

27 March 2025

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Personal details removed
for proactive release

OIA 29880

Personal details removed for proactive release

Thank you for your email of 8 January 2025 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

for any documents, emails or correspondence between MFAT, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Transport Minister and the Cook Islands government over the past five years relating to the establishment and operation of a Cook Island shipping registry.

On 25 January 2025 you agreed to refine the scope of your request to be for:

- 1. Submissions to a Minister that outline New Zealand's policy position relating to the establishment and operation of a Cook Island shipping registry, 1 Jan 2020 – 1 Jan 2025*
- 2. Formal reporting relating to the establishment and operation of a Cook Island shipping registry, 1 July 2024 to 8 January 2025*

On 24 February 2025, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 25 working days because responding to your request necessitated the review of a large quantity of information, and due to the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request (section 15A(1)(a) and (b) of the OIA refers).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) has not provided any submissions to a Minister that outline New Zealand's policy position relating to the establishment and operation of a Cook Island shipping registry, 1 Jan 2020 – 1 Jan 2025. Therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the OIA as the information requested does not exist.

The following table lists the documents that are in scope of part two of your request:

#	Title	Date	Decision
1.	Ministry (Seemail) Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: SHADOW FLEET CALL TO ACTION [6(b)(i)]	4 October 2024	6(a); 6(b)(i); 7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii)

#	Title	Date	Decision
2.	FORMAL MESSAGE: [7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii)] COOK ISLANDS	9 October 2024	Withheld in full – 6(a); 6(b)(i); out of scope
3.	FORMAL MESSAGE: REGISTERING NEW ZEALAND'S CONCERNS WITH THE COOK ISLANDS SHIPPING REGISTRY – "DARK FLEET" ASSOCIATIONS	21 October 2024	6(a); 7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii); 7(c)(i); 9(2)(g)(ii); 9(2)(k)
4.	FORMAL MESSAGE: COOK ISLANDS SHIPPING REGISTRY [7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii)]	15 November 2024	6(a); 7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii); 9(ba)(i); 9(2)(g)(i)
5.	FORMAL MESSAGE: MINISTER PETERS' VISIT TO LONDON 28 – 29 NOVEMBER	4 December 2024	Withheld in full (including attachments)- 6(a); 9(2)(a) 9(ba)(i); 9(2)(g)(ii); out of scope
6.	FORMAL MESSAGE: NEW ZEALAND/COOK ISLANDS JOINT MINISTERIAL FORUM WORKING GROUP AND INAUGURAL JOINT DEFENCE AND SECURITY DIALOGUE – 29 NOVEMBER 2024	11 December 2024	Extracts released in Annex One - 6(a); 7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii); out of scope
7.	File Note: Joint Ministerial Forum Working Group (JMFWG) & Joint Defence and Security Dialogue (JDaS) (attachment to Formal Message dated 11 December 2024)	29 November 2024	Extracts released in Annex One - 7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii); out of scope

Some information is withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government;
- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis;
- 7(b)(i) and (ii): to avoid prejudicing relations between any of the Governments of New Zealand and the self-governing State of the Cook Islands;
- 7(c)(i): to avoid prejudicing the international relations of the Government of the self-governing State of the Cook Islands;
- 9(2)(ba)(i): to protect the supply of confidential information by a third party;
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments;

- 9(2)(g)(ii): to protect officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment; and 9(2)(k): to prevent disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage.

Where information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, no public interest in releasing the information has been identified that would override the reasons for withholding it.

Where large sections of a document are withheld or out of scope, the information that is in scope is being provided as extracts in **Annex One**, which is attached to this letter (section 16(e) of the OIA refers).

Information relating to the Cook Island's registered ship, Eagle S, which was involved in an incident in the Baltic Sea on 25 December 2024, is publicly available on the Ministry's website: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/OIA/OIA-2025/OIA-29892-Cook-Islands-Shipping-Registry-Eagle-S-20-March-2025.pdf>.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website: www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Annex One – extracts of information in scope of OIA 29880

Extract 1:

FORMAL MESSAGE: NEW ZEALAND/COOK ISLANDS JOINT MINISTERIAL FORUM WORKING GROUP AND INAUGURAL JOINT DEFENCE AND SECURITY DIALOGUE – 29 NOVEMBER 2024

[6(a); 7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii); out of scope]

LGL/SANS: See **para 20 - 21** on dark fleet discussion (and file note).

