', with a stylized, wavy flourish extending to the right.

**Andrew Hampton**

Te Tumu Whakarae mō Te Pā Whakamarumarū  
Director-General of Security