



18 August 2023



Ref: OIA-2022/23-0648

Dear

Official Information Act request relating to correspondence with TikTok and ByteDance regarding the Christchurch Call

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, received on 8 March 2023. You requested:

[...] all correspondence with TikTok or parent company ByteDance regarding the Christchurch Call, specifically any communications to and from the companies relating to involvement in or the activities of the Christchurch Call, and any internal communications on considerations regarding their involvement.

On 15 May 2023 I advised you of my decision to release in part information relevant to your request, pending further necessary consultation. This consultation has now been undertaken. Please find in Attachment A the information relevant to your request.

The relevant grounds under which information has been withheld are:

- section 6(a), to protect the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand
- section 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of individuals
- section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion
- section 9(2)(j), to enable negotiations to be carried on without prejudice or disadvantage.

Please note I am releasing two documents authored by TikTok representatives. These documents were provided to DPMC in the context of a confidential relationship and process. I am releasing these documents because, for the purposes of the OIA request, TikTok representatives have waived confidentiality relating to the provision of these documents to DPMC.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act. No public interest has been identified that would be sufficient to override the reasons for withholding that information.

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

Yours sincerely



Anneliese Parkin
Deputy Chief Executive, Policy

From: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Sent: Tuesday, 8 June 2021 6:08 pm
To: Brent Thomas .
Cc: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: RE: [External] RE: Hi and catch up call? [UNCLASSIFIED]

Thanks Brent – will do so.

Regards

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)
s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
P s9(2)(a)
M s9(2)(a)
Es9(2)(a)



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From: Brent Thomas . s9(2)(a), TikTok, Bytedance
Sent: Tuesday, 8 June 2021 5:36 pm
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Cc: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: Re: [External] RE: Hi and catch up call? [UNCLASSIFIED]

Yes great s9(2)(a). That will work for me. Would you like to call me when you're free? I'm on s9(2)(a)

Talk soon

On Tue, Jun 8, 2021 at 3:32 PM s9(2)(a), DPMC > wrote:

Hi Brent

Thanks for this - how would tomorrow morning work for a quick call? I have meetings through to 0930. Could do a call from 1000 though...

Thanks

s9(2)(a)

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: Brent Thomas . ByteDance, s9(2)(a), TikTok
Date: Tuesday, 08 Jun 2021, 12:44
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: Re: Hi and catch up call?

Hi s9(2)(a)

Hope you had a good long weekend!

Hey just bumping this one up. Would you possibly have 5 minutes for a quick call with me in the next 24 hours or so? **Out of Scope** I was hoping to have a quick chat with you prior to that if at all possible.

Many thanks,

Brent

On Thu, Jun 3, 2021 at 10:57 AM Brent Thomas . s9(2)(a), TikTok, ByteDance wrote:

Hi s9(2)(a)

Hope you're going well, and it's good to see NZ continuing to succeed in these COVID times.

Just following on from our last conversation with you last year, we really appreciated our meeting with you, and are hoping to catch up with you again soon.

We're particularly keen to get your feedback and insights, particularly around the *Christchurch Call*. As we discussed in our catch up, with TikTok's top priority being community safety, we'd be grateful for your suggestions about how we can best engage constructively with the process.

I'm cc'ing my colleagues Ella and Gullnaz. Ella is also in Sydney, and Gullnaz is in Singapore. Could a call around the middle / later part of your day work some time in the next week or two?

Hope to talk with you soon.

Regards, Brent

Brent Thomas
Director of Public Policy, Australia and New Zealand

Tel: s9(2)(a)
Email: s9(2)(a)



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Released under the Official Information Act 1982

From: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Sent: Monday, 27 September 2021 8:54 am
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: RE: TikTok at 0900

Thanks s9(2)(a) – much appreciated and very helpful. See you in a few minutes online.

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)
s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
P s9(2)(a)
M s9(2)(a)
E s9(2)(a)



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From: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Sent: Monday, 27 September 2021 7:40 am
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: TikTok at 0900
Importance: High

~~[REDACTED]~~

Morning both,

Sorry for the delay, here are a few points and draft questions ahead of the 0900 TikTok meeting. Hopefully this is helpful.

s6(a)



Released under the Official Information Act 1982

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Thanks, ^{s9(2)(a)}

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

E s9(2)(a)



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From: s9(2)(a)
Sent: Friday, 1 October 2021 10:11 am
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: RE: Follow-up questions for TikTok

~~[UNCONFIDENTIAL]~~

Thanks s9(2)(a)

That looks very good indeed – some small thoughts below 😊

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)
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s9(2)(a)
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
P s9(2)(a)
M s9(2)(a)
E s9(2)(a)



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From: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Sent: Thursday, 30 September 2021 4:10 pm
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: Follow-up questions for TikTok

[UNCLASSIFIED]

Afternoon both, as discussed, below are some draft follow-up questions for TikTok.

Just to clarify, I gather these are for our internal use and will be separate to a questionnaire NZ/FR issues to companies as part of the onboarding process (although they may cover similar themes)?

