



Headquarters
New Zealand Defence Force
Defence House
Private Bag 39997
Wellington Mail Centre
Lower Hutt 5045
New Zealand

OIA-2024-5113

30 October 2024

[REDACTED]
[@nzme.co.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@nzme.co.nz)

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 12 August 2024 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), the following information:

- A copy of the Army Safety and Training Review;*
- A copy of the review of the NZ Army Health and Safety System;*
- Communications to and from the Chief of Army relating to the ASTR review;*
- A copy of the central recording document of recommendation progress for the review of the NZ Army Health and Safety System.*

I apologise for the delay in providing this response. The Army Safety and Training Review (ASTR) was a process in the form of a series of activities and discussions, it is not a stand-alone document. It was not related to health and safety matters arising from the Court of Inquiry reports previously released to you. The process focussed on Army structure, doctrine, and capability, including consideration of foreign partners' militaries. ASTR information is therefore withheld in full in accordance with section 6(a) of the OIA, as making this information available would be likely to prejudice the defence or security of New Zealand, and the international relations of the Government of New Zealand.

The Army Health and Safety System review was a more concise process, the resulting Minute is provided at enclosure 1. Where indicated, personal information is withheld to protect privacy in accordance with section 9(2)(a) of the OIA, and the name of the author of the Minute is withheld in accordance with section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA. No central recording document of recommendation progress for the review exists, this part of your request is therefore declined in accordance with section 18(e) of the OIA.

A glossary of acronyms contained in Enclosure 1 is provided below. On page seven there is a typography error with the footnote that should reference the Officer Commanding Linton Regional Support Centre (LRSC, not LSRC)

G7:	the chief Army Training position, created as a result of the ASTR.
G73:	Army Current Training Plans position
SEMT:	Safety Event Management Tool
CA/DCA:	Chief of Army/Deputy Chief of Army
NAVOSH:	Navy Occupational Safety and Health
DASH:	Directorate of Air Safety
TAD:	The Army Depot, Waiouru
LMGI:	Lockheed Martin Global Inc.
SRS:	Safety Reporting System, the precursor to SEMT

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. Army General Staff Minute, Review of NZ Army Health and Safety System

Army General Staff, New Zealand Army

G7 MINUTE

30 Aug 23

1635/1

G7 (Through G73 LTCOL s.9(2)(a) [REDACTED])

REVIEW OF NZ ARMY HEALTH AND SAFETY SYSTEM

References:

- A. G7 1635/1 Minute review of NZ Army Health and Safety System dated 30 Jun 23
- B. Briefing discussion between G73 and LTCOL s. 9(2)(g)(i) [REDACTED] of 29 Aug 23

Purpose

1. The purpose of this minute is to provide G7 with an understanding of the current Army Health and Safety (Army H&S) System and identify where it is not fit for purpose. The review is not intended to define future health and safety systems for NZ Army.

Background

2. The task from G7 was to conduct of a review of the Army H&S System in order to ensure NZ Army is adhering to NZDF standards and best practice. Upon the establishment of the G7 Branch of Army GS, liaison with the Directorate of Safety (DoS) identified gaps in Army's health and safety system. Further exploration of the system by the ACA (T) led to the identification of issues relating to clarity of health and safety (H&S) roles and responsibilities. As a result of these identified issues, the ACA (T) has instituted a review into the Army H&S System.

Approach

3. The aim of the review is to gain an understanding of the current H&S system within Army and identify where it is not fit for purpose. It was acknowledged that this review contains a significant amount of work. It became apparent during discussions that there were a number of areas recognised above those currently included that had some influence, personnel or required provision within the H&S systems for NZ Army. This would require further work streams and discussion to explore where these interactions should be considered and prioritised with an Army H&S System.

4. The Terms of Reference allowed the review to offer an overview of the current Army H&S System. In short a 'this is what it currently looks like' based on the identified organisations that hold current H&S specific roles.

5. Information was gathered through interviews and discussions. It was instantly apparent that all commands and personnel within this space recognised the current deficiencies in the system, wanted to assist and willingly provided input for solutions.

Executive summary

6. As stated a lot of information is available across Army Formations (Fmns) and Commands as well as NZDF on the state of the Army H&S. There are a number of personnel working from unit, to Fmns through to Army level with H&S responsibilities or tasks. Focus of the review was to gain an understanding of the current situation and identify where it's not fit for purpose to inform further work. Of note Landworthiness conducted a similar review internally when Army H&S was part of this portfolio. Their outcomes and work streams were similar.

7. The Commands and organisations consulted have ongoing lines of operation, work streams and initiatives within the H&S space. They all sit at the higher level of responsibility for H&S within Army. There a number of systems that work within or are related to Army H&S. There are also a number of projects or business cases taking place that work to address deficiencies in personnel, equipment and resources that can be directly related to Army H&S. These are beneficial and worthwhile but there appears to be no overarching understanding or higher awareness of this work, it would be appropriate that Army H&S have a higher level of recognition in the work and outcomes.