[out of scope]

Rāpopoto – ‘Akako’uko’u – Summary

[6(a); 7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii)]

DS PDG [9(2)(g)(ii)] led an inter-agency team to Rarotonga on 29 November for the annual Joint Ministerial Forum Working Group (JMFWG), and the inaugural session of the Joint Defence and Security Dialogue (JDaS). These talks came close on the heels of Prime Minister Luxon’s, and Deputy Prime Minister Peters’, meetings with Prime Minister Brown (PACPF FM 22 Nov refers)

[6(a); 7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii)]

On current key issues, officials reiterated New Zealand’s positions:

[6(a); 7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii)]

- Our deep concerns with the Cook Islands shipping registry registering **‘dark/shadow fleet’** vessels,

[6(a); 7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii); out of scope]

We shared our concerns about a range of security issues...

20. We shared an update on New Zealand’s latest tranche of sanctions against **Russia**. We emphasised our deep concerns about Russian and DPRK’s use of **dark fleet** vessels to transport oil in contravention of the G7+ Oil Price Cap, and in breach of likeminded partners’ sanctions regime. We underlined our concerns regarding the Cook Islands registry registering vessels associated with the shadow fleet, and undertook to provide information soon on Cook Islands-flagged vessels we suspect were doing dark fleet activities [Comment: This was since provided to MFAI on 6 Dec].

21. [6(a); 7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii)]

[out of scope]

Extract 2:

Attachment to Formal Message dated 11 December 2024 - File Note: Joint Ministerial Forum Working Group (JMFWG) & Joint Defence and Security Dialogue (JDaS): 29 November 2024 (Rarotonga, MFAI Office)

[out of scope]

- [9(2)(g)(ii)] opened a discussion on the dark fleet, which she noted was a good example of the more contested space we find ourselves in. [9(2)(g)(ii)] began by providing an update on the recent tranche of New Zealand sanctions against Russia, which are aimed at individuals connected to chemical weapons and ballistic missiles. New Zealand had now sanctioned over 700 individual and entities.
- [9(2)(g)(ii)] noted that New Zealand remained deeply concerned about Russian and DPRK's use of 'shadow fleet' vessels to transport oil in contravention of the G7+ Oil Price Cap and like-minded partners sanction regime. These vessels present a global threat, undermining sanctions and risking the environment. They are old, often poorly maintained, under-insured and do not meet international standards.
- [9(2)(g)(ii)] acknowledged the Cook Island's request for a list of vessels of concern, which was being collated by New Zealand's Maritime Coordination Centre and would be shared soon. [9(2)(g)(ii)] noted that once the list was shared MFAT would welcome further discussion. [9(2)(g)(ii)] also acknowledged the interest of likeminded partners on this issue, and shared that Foreign Minister Peter was currently in London in a meeting with counterparts, and that we have announced our joining the international "call to action" against the Shadow fleet, alongside Australia and Japan. MFAT was keen to continue to share information to support the Cook Islands.
- Upon prompting about these 'dark fleet' vessels, [9(2)(g)(ii)] explained that the dark fleet were normally oil tankers, aptly named due to 'going dark' by turning off trackers to obfuscate their movements. This makes it very tricky to monitor as one has to line up satellite data with the tracker information. The complex ownership of these ships means that shipping registries have to be very well equipped to monitor and have good due diligence processes in place for registering vessels.
- [9(2)(g)(ii)] commented that the dark fleet undermines our efforts to make the world less contested and that it was very unfortunate that many of the fleet were Cook Islands' flagged vessels.
- [7(b)(i); 7(b)(ii)]
- [9(2)(g)(ii)] agreed to take these comments back to Wellington.