Hi Brent,

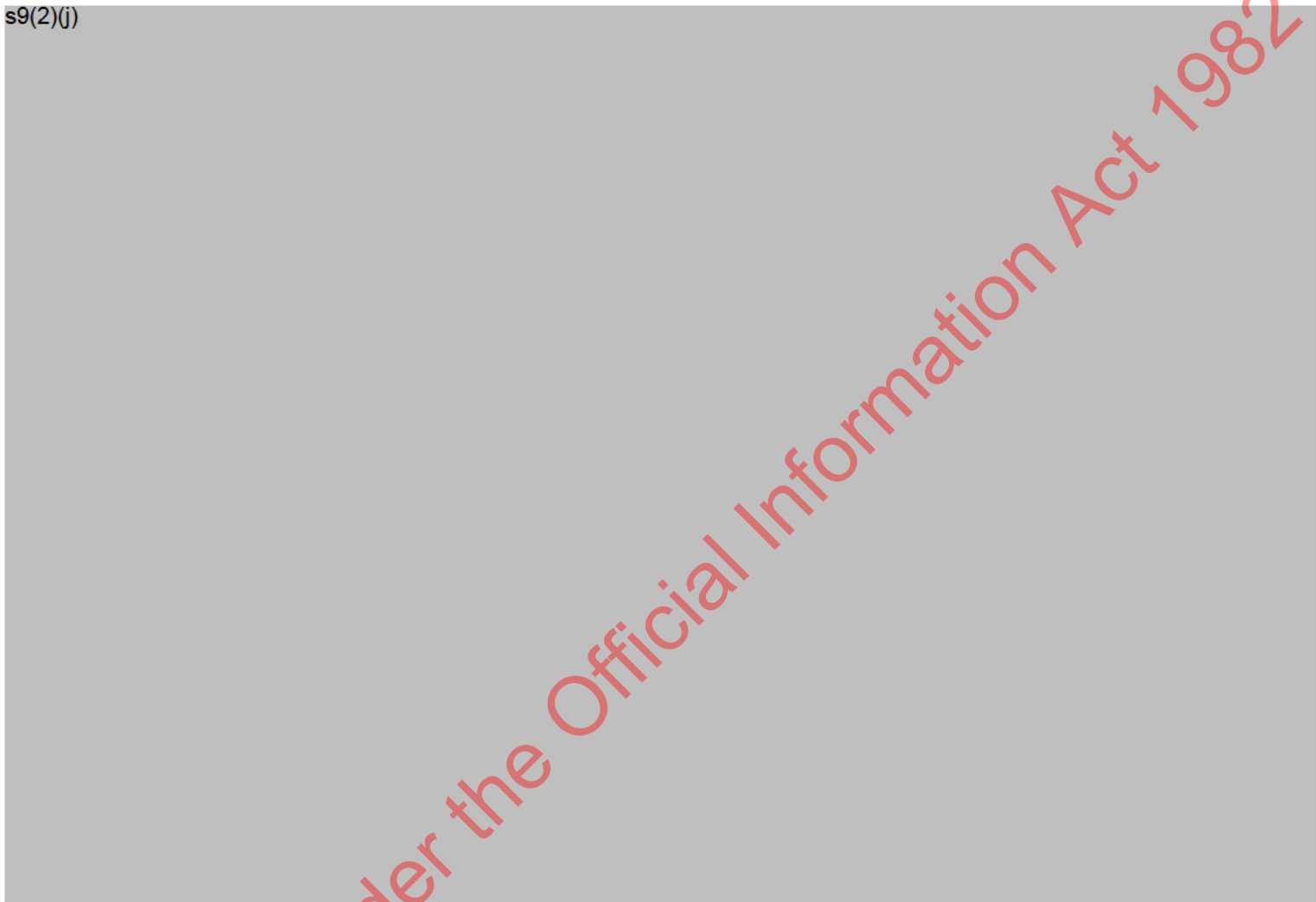
Thanks again for your time on Monday. It was useful to talk though some of the questions and knowledge gaps we had on TikTok.

Before companies are formally confirmed as supporters of the Christchurch Call, New Zealand and France undertake an initial due diligence assessment. The [Becoming A Call Supporter](#) document on our website outlines some of the things we take into consideration, including: ownership structure and maturity of trust & safety settings.

There are two additional steps we ask companies to go through, which will come later:

- A **written request for information**, which will cover similar topics and themes as the questions **below**. This will be shared with the whole community (companies, countries and civil society) and they are invited to contribute questions.
- An hour-long VTC which is open to all community members. The aspirant company is invited to brief **participants** on their intentions and policies **as they relate to the content of the Christchurch Call**, and we then moderate **a community** Q&A. This is also an opportunity for TikTok to ask questions of the community.

s9(2)(j)



Thanks, s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

M s9(2)(a)

E s9(2)(a)



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From: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Sent: Tuesday, 5 October 2021 3:18 pm
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: FW: Onboarding companies / Out of Scope

FYI too

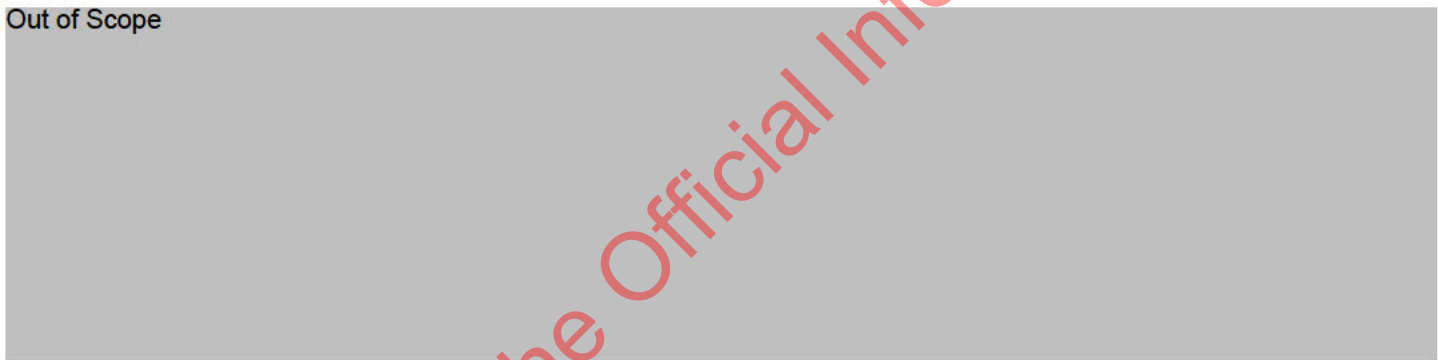
From: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Sent: Tuesday, 5 October 2021 12:36 pm
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC s9(2)(a)
s9(2)(a), MFAT
Subject: Onboarding companies / Out of Scope

~~(IN CONFIDENCE)~~

Hi all,

Following our discussion at the stand-up, below is a summary of where we are at with company onboarding and key actions

Out of Scope



Status Update on companies below.

