

The National Assessments Bureau (NAB)

The lead agency for intelligence assessment

The Intelligence and Security Act 2017



DEPARTMENT of the
PRIME MINISTER and CABINET

Te Tari o Te Pirimia me Te Komiti Matua

FACT SHEET NO. 5

What the Act does

- Sets out the role of NAB in legislation for the first time.

NAB's role in the intelligence community

A crucial part of any country's national security system is its ability to make sense of the global environment. Intelligence assessment helps to do this. Since 1975, New Zealand has had a primary intelligence assessment agency, now called the National Assessments Bureau (NAB). NAB is part of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

NAB does not collect intelligence. Its role is to provide independent and impartial assessments on events and developments relevant to New Zealand's national security and international relations. These assessments inform government decision-making.

NAB staff scrutinise, analyse and provide context to information from a wide range of public, diplomatic and intelligence sources. New Zealand also receives intelligence from international sources and partners, and NAB has a lead role in providing a perspective of what that intelligence means for New Zealand.

NAB provides advice to other government departments on best practice in relation to intelligence assessment.

What is an intelligence assessment?

An NAB assessment is a written or oral report that provides analysis on events or developments that are relevant to New Zealand's national security and international relations. It may be short and situational or long-term and strategic.

For example, in developing an assessment on a sudden crisis between countries or the capabilities of a terrorist network, an analyst will rely on publicly available information such as news media and academic writings, as well as official information (such as diplomatic reporting) and secret intelligence from New Zealand or abroad.

The role of assessment is not to make recommendations on what actions the Government should take. Independent assessments provide a check in the system by providing an impartial perspective on developments and risks to New Zealand.

NAB assessments are made available to the Prime Minister and ministers, as well as government departments and agencies, including New Zealand's diplomatic posts overseas.

Other agencies that provide assessment include the:

- Combined Threat Assessment Group within NZSIS
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
- Ministry for Primary Industries
- Directorate of Defence Intelligence within the New Zealand Defence Force
- New Zealand Customs Service and
- New Zealand Police.