[out of scope]

From: [LONDON](#)
To: [LGL/SAN](#)
Cc: [LGL; NAD; SSEA; EUR; MFA; ISED; ECO; AMER; AUS; BEIJING; WASHINGTON; BANGKOK; KUALA LUMPUR; MOSCOW; WARSAW; ANKARA; CANBERRA; CAIRO; LONDON; SAPD; FM.Defence \(Seemail\); s6\(a\)](#)
[EUR; FM.Treasury \(Seemail\); s6\(a\)](#) [ARU; ...EUROPEAN POSTS; DS.FMA; DS.AAG; DS.MLG; DS.TEG; DCE; LEO; PACPT; ABU DHABI; RAROLONGA; DS.PDG; FM.Maritime.NZ \(Seemail\); FM.Transport Ministry \(Seemail\)](#)
Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: SHADOW FLEET CALL TO ACTION s6(b)(i)
Date: Friday, 4 October 2024 5:08:38 am
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
s6(b)(i)

[RESTRICTED]

Hohenga – Action

s6(a), s6(b)(i)

EUR/CHOGM: Please note the suggestion that New Zealand joining the call could be announced as Prime Ministerial deliverable (par 2)

s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

Pūrongo – Report

We report on a meeting today (October 3) with the Foreign Office's Russia Department's Sanctions and Economy Team Leader s6(a), and with from the Sanctions Directorate's Russia/Belarus team s6(a)

2 The UK would warmly welcome New Zealand committing to the "[Call to Action](#)" against Russia's "shadow fleet" launched as part of the European Political Community Summit. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

The Call has around 44 European signatories, and the Foreign Office are in talks with Canada, Australia, Japan and the US about joining. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

Comment: New Zealand joining the Call could be announced as a deliverable in the margins of upcoming visits or meetings.

3 Alongside the Call, the UK also sanctioned 11 new vessels responsible for transporting GBP930 million worth of sanctioned oil – including at least one under a Cook Island flag. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

4 s6(b)(i), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)
s6(a)

14 s9(2)(ba)(i)

15 s9(2)(ba)(i)

Tākupu – Tā Mātou Manako – Comment

16 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

17 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

18 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

19 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

20 Should New Zealand join PM Starmer's Call to Action, we will engage with MCI, the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration to officially inform them. We have already foreshadowed this possibility with MFAI and MCI.
s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

Mutu – Oti - End

Released under the Official Information Act

5. s6(a)

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From: LONDON <LON@mfat.govt.nz>
Sent: Sunday, August 4, 2024 6:56 PM
To: LGL/SAN <DM-LGL/SAN@mfat.govt.nz>
Cc: LGL <DM-LGL@mfat.govt.nz>; NAD <DM-NAD@mfat.govt.nz>; SSEA <DM-SSEA@mfat.govt.nz>; EUR <DM-EUR@mfat.govt.nz>; MEA <DM-MEA@mfat.govt.nz>; ISED <DM-ISED@mfat.govt.nz>; ECO <DM-ECO@mfat.govt.nz>; AMER <DM-AMER@mfat.govt.nz>; AUS <DM-AUS@mfat.govt.nz>; BEIJING <BFI@mfat.govt.nz>; WASHINGTON <WSH@mfat.govt.nz>; BANGKOK <BKK@mfat.govt.nz>; KUALA LUMPUR <KLU@mfat.govt.nz>; MOSCOW <MOS@mfat.govt.nz>; WARSAW <WSW@mfat.govt.nz>; ANKARA <ANK@mfat.govt.nz>; CANBERRA <CBA@mfat.govt.nz>; CAIRO <CAI@mfat.govt.nz>; LONDON <LON@mfat.govt.nz>; SAPD <DM-SAPD@mfat.govt.nz>; FM.Defence (Seemail) <fm.defence@nzdf.mil.nz>; s6(a)
EUR <DM-EUR@mfat.govt.nz>; FM.Treasury (Seemail) <merlin@treasury.govt.nz>; s6(a)
ARD <DM-ARD@mfat.govt.nz>; ...EUROPEAN POSTS <EUROPEANPOSTS@mfat.govt.nz>; DS EMA <DM-DSEMA@mfat.govt.nz>; DS AAG <DM-DSAAG@mfat.govt.nz>; DS MLG <DM-DSMLG@mfat.govt.nz>; DS TEG <DM-DSTEG@mfat.govt.nz>; DCE <DCE@mfat.govt.nz>; CEO <DM-CEO@mfat.govt.nz>; PACPF <PACPF@mfat.govt.nz>; ABU DHABI <ABD@mfat.govt.nz>; RAROTONGA <RRO@mfat.govt.nz>
Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: UPDATE ON THE UK'S SANCTIONS APPROACH