Out of Scope	
TikTok	DPMC has sought more information from TikTok to inform due diligence.
Out of Scope	

Thanks, s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a) (she/her)
s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

M s9(2)(a)

E s9(2)(a)



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From: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Sent: Tuesday, 5 October 2021 5:52 pm
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: onboarding s9(2)(g)(i)
Importance: High

~~[REDACTED]~~

Hi s9(2)(a)

I am sorry to bother you with this while you're on leave.

Anneliese will be considering the draft briefing tomorrow at 11am. s9(2)(g)(i)

Out of Scope, s9(2)(g)(i)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

Out of Scope

s9(2)(g)(i)

If you're able to grab five minutes on the phone at some stage to talk this through before tomorrow morning I'd be very grateful.

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a) (he/him)
s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

E s9(2)(a)



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June 6 2022

Dear ^{s9(2)(a)} [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email and for providing a summary of the additional information required to facilitate consideration of TikTok's participation the Christchurch Call.

User safety is our highest priority and TikTok invests significantly in our Trust and Safety policies, procedures and practices to support our community's safety and wellbeing.

We're pleased to provide responses to the questions posed in your correspondence below and look forward to ongoing engagements with you and your team.

1. How does TikTok identify and remove violent extremist or terrorist content (aside from relying on community reporting?)

TikTok is committed to leveraging the possibilities of advanced technology to prevent, detect, remove, and report online abhorrent violent material as well as other potential harms.

We have invested heavily in human and machine-based moderation tools to find and remove violative content. The systems and measures we have put in place include our safety classifiers, deep learning models, and the use of image matching technologies that work to proactively identify illegal and harmful content, and our decision engine that ranks potentially violating content to help moderation teams review the most urgent content first. If we become aware of violative content, we will take immediate action to remove content, terminate accounts, and report cases to law enforcement as appropriate.

In addition to detection, we have taken an upstream, safety by design approach to prevention. For example, it is not possible to send an off platform attachment (video or image) via our direct messaging service.



While our expert teams pay attention to the nuance of our enforcement, we also run databases of keywords associated with violent extremism and hate, which disallow users from searching for particular terms. Similarly, we maintain databases of signs, symbols and images related to violent extremism, dangerous organisations and hateful ideologies to ensure content containing it is disallowed, blocked from upload or removed. TikTok continuously reviews entities that are known to participate in hateful behaviour, violent extremism, and criminal activities. These identified groups are not able to join our platform and action would be taken against any such accounts. Additionally, TikTok has commercial partners that monitor and gather intelligence on violent extremist content and provide threat alerts on credible threats. We have access to databases that include more than 7,000 archived audio/video files and 200,000 URLs published/shared by designated extremist groups. We use this intelligence to improve our detection and proactive risk mitigation.

These are some of the ways that TikTok is already deploying technical solutions and product changes that make our platform experience a safer one for users. We will continue to innovate in this space, and look forward to working with the Coalition to identify opportunities to enhance protections.

We know there is no finish line when it comes to further improving safety on TikTok and our transparency reports show that we removed 2,712,492 pieces of content that violated our Community Guidelines relating to violent extremism in 2021.

2. Referring to the [Call to Action](#), what commitments has TikTok already addressed or taken measures to address?

Through TikTok's publicly available [Community Guidelines](#) and [Terms of Service](#), our platform clearly articulates and enforces policies to support the Call to Action commitments.

Violent extremism, dangerous organisations and hateful ideologies are explicitly designated in our Community Guidelines as being prohibited on our platform. And our Community Guidelines Enforcement Reports are regularly updated to provide information on the types of content we remove, at what volume, and what stage of moderation. Our most recent update is available [here](#).

As described in the answer above, we use a mixture of machine and human moderation to detect, remove and take enforcement action as appropriate when violative content is detected on TikTok. Specifically, TikTok has a clear policy of removing violent extremism content. We reject any form of violent



content or content that seeks to glorify groups and/or individuals associated with violent extremism from using our platform to advance their violent extremism propaganda.

We will terminate accounts and may also ban users from coming back to our platform if they have posted content that glorifies and promotes violence.

While we take decisive action against violative content and accounts, we also ensure we notify our users of the actions taken and provide an avenue to appeal, consistent with transparent, best practice.

In late 2021, we provided an update on work we are doing regarding our recommendation system, to keep people's "For You Feed" fresh and to interrupt repetitive patterns to foster diversity of content. Further details are available [here](#), and it builds on our previously provided overview of how our recommendation system works, which is available [here](#).

TikTok has a network of Transparency and Accountability Centres, that provide outside experts an opportunity to directly view how our teams at TikTok go about the day-to-day challenging, but critically important, work of moderating content on the platform, our privacy policies and other important practices. We would be pleased to welcome representatives of the Christchurch Call an opportunity to participate in a tour of our Transparency and Accountability Centre.

TikTok also works with industry experts, non-governmental organisations, and industry associations throughout our safety policy and feature development process to monitor emerging trends, identify blindspots or gaps in our knowledge, and generate innovative solutions for building the safest possible platform for our community.

It's worth noting that TikTok currently participates in three of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism's (GIFCT) working groups, in order to learn from and contribute to industry best practices. These working groups are: Transparency, Crisis Response, and Positive Interventions and Strategic Communications. TikTok continues to actively work toward gaining membership in GIFCT and recently completed the GIFCT-Tech Against Terrorism mentorship program.

3. How does TikTok intend to contribute to and participate in the Christchurch Call Community?

TikTok's top priority is safety for our community. We know there is no finish line when it comes to keeping our users safe and we are committed to working



collaboratively with our industry peers to ensure we are playing a proactive and meaningful role globally to support shared safety goals.

TikTok is committed to sharing information that will support the identification and suppression of terrorist and violent extremist content. We do so already through global and regional initiatives, including:

- MHA-RSIS Webinar on "Countering Extremist Content: Promoting Positive Narratives Online" - an engagement to combat extremism online with the Singapore Government's Home Affairs Ministry and a local think-tank.
- Collaboration with UNDP to empower content creators in APAC to build a safe online space

Our intention is to continue this collaborative and open engagement through the Christchurch Call community and we are open to more detailed discussions around how we can most meaningfully support achieving the Christchurch Call's objectives.

