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OIA-2024-5046

17 June 2024

[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

I refer to your email of 21 May 2024 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information concerning the promotion of te reo Māori at Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) Base Ohakea. Responses to your questions are provided below.

*Is there currently, or has there been, a trial at Ohakea air base surrounding "Reo Champions" (i.e., personnel that wear Te Reo Pins to signify their understanding of the Maori language). If so, please explain what this trial is and provide some justification for why this trial is necessary?*

In order to promote te reo Māori and its use, RNZAF Base Ohakea is currently running a trial where personnel volunteered to wear pins to reflect their te reo Māori competence, passion to develop te reo Māori for themselves and others, and the willingness to participate.

*What is the cost of this trial/campaign so far, and how much is expected to be spent on the initiative going forward.*

*Break the above down by expense types (i.e., design costs, costs of pins etc.)*

There is no cost associated with the trial as personnel are participating as part of their regular duties and the pins were provided free of charge by Te Taura Whiri I Te Reo Māori, Māori Language Commission.

*How long has the trial been going on for and when is it due to end, become permanent?*

The trial began at the start of May and no end date has been set.

*How many "Reo Champions" have been selected for this trial?*

*How does one become a "Reo Champion"? Is this based on ability at speaking Te Reo, or confidence in speaking Te Reo. Is there some sort of test one must take in order to qualify?*

*Can you be revoked of your Reo Champion status?*

Personnel volunteer to participate and must meet the expectations outlined above. To date, 15 personnel have been identified as suitable. It is not something to be revoked.

*Can non Reo Champions wear the Reo Pin?*

No.

*Are Reo Champions required to wear the Reo Pin? If so, what happens if they do not wish to wear one?*

There is no requirement to wear a pin, it is an individual choice.

*Are there any consequences for Reo Champions who do not wish to speak in Te Reo when they encounter another Reo Champion?*

No.

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](http://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