[RESTRICTED]

Rāpopoto – Summary

s6(a)

Hohenga – Action

s6(a)

Pūrongo – Report

s6(a)

2 s6(a)

3 s6(a)

s6(a)

4 s6(a)

5 As part of the European Political Community Summit, the UK led a [“Call to Action”](#) against Russia’s “shadow fleet”. The UK also sanctioned 11 new vessels responsible for transporting GBP930 million worth of sanctioned oil (we understand one under a Cook Islands flag), building on G7 sanctions against six vessels in June. s6(a)

6 s6(a)

Released under the Official Information Act

s6(a)

s6(a)

7 s6(a)

8 s6(a)

9 s6(a)

10 s6(a)

s6(b)(i)

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-
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-

s6(b)(i)

Released under the Official Information Act

s6(b)(i)

MUTU - ENDS

Released under the Official Information Act

Following 335 pages withheld under s6(b)(i)

From: [PACPF](#)
To: [RAROTONGA](#); [EUR](#); [LONDON](#)
Cc: [...POLICY DIVISIONS](#); [...PACIFIC POSTS](#); [FM_Defence \(Seemail\)](#); [FM.DPMC \(FPA\) \(Seemail\)](#);s6(a)
[FM.DPMC \(Seemail\)](#); [FM.Maritime NZ \(Seemail\)](#); s6(a) [FM.MPI](#)
[\(Seemail\)](#); [FM.Police \(Seemail\)](#); [FM.P/S MFA \(Seemail\)](#); [OCE](#); [DCE](#); [DS PDG](#); [DS MLG](#); [DS EMA](#); [DS AAG](#); [DS](#)
[TEG](#); s9(2)(k) [Cable Exchange DFAT-AUS](#); [Cable Exchange FCDO-UK](#); [WASHINGTON](#);
[BEIJING](#); [WASHINGTON](#); [BANGKOK](#); [KUALA LUMPUR](#); [MOSCOW](#); [WARSAW](#); [ANKARA](#); [CANBERRA](#); [CAIRO](#);
[ABU DHABI](#);s9(2)(k)
Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: REGISTERING NEW ZEALAND'S CONCERNS WITH THE COOK ISLANDS SHIPPING
REGISTRY – "DARK FLEET" ASSOCIATIONS
Date: Monday, 21 October 2024 10:09:03 pm

[RESTRICTED]

[FOR CABLE EXCHANGE]

TOHUTOHU KAWE – HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

s9(2)(g)(ii)

s9(2)(k)

RAPOPOTO – SUMMARY

- We remain concerned that the Cook Islands Shipping Registry (the Registry) is associated with the "dark fleet". We are aware of increased media reporting on the scale of the issue and that likeminded partners have sanctioned vessels that are flagged by the Registry.
- We would appreciate RRO registering our concerns with the Cook Islands' Foreign Affairs Ministry (MFAI), in addition to the Ministry of Transport (MoT), to ensure there is awareness of the associated risks to the Cook Islands' reputation, international relations, and potential legal and financial liability.
- New Zealand is considering joining the "[The Shadow Fleet: A Call to Action](#)" (LON FM of 4 October refers), subject to approvals, by late November. As part of RRO's engagement on this issue, we would appreciate your informing MFAI of our intention to join the Call to Action.
- We are keen to support the Cook Islands in managing this issue. We would appreciate RRO's further investigation using the provided key messages, and subsequent reporting to inform New Zealand's response and level of support. Relevant NZ Inc agencies are exploring ways New Zealand can support, and s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

HOHENGANGA – ACTION

- **RRO:** grateful if Post formally raises with the MFAI (alongside MoT if useful) the actions of Cook Islands' flagged vessels using the key messages provided; offer further technical assistance to support the Cook Islands in managing this problem; and advise the Cook Islands of New Zealand's intention to join the Call for Action.
- **EUR/LON:** for information only at this stage, in response to earlier FMs relating to the UK's suggestion for New Zealand to join the Call to Action.

PŪRONGO – REPORT

1. We appreciate RRO's FM detailing ^{s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)} amid recent reports that Cook Islands' flagged vessels are operating as part of the "shadow fleet" or "dark fleet", which is functioning in breach of International Maritime Organization (IMO) standards and other international norms.

