



## DEFENCE FOI 432/19/20 STATEMENT OF REASONS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

1. I refer to the application by [REDACTED] under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act), for access to documents as outlined in the request below:

*"Request the most significant document detailing consultation with Defence on the development of the Military Council on Climate and Security's World Climate Report*

*A document outlining any engagement requests to Defence officials with the International Military Council on Climate and Security*

*The most significant document relating to the engagement of Defence officials with the International Military Council on Climate and Security"*

### FOI decision maker

2. I am the authorised officer pursuant to section 23 of the FOI Act to make a decision on this FOI request.

### Documents identified

3. I have identified two documents that fall within the scope of the request. One of these documents, *'The World Climate and Security Report 2020'*, by the Expert Group of the International Military Council on Climate and Security (IMCCS) is publicly available on the IMCCS website (<https://imccs.org/>).

### Decision

4. I have decided to partially release one document in accordance with section 22 [access to edited copies with exempt or irrelevant matter deleted] of the FOI Act, on the grounds that the deleted material is considered exempt under section 47F [Personal privacy conditional exemptions] of the FOI Act.

### Material taken into account

5. In making my decision, I had regard to:
- the terms of the request;
  - the content of the identified documents in issue;
  - relevant provisions in the FOI Act;
  - the Guidelines published by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner under section 93A of the FOI Act (the Guidelines); and
  - advice provided from Defence officials in Strategic Policy Division.

### Reasons for decision

#### Section 22 – Irrelevant material deleted

6. Upon examination of the documents, I found that they contained material that did not relate to the scope of the request. I considered that the material would disclose information

that would reasonably be regarded as irrelevant to the scope of the request. As such, in accordance with section 22(1)(a)(ii) of the FOI Act, I decided to remove this material.

### **Section 47F – Personal privacy**

7. Upon examination of the documents, I identified personal information, specifically names of individuals and their contact details. When assessing whether the disclosure of personal information is unreasonable, I considered the following factors:

- a. the extent to which the information is well known,
- b. whether the person to whom the information relates is known to be (or to have been) associated with the matters dealt with in the document,
- c. the availability of the information from publicly accessible sources, and
- d. the effect the release of the personal information could reasonably have on the third party.

8. I found that the:

- a. specific personal information listed is not well known,
- b. individuals whose personal information is contained in the documents are not widely known to be associated with the matters dealt with in the documents, and
- c. information is not readily available from publicly accessible sources.

9. The release of the names of personnel identified in the document could reasonably be expected to cause harm to their privacy. Taking into account the above factors, I consider that the release of the personal information of individuals other than the applicant would be an unreasonable disclosure of personal information and conditionally exempt under section 47F(1) of the FOI Act.

### **Third Party Consultation**

10. I decided to consult with Clingendael Institute and the Netherlands Ministry of Defence given the originating request to the Department of Defence for information. Neither Clingendael Institute and the Netherlands Ministry of Defence responded to this consultation. Although no response was provided, I decided that the release of personal information in relation to individuals within Clingendael Institute could reasonably be expected to harm their privacy as outlined above.

### **Further Information**

11. Some of the documents falling within the scope of this request contained security classifications and caveats and dissemination limiting markers. As the documents are now approved for public release, the relevant documents have been declassified and the markings struck through.



Helen Thai  
Accredited Decision Maker  
Strategic Policy and Intelligence Group