4. Could you please describe TikTok's ownership structure? What is the nature of the relationship between ByteDance and Beijing ByteDance Technology (noting the Chinese Government's recent acquisition of a 1% stake in the latter)? a. Does this investment allow for a board seat in Beijing ByteDance Technology? How does this relate to TikTok's operations?

TikTok Ltd is owned by Bytedance Ltd, a privately owned technology company incorporated in the Cayman Islands, and the majority investors include Bytdance and TikTok founder, Yiming Zhang and large institutional investors such as Sequoia Capital, General Atlantic, KKR and Softbank. We have a global board of directors.

TikTok's CEO is based in Singapore, and we have a diverse leadership team, many of which are based in the United States. The TikTok app is available in more than 150 countries, but not in China.

The Chinese Government has not taken an ownership stake in TikTok.

The subsidiary referenced has no ownership, visibility, or input into TikTok's operations.

There are no TikTok companies incorporated in China.



In summary, there is nothing about TikTok's ownership structure which would limit our commitment to participate in the Christchurch Call.

5. What assurances can TikTok give about its data protections and the independence of its content moderation processes?

New Zealand user data is stored in the US and Singapore. As indeed is the data of all TikTok users, worldwide.

We have strict access controls in place - including restrictions on who has access to which data set, strong authentication measures, logging of access, limited access period, and encryption of data. We employ thousands of safety professionals around the world to ensure we have 24/7 coverage of content on TikTok.

Our moderation teams that review New Zealand content (for example) are based in Europe and SE Asia and provide coverage on a 24/7 basis. This team is supervised by dedicated experts in policy and enforcement who write the content moderation guidelines and leads practice - they are based in our regional Trust & Safety hubs in Singapore, Dublin, and California and include specialists who are familiar with our local culture and norms.

We moderate content according to our [Community Guidelines](#) and local laws, our moderation teams are empowered to make decisions that suit the local market.

6. Noting ByteDance products in China, such as Douyin, are subject to regulatory frameworks and privacy regimes there, to what extent is TikTok also subject to these and/or, as a subsidiary of ByteDance, has the potential to be subject to these?

TikTok is not available in China and we are a global company. We have not and will not share user data with the Chinese Government, and would not do so if asked.

Any legal requests by any Government for TikTok user data would be sent to our Law Enforcement Response Team (LERT) and would follow a well established international process. Such requests would need to go through the relevant Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) process.

As is made publicly available in our regularly published Transparency and Accountability reports, the Chinese Government has not requested or asked for TikTok user data. We have never given the Chinese Government TikTok user data.



Our Trust and Safety Centres are located in Singapore, Ireland and the US; our data storage facilities are in US and Singapore (which have achieved international recognised security certifications), and we have strict controls on who can access it.

We also have a dedicated US based Data Protection team focused on controls implementation and monitoring of our protected sensitive data.-and our Chief Security Officer, Roland Cloutier, brings to TikTok over 30 years of experience in cyber security and law enforcement, including over a decade serving the United States Air Force, Department of Defence and Department of Veterans Affairs.

We would welcome conveners of the Christchurch Call to participate in a Transparency and Accountability Centre tour which will provide you an opportunity to visit and see first-hand how teams at TikTok go about the critically important work of securing our community's safety, data, and privacy.

7. How does TikTok approach the concept of a free, open and secure internet? Does TikTok have policies and/or a public statement on how it respects and protects human rights and fundamental freedoms?

TikTok has progressed a range of partnerships and projects related to human rights, including as a member of Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) and TikTok has joined BSR's Human Rights Working Group. Together with BSR and Article 1 Advisors, we have held educational trainings for senior leadership on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and are committed to respect human rights under the UNGP's Protect-Respect-Remedy framework.

We have also publicly made a statement with respect to our approach to human rights that is available on our [website](#). It reads:

Technology is an essential gateway to the exercise of human rights. TikTok touches more than 1 billion people across the globe, who represent a variety of ethnicities, orientations, backgrounds and life experiences. As a global entertainment company, TikTok has a responsibility to ensure that our community is treated.

Responsibility for upholding human rights is shared: while governments have the responsibility to protect human rights, TikTok and other businesses have a responsibility to respect those human rights. Respecting human rights is essential for TikTok to build and sustain trust among our employees, creators, advertisers, and others who engage with our company.



Our philosophy is informed by the International Bill of Human Rights (which includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Labour Organisation's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work) and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. As part of our commitment, we will strive to respect human rights throughout our business and will comply with applicable laws and regulations intended to promote human rights where we conduct business globally. We will continuously evaluate our operations to identify, assess, and address salient human rights risks; engage key stakeholders; and prioritise key areas where we have the greatest opportunity to have a positive impact.

8. What is TikTok doing to improve transparency of the platform?

As articulated in our answer to Question 2 above, at TikTok we recognise that accountability and transparency are essential to facilitating trust, and we are committed to being transparent in how we operate, moderate and recommend content, and secure our platform. In early 2020 TikTok launched its first Transparency Report. As part of that work, we provide regular updates on reports received across different violation types, the frequency of those reports, and how much of that content we act on for violating our Community Guidelines. We also disclose the percentages of content we take action on proactively, through automation and detection models that enqueue content for human moderation.

As mentioned, TikTok has also opened Transparency and Accountability Centres for experts and policymakers to see first-hand how we are working to build a safe and secure platform for our growing and diverse community. Due to physical constraints around the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, opening the centre has meant evolving our original plans to offer a virtual experience until we can welcome guests to the full tour at our physical locations.

Moving forward, we endeavour to lead the industry in transparency including through robust transparency reporting as well as additional experiences at the Transparency and Accountability Centres, including opportunities for qualified experts to review our algorithm.

We are also very upfront about our platform's policies, including our [Terms of Service](#) and our [Community Guidelines](#). Everyone who uses TikTok is bound by our Terms of Service, and our Community Guidelines apply universally. We take a firm stance on behaviours and content which are not in keeping with our policies, and we will not hesitate to take action against accounts that might seek to undermine the safety of our community.