2. ^{s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)}

3. We ask RRO to engage with the MFAI on this issue to formally register New Zealand's concerns, ^{s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)}

We ask that RRO emphasise the seriousness of the situation from an international relations, international security, potential liability, and reputational perspective. The actions of Cook Islands' flagged vessels, and any perceptions of lack of action or concern by the Cook Islands Government in response, could affect the Cook Islands' international standing, and the efficacy of international sanctions efforts of like-minded countries. You should also make the point that the activities of dark fleet vessels directly undermine international security, and therefore our shared security interests.

4. In the course of this discussion, we should also impress upon the Cook Islands the seriousness with which New Zealand and other partners take the "shadow or dark fleet", and draw their attention to "The Shadow Fleet "[Call to Action](#)". You should advise the Cook Islands that as it aligns with New Zealand's policy positions, we are intending to join the "Call to Action".

Financial and legal risk exposure for the Cook Islands (and New Zealand)

5. In addition to the identified risks to their international security and reputation, any dark fleet vessels flagged by the Registry pose significant financial and legal risk to the Cook Islands. The dark fleet often acts in illegal and unsafe ways (as shown by the [recently reported](#) fire onboard a Cook Islands' flagged vessel off the coast of Bangladesh). Dark fleet vessels are often under-insured. If a Cook Islands' flagged vessel was involved in a maritime incident and was under-insured, injured States may seek to hold the Cook Islands responsible for the costs of salvage or compensation for damage.

6. We wish to understand whether the Cook Islands has considered these scenarios, and what steps have been put in place to mitigate risk. ^{s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)}

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

7. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

The UK [recently announced](#) on 17 October, sanctions on an additional 22 vessels (of which four are Cook Islands-flagged vessels). This brings it to a total of nine Cook Islands-flagged vessels that have so far been sanctioned under the UK Russia sanctions regime, out of 59 vessels that have been sanctioned to date.

8. We wish to understand how the Cook Islands is managing the increasing number of problematic and sanctioned vessels. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

9. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s6(a)

New Zealand technical support for the Cook Islands: Is there more we can do?

10. New Zealand has in the past supported work to strengthen governance and capability in the Cook Islands MoT through the "Strengthening Pacific Shipping Registries" programme (with Corio Bay Consultants) and Maritime NZ's port security and maritime safety programme. This included an in-person audit of the Registry by Corio Bay last year, and supporting capacity and capability development of Cook Islands fisheries officers through the MPI-run programme Te Patui. All these activities are funded through the IDC or the Pacific Security Fund.

11. We wish to know what support the Cook Islands might find useful from New Zealand to respond to this issue and, more generally, improve its Shipping Registry. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

RRO's reporting on this issue will support relevant NZ Inc agencies' efforts to explore ways New Zealand can provide support, s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

Key messages

- Note New Zealand's concerns following the increased media reporting on the Cook Islands Shipping Registry containing vessels associated with the "dark fleet".
- Refer to the UK's latest sanctions against the "dark fleet" which included 22 vessels. Note that we understand that four of those vessels were flagged by the Cook Islands. [\[If required\]](#), given MFAI may not be aware of the "dark fleet" - see background section].

- Underline the impact of the Cook Islands Shipping Registry being associated with the “dark fleet” has on -
 - Cook Islands’ international reputation, and relations - if the Cook Islands is perceived as not acting quickly to remedy the situation e.g. work with MCI to de-register vessels, their international standing could be affected especially if seen to be undermining the efficacy of international sanctions efforts of like-minded countries.
 - Cook Islands’ international security and the potential liability - if a serious incident were to occur to one of its flagged vessels e.g. dark fleet vessels are often under-insured, injured States may seek to hold the Cook Islands responsible for the costs of salvage or compensation for damage.
- s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

- Seek to understand whether the Cook Islands has considered the above scenarios and implications. Ask about steps taken to mitigate the above risks.
- Note that New Zealand remains ready to support wider efforts the Cook Islands might be considering in strengthening its Shipping Registry, as we have in the past through Corio Bay.
- Seek more information about how New Zealand can support immediately – e.g. expertise or intelligence to help the Cook Islands’ response – as well as any long-term ideas or efforts.
- Note that we have been approached by partners to join the “[Call to Action on the Shadow Fleet](#)”. In line with New Zealand’s policy positions, share that we are intending to join the Call to Action. [If required, briefly explain the “Call to Action” using background info below].