8. The key theme as to the current state of Army H&S specifically the team now residing within G7 branch, was that it had become an advisory entity. It is not seen as the authority for H&S policy and advice within Army. It is seen as the subject matter experts (SME) on SEMT and liaison with DoS only. The perception of most is that it lacks authority and recognised formal or technical lines of communication around H&S within Army.

9. Army H&S doesn't have a systems approach to the conduct of its business. Whilst there are elements of coordination and reporting these do not appear to be formalised. Regular provision of Army H&S information, reporting and support products isn't apparent. The movement of information appears to be based on relationship networks or in response to a demand from higher or from DoS.

10. Army H&S appears to cease at the 'cattle stop' it's for 'in camp' not necessarily for training as this is considered a comd function. This is true and correct to a large extent, comd responsibility for risk and safety is relevant in the majority of most training conducted 'over the cattlestop'. The direction for comds is clear and followed as required through Risk Management Plans, training and orders. However qualified Army H&S Advisors are available regionally under the Regional Support Centres (RSC) but potentially underutilised as an enabler to comd due to a number of factors. These include but are not limited to the following:

- a. The current Army RSC H&S advisors belong to the RSA and are seen as a 'camp' asset. This often creates tension between comds in terms of tasking and information flow.
- b. The use of RSC H&S advisors to support field training outcomes and comds i.e. investigations and Courts of Inquiry are not yet common practice.
- c. SEMT information from training is triaged by units through their higher Fmn Risk and Safety advisors. This may not be shared across the regional location so immediate safety concerns or lessons aren't available.

11. The requirements of ISO 45001 will need Army H&S and OHS outputs combined to achieve results. The involvement of H&S personnel as soon as practicable to meet the requirements, provide input and identify areas of effort. The RSC H&S advisors and key personnel within commands are qualified and prepared to provide this support.

12. Consolidation or linking of ongoing work across Army that has H&S factors. Requirement for centralised oversight and promote 'an Army H&S community' to share an awareness of these various work streams.

13. SEMT is not well regarded, it doesn't support analysis or trend identification. It's difficult to access and requires a time consuming manual process to extract data. This results in an inability to provide H&S trends and link prevalent issues across commands.

14. Fmn/RSC have H&S SME and personnel that are willing to provide input and assist to improve the current Army H&S System.

15. There are subsequent work streams that have been identified that will require further effort in conjunction with DoS. However some suggested initiatives are recommended to G7 as short term improves to Army H&S. Accordingly the review identified and recommends the following:

- a. The G7 and incoming G73 assuming comd over Army H&S will provide a 'Champion' as well as move to address the lack of direction, authority and technical communication. A head of safety be appointed.
- b. Consideration given to move the comd of the RSC H&S advisors to G7 from RS(Army) to establish an Army H&S structure. Obviously further work is required to understand the full ramifications of the change and develop a transition plan.
- c. Implement a systems approach for Army H&S utilising the current RSC H&S advisors located within Army Camps as a workshop SME group. All of these personnel are qualified

and available to assist. Their support within guidelines has been discussed and tentatively agreed with CO RS(Army).

d. Army H&S System plan to lead and institute a suitable timeframe for a 'H&S Community' within Army to be established including representation from DoS to combine for info sharing, analysis or to inform higher IR.

e. Army H&S consider the provision of a regular report as per other Services to CA/DCA as a 'climate check' for H&S within Army.

Terms of Reference

What organisations within NZ Army hold current health and safety specific roles (both permanent positions and responsibilities)?

16. The H&S organisation's within Army are identified at Annex A, all hold current H&S roles and appointments. The majority of these appointments have suitably qualified personnel posted into them. In fact at the Operational/Tactical level most personnel hold higher level qualifications within the H&S field. A number of personnel at unit level also have trained or attended formal courses.

What are the health and safety roles in NZ Army and the responsibilities of these identified roles?

17. The Army H&S roles of Manager and Assistant Manager now reside under G7. They sit at the top of the hierarchy to ensure effective H&S management systems. This hasn't been the case due to a number of reasons.

18. The Fmns have H&S personnel responsible to their comd. They provide H&S information and meet requirements for their units and higher. This tends to be focused on training towards operational outputs. They work predominantly with the risk and mitigation of those risks in training. They are accessed by Army H&S.

19. Within units there is an H&S officer responsible to their comd. A number of units mainly CSS may have personnel within identified areas ie workshops to meet specialised H&S requirements. They provide H&S information and meet requirements for their sub-units and higher. They have a relationship with the Regional H&S advisors within their respective camp locations.

20. There are five regional civilian H&S advisors in Army Camps. These personnel are highly qualified, they are posted to Regional Support (Army) and located with the camps in support of the OIC Defence Area or OC RSC. Three of these personnel are Army civilians. Two of these

personnel are LMGI employees. These personnel are a qualified group of SME that due to the decentralized nature of the current H&S model are arguably not correctly utilized.

Are there any conflicts between the various roles and responsibilities i.e. two roles holding the same responsibility. Comment on whether these common areas of responsibility are appropriate.