When users make reports about particular content, we notify them of the outcome of that report. For TikTok users whose content has been removed or account has terminated, we notify them with information on why the action was taken, and they will be allowed to submit an appeal should they feel the removal decision was unjustified.

9. How does TikTok moderate live content for TVEC?

At TikTok, we use a number of measures to identify and moderate TVEC, including through automated detection.

Specifically, we have multiple models that detect content that overlaps with Violent Extremism (VE) signals, for example (but not limited to), we have model(s) that detects blood in the frame and another that detects sensitive military or police clothing. If our models are hit with a positive match, it will be automatically sent to the moderation queue where human moderators will assess the content for possible violations.

We also have a dedicated high risk detection database, which scans through high risk content (such as footage from previous Violent Extremism attacks) that will automatically detects and remove this content.

Regarding our moderation practices, our moderators are trained on integrated policies including being able to detect violent extremist signals and enforce against them.

We also have a number of dedicated teams that help moderate live content for TVEC including:

- a dedicated Emergency Response Team that work with law-enforcement to tackle the use of VE actors on the platform;
- an Incident Management Team that handles major VE events from an operational perspective and collaborates closely with our policy team;
- a Risk Analysis Team that proactively detects possible threats to the platform for teams to prepare against.

Our global policy team has global and regional experts focusing on violent extremism, hateful organisations and ideologies, including policy experts dedicated to livestreams.

Our Trust and Safety teams pay special attention to livestreams, taking into consideration the unique nature of this feature, including but not limited to the simultaneity between creation and consumption of content, the interaction between viewers and hosts, existing or past strikes against user accounts. Our



policies and safety strategies are continuously reviewed and updated: they are influenced and shaped by real-life events and feedback from experts. As violent extremist events occur around the world, we work to proactively draft policies that are able to scale and adapt to novel concepts.

10. How does TikTok prevent recommending TVEC or harmful content? How does TikTok assess and moderate algorithmic recommendation processes?

As previously described, we use a mix of technology and human moderation to enforce our Community Guidelines (which includes controlling TVEC or harmful content), which is also informed by in-app user reporting (and non-users via website), where users have an option to easily report potentially violative content.

All content uploaded to TikTok passes through technology that works to identify potential policy violations. Our safety team takes additional precautions to review videos as they rise in popularity to reduce the likelihood of content that may not be appropriate for a general audience entering our recommendation system.

With regard to our recommendation system, we present users with a stream of videos on our 'For You' feed curated to their interests, but also works to intersperse recommendations that might fall outside people's expressed preferences, offering an opportunity to discover new categories of content.

Our recommendation system on TikTok is designed with safety as a key consideration. Reviewed content found to depict things like graphic medical procedures or legal consumption of regulated goods, for example - which may be shocking if surfaced as a recommended video to a general audience that hasn't opted in to such content - may not be eligible for recommendation. Users can also report a video that seems out of line with our guidelines. All these actions contribute to future recommendations on the For You feed.

Content along the lines of TVEC or harmful content in general will not be eligible for recommendation under any circumstances and will be taken down from the platform as they violate our Community Guidelines.

Ultimately, the For You feed is powered by user's feedback: the system is designed to continuously improve, correct, and learn from user's engagement with the platform to produce personalised recommendations that we hope inspire creativity and bring joy with every refresh of their For You feed.



11. Has TikTok engaged with research or academic efforts to understand, prevent and TVEC online? (A Call commitment so may also be addressed under Q2).

Violent extremism, dangerous organisations and hateful ideologies are an industry-wide challenge and it must be met with an industry-wide solution. We work closely with partners not just on the global level, but also on the local level to ensure we have a nuanced approach.

Tech Against Terrorism provides TikTok with support and advice across a range of counterterrorism enforcement strategies at TikTok with the objective of helping us improve on our approach and policies. This partnership kicked-off in January, 2021.

As previously cited, TikTok currently participates in three working groups convened by the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT) and is in ongoing discussions about our membership to GIFCT.

We also consult with renowned regional subject matter experts in each region on ongoing issues related to VE, as well as have periodical policy consultations to ensure our policies on platform remain robust and current.

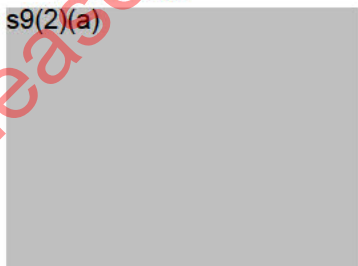
We are fully committed to working with partners across industry and other sectors to enhance our collective approach to countering violent extremism.

We hope these responses demonstrate our commitment to fully participate in the Christchurch Call. We certainly appreciate the opportunity to answer the above questions, and to engage with the Christchurch Call Secretariat further about these important issues.

Leadership of TikTok Australia and New Zealand Leadership will be in New Zealand later this month and we would welcome the opportunity to engage with your officials in person, should that be of assistance.

Sincerely,

s9(2)(a)



Brent Thomas

Director of Public Policy, Australia and New Zealand

From: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Sent: Tuesday, 21 June 2022 8:20 pm
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: RE: [External] RE: Christchurch Call [UNCLASSIFIED]

No good reason I can sensibly think of. Of course – please go ahead.

s9(2)(a)
s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Phone: s9(2)(a)
Email: s9(2)(a)



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From: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Sent: Tuesday, 21 June 2022 5:38 pm
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: FW: [External] RE: Christchurch Call [UNCLASSIFIED]

s9(2)(a) – s6(a)
s6(a)

From: Brent Thomas . s9(2)(a), TikTok, Bytedance
Sent: Monday, 6 June 2022 5:58 pm
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Cc: s9(2)(a), DPMC
s9(2)(a), TikTok, Bytedance Ella Woods-Joyce
Subject: Re: [External] RE: Christchurch Call [UNCLASSIFIED]

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Dear s9(2)(a), DPMC

Thank you all for your patience as we worked through the questions raised in your previous correspondence.

