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OIA-2024-5024

12 June 2024

Jan Tempsky
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Dear Jan Tempsky

I refer to your email of 15 May 2024, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), requesting a summary of recruitment targets for the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) for the past five years. You asked for this information to be broken down *to Service, trade group and geographic area*, as well as seeking the following:

- *Using the above categories, please provide the number of initial applications, the number of who completed the application process, and the number who arrived for initial training.*
- *Please also provide reasons for not completing the application process, including voluntary withdrawal or being assessed as unsuitable. If unsuitable, please provide broad categories on why there were assessed as unsuitable.*

The details of NZDF recruitment targets by trade provide insight on particular capability within the NZDF and are therefore withheld in accordance with section 6(a) of the OIA to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of New Zealand.

The tables enclosed provide data on NZDF recruitment for the past five calendar years (i.e. 2019-2023). Table A provides the number of initial applications, the region where the applicant was based, and the Service applied for. Table B provides the number of applicants who arrived for initial training and attested, by region where the applicant was based, and by Service. Completion of the application process is considered to be the point at which an applicant arrives for initial training and attests. Table C provides the reason why applications were declined.

- *Of recruits who arrived for initial training, please provide the figures for how many completed initial training, by service, trade group and geographic area.*

As stated above, details of recruitment by trade are withheld in accordance with section 6(a) of the OIA, and Table B provides the number of applicants who completed initial training by Service and region.

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

Enclosure:

1. NZDF recruitment tables

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Table A

Initial Applications - Region and Service

Service	2019					2020				
	Central	Northern	Overseas	Southern	Yearly Total	Central	Northern	Overseas	Southern	Yearly Total
Air Force	436	839	106	331	1,712	445	1,051	94	424	2,014
Combination	286	638	97	268	1,289	287	820	93	312	1,512
Army	1,195	1,703	231	958	4,087	1,244	2,071	207	1,068	4,590
Navy	283	965	86	210	1,544	324	1,095	84	226	1,729
Total	2,200	4,145	520	1,767	8,632	2,300	5,037	478	2,030	9,845

Service	2021					2022				
	Central	Northern	Overseas	Southern	Yearly Total	Central	Northern	Overseas	Southern	Yearly Total
Air Force	370	692	82	240	1,384	402	836	111	305	1,654
Combination	229	450	87	212	978	76	159	24	68	327
Army	1,016	1,803	156	891	3,866	1,130	2,013	262	959	4,364
Navy	210	777	77	180	1,244	224	743	82	179	1,228
Total	1,825	3,722	402	1,523	7,472	1,832	3,751	479	1,511	7,573

Service	2023				
	Central	Northern	Overseas	Southern	Yearly Total
Air Force	459	1,009	101	449	2,018
Combination	67	133	8	54	262
Army	1,167	2,236	232	1,126	4,761
Navy	265	977	75	247	1,564
Total	1,958	4,355	416	1,876	8,605

Note: "Combination" refers to people who made an initial application but did not select a specific trade.

Table B

Number of attestations - Region and Service

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Central Region					
Air Force	64	62	51	63	63
Army	144	128	208	114	117
Navy	58	50	37	29	17
Regional total across services	266	240	296	206	197
Northern Region					
Air Force	50	40	52	59	58
Army	176	163	235	187	200
Navy	145	137	100	129	111
Regional total across services	371	340	387	375	369
Overseas					
Army	0	2	1	1	0
Navy	3	0	0	0	0
Air Force	0	0	0	0	0
Regional total across services	3	2	1	1	0
Southern Region					
Air Force	30	32	19	34	31
Army	150	165	202	158	157
Navy	40	43	27	39	30
Regional total across services	220	240	248	231	218
Annual Total	860	822	932	813	784

Table C

Number of Applicants Declined by Reason

Reason for Decline	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Declined Duplicate Application	220	310	258	380	336
Declined Entry Requirements	250	320	269	198	178
Declined Inactive Application	2,491	2,765	2,238	2,299	2,673
Declined Internal Processing	277	379	172	148	122
Declined Medical	1,156	1,353	1,056	1,177	1,007
Declined Misc	298	266	115	194	293
Declined Residency Failure	1,218	1,308	1,037	969	922
Declined/SD Aptitude Testing	257	410	477	326	241
Withdrawn Application	1,514	1,812	1,079	1,045	1,761
Annual Total	7,681	8,923	6,701	6,736	7,533

Note: the year is that in which a person's application was opened, not necessarily the year in which they were declined. Also, SD aptitude testing refers to two aptitude tests conducted during the recruitment process. The tests assess a person's ability to do certain things compared to others, such as solving unfamiliar problems. Further information on recruitment testing is available on the NZDF Careers website: www.defencecareers.mil.nz