Background

What is a Dark fleet vessel and why do they pose a risk?

- Shadow fleet or dark fleet vessels are operating inconsistent with international norms and standards – with direct implications for our environment, maritime safety and security, the integrity of international seaborne trade, respect for international maritime law. They undermine international efforts to up-hold the UN Charter through sanctions, regarding Iran, Russia, and wider non-proliferation efforts.
- According to Lloyds list methodology, a tanker vessel is defined as being part of the “dark fleet” when it is aged 15 years or over, anonymously owned and/or has a corporate structure designed to hide its beneficial ownership and is solely deployed in sanction oils trades.
- “Dark or shadow” refers to the practice when tanker vessels are observed switching off their vessel tracking transponders to avoid detection and hide the origin and destination of the goods they are carrying.
- The dark fleet is understood to encompass hundreds of tanker vessels that

employ varying degrees of illicit or evasive tactics. The worst of dark fleet characteristics could include fraudulent representations of class and insurance, alongside a history of "flag hopping" and voyage irregularities such as turning off tracking transponders.

- Ownership and technical management of these vessels can be unknown and is often overtly complex - and activities can sometime include taking on cargoes via ship-to-ship transfers in international waters.
- Dark fleet vessels can carry as much as 100,000 tonnes of crude oil. In the event of a maritime incident involving oil spillage, suggested estimates of clean-up costs range from \$9,000 - \$16,000 USD per tonne, meaning the approximate total cost could range from \$859 million to 1.6 billion USD.

The Call to Action

- The Call to Action is a UK-led initiative launched at the European Political Community summit in July that aims to bring attention to the risks that 'shadow fleet' poses to the environment, maritime safety and security, the integrity of international seaborne trade, respect for international maritime law, as well as likeminded efforts to support the UN Charter by seeking compliance with international sanctions.
- Following endorsement of the Call to Action by New Zealand, we would keep in touch with the UK and others as they work through ideas around how to make more practical interventions in line with the Call, such as joint lobbying of flag states, operational coordination, and better tracking and information-sharing.

TĀKUPU - COMMENT

12. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

13. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

14. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

MUTU - ENDS

From: RAROTONGA <RRO@mfat.govt.nz>

Sent: Friday, October 11, 2024 1:43 PM

To: PACPF <PACPF@mfat.govt.nz>; LGL/SAN <DM-LGL/SAN@mfat.govt.nz>; PACREG <PACREG@mfat.govt.nz>
Cc: LGL <DM-LGL@mfat.govt.nz>; NAD <DM-NAD@mfat.govt.nz>; SSEA <DM-SSEA@mfat.govt.nz>; EUR <DM-EUR@mfat.govt.nz>; MEA <DM-MEA@mfat.govt.nz>; ISED <DM-ISED@mfat.govt.nz>; ECO <DM-ECO@mfat.govt.nz>; AMER <DM-AMER@mfat.govt.nz>; AUS <DM-AUS@mfat.govt.nz>; BEIJING <BEI@mfat.govt.nz>; WASHINGTON <WSH@mfat.govt.nz>; BANGKOK <BKK@mfat.govt.nz>; KUALA LUMPUR <KLU@mfat.govt.nz>; MOSCOW <MOS@mfat.govt.nz>; WARSAW <WSW@mfat.govt.nz>; ANKARA <ANK@mfat.govt.nz>; CANBERRA <CBA@mfat.govt.nz>; CAIRO <CAI@mfat.govt.nz>; LONDON <LON@mfat.govt.nz>; SAPD <DM-SAPD@mfat.govt.nz>; FM.Defence (Seemail) <fm.defence@nzdf.mil.nz>; s6(a)

FM.Treasury (Seemail)