Please find attached a document outlining our replies. We've tried to make our responses as detailed and as helpful as possible.

We would appreciate your feedback in terms of next steps from here.

Our General Manager for TikTok AU and NZ, Lee Hunter, along with myself, will be in Wellington (and Auckland) later this month, and we'd be very pleased to make time to meet with yourselves (and any other relevant stakeholders) to further progress this discussion, if there is interest at your end.

Kind regards,

Brent

On Fri, Oct 1, 2021 at 11:19 AM s9(2)(a), DPMC > wrote:

[UNCLASSIFIED]

Afternoon Brent,

Thanks again for your time on Monday. It was useful to talk through some of the questions and knowledge gaps we had on TikTok.

Before companies are formally confirmed as supporters of the Christchurch Call, New Zealand and France undertake an initial due diligence assessment. The *Becoming A Call Supporter* document on our website outlines some of the things we take into consideration, including: ownership structure and maturity of trust & safety settings.

There are two additional steps we ask companies to go through, which will come later:

- A written request for information, which will cover similar topics and themes as the questions below. This will be shared with the whole community (companies, countries and civil society) and they are invited to contribute questions.
- An hour-long VTC which is open to all community members. The aspirant company is invited to brief participants on their intentions and policies as they relate to the content of the Christchurch Call, and we then moderate a community Q&A. This is also an opportunity for TikTok to ask questions of the community.

s9(2)(j) [Redacted]

s9(2)(j) [Redacted]

s9(2)(j) [Redacted]

s9(2)(j) [Redacted]

s9(2)(j)

[Redacted content]

As always, we would be pleased to discuss any elements of these. Have a good weekend!

Thanks, s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a) (she/her)
s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

M s9(2)(a)
E s9(2)(a)



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-----Original Appointment-----

From: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Sent: Tuesday, 21 September 2021 7:12 pm
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC Brent Thomas ; s9(2)(a), DPMC s9(2)(a), DPMC

Subject: [External] RE: Christchurch Call [UNCLASSIFIED]

When: Monday, 27 September 2021 9:00 am-9:45 am (UTC+12:00) Auckland, Wellington.

Where: Microsoft Teams Meeting

[UNCLASSIFIED]

Thanks Brent – trying out a time...

Hope this works for you – if not please suggest an alternative.

Ngā mihi nui

s9(2)(a)

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only)

s9(2)(a) New Zealand, Wellington

Phone Conference ID: 752 744 440#

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)

[Learn More](#) | [Meeting options](#)

From: Brent Thomas, s9(2)(a), TikTok, Bytedance

Sent: Monday, 20 September 2021 3:49 pm

To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: Re: [External] RE: Christchurch Call [UNCLASSIFIED]

Kia Ora s9(2)(a). Thanks for your note.

Late this week or early next week are both pretty good for me. I'm happy to do it quite early in my morning if that makes it easier for you too.

LMK a time and I'll do my best to accommodate it.

Best regards, Brent

On Fri, Sep 17, 2021 at 4:47 PM s9(2)(a), DPMC > wrote:

Kia ora Brent

Thanks for this and apologies for the delay in coming back to you; things have been rather busy here. Yes, an online catch-up might be the best option here. How are you placed later next week, or early the week after?

Ngā mihi nui

s9(2)(a)

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: Brent Thomas . s9(2)(a), TikTok, Bytedance

Date: Tuesday, 14 Sep 2021, 11:59

To: s9(2)(a), DPMC

Subject: Re: [External] RE: Christchurch Call

Hi [REDACTED] - would a call / Zoom be a good way to progress this one?

On Mon, Aug 9, 2021 at 10:55 AM Brent Thomas . [REDACTED], TikTok, Bytedance > wrote:

Hi [REDACTED] - don't mean to keep spamming you (and I know you're all under the pump over there). Is there a better way we can help to progress this discussion? Talk soon. Brent

On Fri, Jul 30, 2021 at 9:14 AM Brent Thomas . [REDACTED], TikTok, Bytedance wrote:

Good morning [REDACTED] and team,

I hope you're all well, and that [REDACTED] you had a decent break away.

Just following up on this one to see if a discussion to progress it might make sense.

Best regards,

Brent

On Thu, Jul 15, 2021 at 10:12 AM Brent Thomas [REDACTED], TikTok, Bytedance wrote:

Thanks very much [REDACTED] for the update, and I hope you enjoy your break!

Hi [REDACTED] and also adding Julie and Thawab from our end on this thread (Julie leads our global product policy team, and Thawab leads on our global policies for violent extremism).

We'll be guided by you in terms of timing and next steps, but we're certainly ready to engage and get deeper into this once it's convenient for you all.

Please let us know, and (subject to managing different time zones and diaries) we'd love to discuss further.

Best regards,

Brent

On Mon, Jul 12, 2021 at 7:38 PM s9(2)(a), DPMC > wrote:

[UNCLASSIFIED]

Kia ora Brent

Thanks so much for this and apologies for the slight delay in coming back to you. I hope you and the team are safe and well in Sydney.

We are now taking forward a number of requests from online service providers to become Call supporters, including your request for TikTok to do so. That includes working through the due diligence elements and, as we do so, thinking through engagement with the Call community and the preferred approach to bringing on a group of new supporters.

As we do so, it will be helpful to engage with you on the sort of details you set out below. Given the exigencies of Covid-19, we fully understand the challenges in traveling here at present and stand ready to connect online until we are able to connect in person.

I'm about to head off on a short leave break, returning 26 July; the team here will be led by s9(2)(a) in my absence and will be happy to connect as needed or we can do so once I return.

We are augmenting our small team from mid-August, to enable us among other things to better take forward the process of building additional support for the Call.

As always, please don't hesitate to be in touch should you have questions or observations about any elements of this.

Ngā mihi nui

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)
s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

P s9(2)(a)
M s9(2)(a)
E s9(2)(a)



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From: Brent Thomas, s9(2)(a), TikTok, Bytedance
Sent: Tuesday, 6 July 2021 12:36 pm
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
s9(2)(a), DPMC
Cc: Ella Woods-Joyce, s9(2)(a), TikTok, Bytedance
Subject: Re: Christchurch Call

Hi s9(2)(a)

I trust you're well. Just bumping this one up. And fully appreciate how much you have going on.

