



Headquarters
New Zealand Defence Force
Defence House
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Wellington Mail Centre
Lower Hutt 5045
New Zealand

OIA-2023-4832

← December 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 22 September 2023 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), the following information:

- 1. Any documents, reports or advice provided to the NZDF by the UK government prior to or during the Operation Grapple nuclear test series taking place in 1957-1958 regarding the safety of, or risks to, participants in the Operation Grapple testing programme;*
- 2. Any communications to the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) from the UK government before or during Operation Grapple as to the purposes of the nuclear testing programme, including whether one of the purposes of the Operation Grapple tests was to understand the impacts of nuclear testing on navy personnel;*
- 3. Any documents, reports or advice provided to the NZDF by the UK government following the Grapple nuclear test series regarding the safety of, or risks to, participants in the Grapple testing programme;*
- 4. Copies of the following documents referenced in the 1989 report by J A B Crawford "The Involvement of the New Zealand Navy in the British Nuclear testing programmes of 1957 and 1958"¹ as follows:*
 - a. The reports and appendices referred to in footnote 4 on page 43 of the Crawford report including report (S) GRA/415/SEA, Requirements and Information concerning HMNZ Ships taking part in Operation Grapple, 27 September 1956;*
 - b. Any of the cabinet minutes and papers referred to in footnote 10 on page 43 of the Crawford report held by NZDF;*
 - c. The minutes of the meeting of the chiefs of staff committee on 24 June 1957 referred to in footnote 76 on page 47 of the Crawford report;*
 - d. Copies of any of the documents referred to in footnotes 91-93 on page 48 of the Crawford report regarding marine life held by NZDF;*

A search through NZDF Operation Grapple records did not locate any communications about the purposes, safety, or risks associated with the nuclear tests between the governments of the United Kingdom and New Zealand prior to, during, or after the tests. Records indicated that some internal NZDF operational information was misplaced between the 1950s and 1980s. The documents referenced in the 1989 report by J Crawford that you have requested are publicly available through Archives New Zealand.

- 5. Any reports or cabinet papers prepared by or for the NZDF between 2005 and today in*

relation to the research prepared by Professor Al Rowland from Massey University and his team in 2007 regarding the effects on veterans who participated in Operation Grapple;

6. Any reports or cabinet papers prepared by or for NZDF between 2005 and present in relation to the possible health implications of veteran participation in Operation Grapple on the descendants of Operation Grapple veterans;

7. Any correspondence between the New Zealand Nuclear Test Veterans' Association (NZNTVA) and NZDF between 2015 and today in relation to veterans of Operation Grapple and their whānau; and

8. Any advice or cabinet papers prepared by or for the NZDF in relation to correspondence

received from the NZNTVA between 2015 and today regarding veterans of Operation Grapple and their whānau.

In regards to these parts of your request, I understand you received responses from Veteran's Affairs New Zealand that addressed these.

You have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to ask an Ombudsman to review this response to your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that responses to official information requests are proactively released where possible. This response to your request will be published shortly on the NZDF website, with your personal information removed.

Yours sincerely

AJ WOODS

Air Commodore

Chief of Staff HQNZDF