<merlin@treasury.govt.nz>; ARD <DM-ARD@mfat.govt.nz>; s6(a)
<merlin@treasury.govt.nz>; ARD <DM-ARD@mfat.govt.nz>; s6(a); DS EMA <DM-DSEMA@mfat.govt.nz>; DS AAG <DM-DSAAG@mfat.govt.nz>; DS MLG <DM-DSMLG@mfat.govt.nz>; DS TEG <DM-DSTEG@mfat.govt.nz>; DCE <DCE@mfat.govt.nz>; CEO <DM-CEO@mfat.govt.nz>; ABU DHABI <ABD@mfat.govt.nz>; DS PDG <DSPDG@mfat.govt.nz>; marsec@maritimenz.govt.nz; FM.Transport Ministry (Seemail) <cables@transport.govt.nz>

Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: UPDATE ON COOK ISLANDS SHIPPING REGISTRY AND 'DARK FLEET'

[RESTRICTED]

Rāpopoto – 'Akako'uko'u – Summary

- The Cook Islands is clearly aware of the problems surrounding its shipping registry and the 'dark fleet'. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)
- s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)
- As it stands, the Cook Islands' registry is currently open and administered by a third party, Maritime Cook Islands (MCI). s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)
- s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

Hohenga – Rave'anga – Action

For information

Pūrongo – Tuatua 'Akakite – Report

HOM met yesterday with s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii) and to discuss the Cook Islands' shipping registry and 'dark fleet'.

2 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

3 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

4 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

5 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

6 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

7 s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

8 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

9 s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

10 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

11 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

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s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

12 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

13 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

14 s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

Tākupu – Tā Mātou Manako – Comment

15 s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

16 s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(c)(i)

Mutu – Oti – End

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From: [RAROTONGA](#)
To: [PACPF](#); [LGL/SAN](#); [PACREG](#)
Cc: [LGL](#); [NAD](#); [SSEA](#); [EUR](#); [MEA](#); [ISED](#); [ECO](#); [AMER](#); [AUS](#); [BEIJING](#); [WASHINGTON](#); [BANGKOK](#); [KUALA LUMPUR](#); [MOSCOW](#); [WARSAW](#); [ANKARA](#); [CANBERRA](#); [CAIRO](#); [LONDON](#); [SAPD](#); [FM.Defence \(Seemail\)](#); s6(a)
[FM.Treasury \(Seemail\)](#); [ARD](#); s6(a) [DS EMA](#); [DS AAG](#);
[DS MLG](#); [DS IEG](#); [DCE](#); [CEO](#); [ABU DHABI](#); [DS PDG](#); [marsec@maritimenz.govt.nz](#); [FM.Transport Ministry \(Seemail\)](#); s6(a)
Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: COOK ISLANDS SHIPPING REGISTRY: s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)
Date: Friday, 15 November 2024 4:36:20 pm

[RESTRICTED]

Rāpopoto – 'Akako'uko'u – Summary

- Maritime Cook Islands has run the Cook Islands open shipping registry since it was privatised in 1995. Cook Islands flagged vessels account for 0.4% of the world's shipping tonnage, with 824 vessels in total, including approximately 600 yachts and 98 tankers.
- s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)
- s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

Hohenga – Rave'anga – Action

For information

Pūrongo – Tuatua 'Akakite – Report

HOM met with s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii) Maritime Cook Islands (MCI) on Friday for an introductory call and to discuss the shipping registry and dark fleet.

2 The Cook Islands' shipping registry was privatised in 1995, and the management contract awarded to MCI. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

The Cook Islands became a member of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in 2008.

3 MCI told us are currently 824 ships in the Cook Islands' registry, of which about 600 are yachts and 98 are tankers. 0.4% of the world's shipping tonnage is Cook Islands flagged, compared to the Marshall Islands, Liberia and Panama, which together make up 50% of global tonnage. s9(2)(ba)(i)

s9(2)(ba)(i)

4 s9(2)(ba)(i)

s9(2)(ba)(i)

5 s9(2)(ba)(i)

6 s9(2)(ba)(i)

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

7 HOM raised the question of the dark fleet, noting New Zealand's concern regarding Lloyd's List Intelligence (LLI) information which stated that 88% of Cook Islands flagged vessels were in the dark fleet. She also noted that New Zealand had been invited to join UK Prime Minister Starmer's Call to Action.

8 s9(2)(ba)(i)

9 s9(2)(ba)(i)

10 s9(2)(ba)(i)

11 s9(2)(ba)(i)

s9(2)(ba)(i)

12 s9(2)(ba)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

13 s9(2)(ba)(i)