We're keen to progress discussions about this when that's appropriate at your end.

Our trip has likely been postponed until later in the year (most likely September), but we're keen to move ahead with Zoom / email discussions in the meantime if at all possible.

Kind regards,

Brent

On Wed, Jun 9, 2021 at 12:26 PM Brent Thomas . s9(2)(a), TikTok, Bytedance wrote:

Hi s9(2)(a)

Further to my telephone call with s9(2)(a) earlier today, I wanted to confirm that TikTok is keen to pursue discussions about potentially joining the Christchurch Call.

I am also cc'ing my colleagues Gullnaz (Trust and Safety) and Ella (Public Policy) here.

As per our discussion, we understand there is a process which needs to be undertaken for corporations. We are also engaged in a range of other safety-focused initiatives around the globe, and would be happy to talk you through both TikTok's structure and operations, as well as those other initiatives, at the appropriate time.

In terms of timing, a number of our Australian leadership team members are also planning a trip to New Zealand in the week commencing 19 July 2021, and, if discussions had advanced sufficiently by that point, we could potentially consider an appropriate meeting / event at that point.

We are looking forward to hearing from you or your colleagues about suggested next steps.

Kind regards,

Brent



Brent Thomas
Director of Public Policy, Australia and New Zealand

Tel: s9(2)(a) [redacted]
Email: s9(2)(a) [redacted]

[Follow us on](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

From: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Sent: Monday, 15 August 2022 1:16 pm
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
s9(2)(a), DPMC
s9(2)(a), MFAT
Cc: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: FW: Christchurch Call and meeting next week

~~[REDACTED]~~

Folks – see below re a meeting with Tik Tok next week.

I'd be grateful for thoughts Christchurch Call team folk have on topics there (it would be good to rehearse where we have got to with Tik Tok's onboarding interest).

And for any elements other colleagues wish to offer...

s 9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)
s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Phone: s9(2)(a)
Email: s9(2)(a)



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From: Brent Thomas . s9(2)(a), TikTok, Bytedance
Sent: Monday, 15 August 2022 11:41 am
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: Christchurch Call and meeting next week

You don't often get email from s9(2)(a), TikTok, Bytedance. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi s9(2)(a)

Looking forward to seeing you again next week. And excited to get back to NZ after all this COVID time!

I thought I'd email ahead of time and see if you have any specific questions (about Christchurch Call or anything else) so that I can make sure we turn up as prepared as possible.

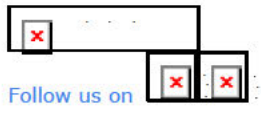
And if not, no worries.

See you soon.

Brent

Brent Thomas
Director of Public Policy, Australia and New Zealand

Tel: s9(2)(a) [redacted]
Email: s9(2)(a) [redacted]



Released under the Official Information Act 1982

From: Brent Thomas . s9(2)(a), TikTok, Bytedance
Sent: Wednesday, 12 October 2022 12:10 am
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Cc: s9(2)(a), DPMC Lee Hunter .
Subject: Our recent meeting

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from s9(2)(a), T kTok, Bytedance. [Learn why this is important](#)

Tēnā koe s9(2)(a)

Thank you for making the time to meet with Lee Hunter and myself (along with our consultant Thomas Pryor) in late August. It was a pleasure to meet again with both you and s9(2)(a), to discuss the Christchurch Call, and to share with you the work TikTok continues to undertake to protect the privacy and security of New Zealand users.

We remain committed to joining the Christchurch Call. As we indicated, progressing our membership application is a priority for us – we believe it's important that TikTok, as a key and growing entertainment platform, is part of the initiative.

Beyond the additional questions we have already answered in writing, we are also committed to answering any further questions you or your colleagues may have for us. If it's possible for you to send us any such additional questions as soon as practicable we would appreciate it.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to progress TikTok's application to the Christchurch Call.

Kind regards,

Brent

Brent Thomas
Director of Public Policy, Australia and New Zealand
Tel: s9(2)(a)
Email: s9(2)(a)



Released under the Official Information Act 1982

From: jed.horner [s9(2)(a), Bytedance, TikTok]
Sent: Saturday, 24 December 2022 12:17 am
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Cc: Ella Woods-Joyce
Subject: Re: [External] RE: Aqaba Dialogue follow-up

You don't often get email from s9(2)(a), Bytedance, TikTok [Learn why this is important](#)

Kia ora s9(2)(a)

I apologise sincerely for my delay in responding - was travelling again for work.

Hope you're keeping well and no doubt ready for the well deserved holiday break?

I have spoken with the team internally and we are very keen to connect in the New Year, specifically on the topic of Live (as well as some other useful timely updates). Usually this engagement is led by my wonderful colleague Ella (cc'd), so between us we will make contact again very early in the New Year to work out a date that works for a virtual meet and then (hopefully very soon....) a face-to-face in Wellington on these substantive issues.

In the meantime, have a fantastic break!

Nga mihi nui,

Jed

Product Policy - Trust & Safety

TikTok AU/NZ

s9(2)(a) - TikTok/ByteDance

s9(2)(a)



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From: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Date: Thu, Dec 8, 2022, 10:45 AM
Subject: [External] RE: Aqaba Dialogue follow-up
To: "jed.horner@s9(2)(a), Bytedance, TikTok"
Cc: "Ella Woods-Joyce@s9(2)(a), Bytedance, TikTok"

[UNCLASSIFIED]

Kia ora, Jed

Great to hear from you and a pleasure to have had the chance to meet and talk a bit in Bali.

The team here would really welcome a session with Tiktok folk on Live, its usage and safety features. We could do this before Christmas (e.g. Wednesday 21st 9.30-10.30am NZT, or 12.30-1.30). Or, if you'd prefer to do it in the New Year, we are all back in the office from 16 January. When would suit?

We'd also welcome the opportunity to meet in person when you're here and we can certainly connect you with the right folk here in DPMC. **Out of Scope** When are you planning to be in Wellington?

Ngā mihi

s9(2)(a) (She/her)
s9(2)(a)
s9(2)(a)
Ms9(2)(a)

From: jed.horner@s9(2)(a), Bytedance, TikTok
Sent: Monday, 28 November 2022 11:45 am
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Cc: Ella Woods-Joyce s9(2)(a), Bytedance, TikTok
Subject: Aqaba Dialogue follow-up

You don't often get email from s9(2)(a), Bytedance, TikTok. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi s9(2)(a)

A pleasure to meet you at the Aqaba Dialogue and hope you returned home safely? Thank you so much for your presentation too - really appreciated the frankness and clarity from the NZ end - as tech companies, we all benefited from that.

I wanted to follow-up on our brief discussion on Live. Acknowledging the broad sector-wide, concerns here, particularly in light of past events in Christchurch. Please do let me know if you would like to meet virtually, via a platform of your choice, at some stage in December? I can ensure we have the right people joining us to answer questions, but also to talk through the safety measures we have in place.

Early in 2023, I plan to return to New Zealand for work, so very happy to also have a more structured discussion then, in-person, if there is interest in doing so. **Out of Scope**

I'm aware that my colleagues (including Ella cc'd) are in ongoing discussions with ^{s9(2)(a)} regarding the Christchurch Call. I'll leave those discussions between those parties, **Out of Scope**

Kind regards,
Jed

Product Policy - Trust & Safety

TikTok AU/NZ

s9(2)(a), TikTok, Bytedance



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From: Erich Andersen . Bytedance, TikTok, s9(2)(a)
Sent: Sunday, 25 December 2022 4:03 am
To: Brent Thomas s9(2)(a), DPMC
Cc: Lee Hunter .; s9(2)(a) DPMC Bytedance, TikTok, s9(2)(a)
Subject: Re: [External] A quick update and season's greetings...

You don't often get email from Bytedance, TikTok, s9(2)(a) [Learn why this is important](#)

I'd like to echo Brent's message and also wish you very happy holidays!

Best wishes,

Erich

From: Brent Thomas . Bytedance, TikTok, s9(2)(a)
Sent: Friday, December 23, 2022 10:09:42 PM
To: s9(2)(a), DPMC
Cc: erich.andersen@Bytedance, TikTok, s9(2)(a) Lee Hunter . Bytedance, s9(2)(a), TikTok >, s9(2)(a)
s9(2)(a), DPMC
Subject: Re: [External] A quick update and season's greetings...

Hi there s9(2)(a)

Thank you very much for your email.

We're certainly keen and committed to working with you and your team on the onboarding process for the Christchurch Call, and look forward to engaging on that in the New Year when you're ready.

Thanks for your kind wishes for the holiday season also, and we at TikTok wish you and your colleagues every peace and happiness at this time also.

Kind regards,

Brent

On Fri, Dec 23, 2022 at 12:52 PM s9(2)(a), DPMC > wrote:

[UNCLASSIFIED]

Kia ora Erich, Brent and Lee

It was good to have the opportunity to meet with Erich in Paris, and with Brent and Lee during your earlier visit to Wellington. The Prime Minister has also subsequently passed your correspondence with her to me and the team for a reply.

Your reiterated commitment to the Call is much appreciated. As discussed with Erich last month, while the team has been busy with the post-Summit workload, we are intent on working with you to step into the next elements in the onboarding process.

We are working through elements of the onboarding process in respect of Tiktok and look forward to engaging further with you on this in the New Year, following the New Zealand summer break.

In the interim, please accept my best wishes for a blessed holiday season and a refreshing break after what I know has been a challenging year for all...

Ngā mihi nui

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Phone: s9(2)(a)

Email: s9(2)(a)

Web: www.christchurchcall.com



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12 December 2022

Rt. Hon Jacinda Ardern
Prime Minister of New Zealand
Via email - j.ardern@ministers.govt.nz

Tēnā koe e te Pirimia

We write to commend you on your leadership in initiating the Christchurch Call and to reaffirm TikTok's commitment to participating in the Christchurch Call.

As we near the fourth anniversary of the Christchurch Call, it is fantastic to see continued support from so many global tech players. We believe it is important that TikTok, as a platform with more than one billion users worldwide, is also part of the initiative.

Becoming a member of the Christchurch Call is a top priority for us. We have been working with Paul Ash and his team over the last 18 months to progress through the membership process, and to engage with the due diligence processes. We have sought to satisfy requirements and would like to become members as soon as possible. We note that during this period, other technology platforms have also been able to formally join the Christchurch Call and look forward to being amongst them and participating fully. We also note that there have been reported issues with concerning content surfacing on platforms that are, in fact, already members of the Christchurch Call.

TikTok's global General Counsel Erich Anderson recently spoke with Mr Ash at the Paris Peace Forum, and reassured Mr Ash of TikTok's commitment to progressing our membership of the Christchurch Call. I understand that representatives of our Trust and Safety team also spoke with New Zealand officials at the Aqaba Dialogue in Bali. This is in addition to our company's engagement with officials in New Zealand during 2022.



You may be aware that TikTok recently opened offices in New Zealand, which we are immensely excited about. Importantly, many New Zealand businesses are already using the platform to grow their business and connect with customers. And as our team grows globally and in New Zealand, it's important for us to continue to build on our interaction with your government, particularly as it relates to online safety. By way of background, TikTok works constructively with New Zealand government agencies and law enforcement. We have engaged with and supported the Electoral Commission, the Chief Censor, and the Privacy Commissioner with their work. And we appreciate the strong relationship we have with the Department of Internal Affairs and Netsafe, in particular.

TikTok firmly supports the Christchurch Call. We are eager to join, and to make useful contributions wherever we are able to. We look forward to continuing to work with Mr Ash and his team and would welcome any suggestions you may have to help us navigate and complete this process.

Nāku noa, nā

s9(2)(a)



Brent Thomas

Director of Public Policy, Australia and New Zealand