21. The current structure within the camp environment has the resident RSC H&S advisors supporting the OIC Defence Area or OC of the RSC. As above the Fmns also have their own Risk, H&S advisors within their HQs. As per Annex A there are lines of comd and support however this often isn't recognized. This can create tension between Fmn personnel and the RSC H&S advisors, as an example SEMT triages for TAD will be processed through TRADOC. The RSC H&S advisor will not be part of the process despite being the resident SME in the location. Often this results in possible relevant lessons, observations and information not being shared across comds in a timely fashion. It is noted that in most cases there is informal communication across the community to share and provide information. This is also available in the unit H&S quarterly returns however it is a concern that was voiced at the tactical level as often these lessons are location, unit/school or region specific.

22. The RSC H&S advisors are highly competent and have a full time focus on H&S. They understand the HSW act and also have qualifications to audit and support H&S outcomes. They aren't utilised fully within the Army H&S system. The commonalities associated with the current structure at Annex A of unit H&S to FMN and regional H&S within Army is still appropriate. If managed appropriately it contributes to a layered approach to Army H&S for example 1 NZ BDE has a focus on safety in training to meet operational outputs whereas LCL has a focus on equipment hazards however together the information creates a superior product to enable training. The regional H&S advisors would be able to provide the overall SME input into this system. The current system is functioning albeit in an informal manner. This could be improved simply with a workshop on confirming or as needed redefining the current lines of responsibility between the H&S responsibilities.

23. The change that has established G7 through G73 as the 'head' of Army H&S is a key step in establishing a more functional service H&S system. The improved use of the RSC H&S advisors to maximize their efforts towards Army H&S outcomes. A structure exists however due partly to the lack of direction from Army H&S this structure hasn't been reinforced or exercised.

Do the identified roles and responsibilities have a system of communication to share information relating to health and safety?

24. There are a number of communication systems available to the identified roles and responsibilities. There is the NZDF Safety site, NAVOSH, DASH and Army on the NZDF Intranet. These sites vary in content however contain all of the necessary reference material and

information related to H&S within the Army and NZDF. The Army H&S Intranet site would benefit from a 'refresh', the inclusion of legislation hierarchy and some identified subject areas as per the DoS site would be a possible start point.

25. Within the NZ Army H&S community a limited system of communication does exist however this appears to be based mainly on an informal chain where relevant information is shared. There is no overall 'H&S communications net' that allows for both sharing information and providing direction.

Does any system of communication include a safety lessons learned system? How are safety lessons distributed throughout Army and across NZDF?

26. There is a safety lessons learned system at Fmn and within the regional structure at the RSCs. The information from this is shared however it would in most cases be formally through unit H&S quarterly reports, unit reporting, comd briefs and informal discussion within the H&S community. There isn't a formal collection process or means to distribute lessons and observations. The difficulty in using SEMT for identifying H&S trends also contributes to an inability to have an effective lessons loop throughout Army.

What governance systems exist within NZ Army that provide oversight for its health and safety system?

27. A higher NZDF Governance system exists for all services with DoS providing oversight through reporting requirements. The Executive H&S Committee and issued directives. In addition Army has the IG and comd chain however this area does require further work to define responsibilities. The potential move to the Army Safety and Training Board will contribute to a stronger governance system.

What policies and orders (NZDF and NZ Army) provide direction to NZ Army's health and safety system? What is the hierarchy of these documents?

28. The H&S at Work Act 2015¹ is the key work H&S law in New Zealand and covers nearly all work and workplaces. NZDF Legislation DFO 071 H&S, DFI 071 NZDF Safety Management System Framework, DFO 81 Risk management and DFO 41 hazardous Substances reflect NZ legislation requirements. DFO(A) Vol 2 Army H&S is the prime reference for NZ Army². A hierarchy of relevant reference Publications ie DFO(A) Vol 7, along with issued Comd Directives, Unit H&S Standing Orders and SOPs.

¹ The Health and safety at Work Act 2015 Presentation by Simpson and Grierson

² Health and safety Law in NZ Presentation by s. 9(2)(g)(i) Army H&S Manager

How does the NZ Army health and safety system interact with the other services and the Directorate of Safety?

29. Discussion with DoS identified that Army H&S lacked direction. It also had no formalized subordinate structure as the current H&S advisors are set up to support the regions and the OIC Defence area in most cases the OC RSC. DoS do interact regularly with Army H&S personnel however believe that this could be better. Where possible they have attended regional 'get togethers' and have informal lines of communication that are used regularly. There are also formal links to Army H&S around SEMT, meetings, compliance and advisory responsibilities.

30. DoS bought up that Army doesn't have an identified Director of Safety as per NAVOSH and DASH. This contributes directly to the lack of direction as previously noted. This position would offer parity with the other services. The move to G7 and G73 offers an appointment that could in the future take up the role for direction and governance.

31. Army H&S does interact with the other services through regular DoS meetings and when asked with the provision of information or reporting.

How is health and safety policy implemented from the NZDF level down to Army units? How does NZ Army health and safety enable this process?

32. The current structure of two SME which makes up Army H&S located in Trentham Camp doesn't adequately support policy implementation. There is a lack of consistent formal direction from Army H&S therefore messaging and communication appears to be generated from the bottom up. This is an identified key weakness in the current Army H&S system.

33. As a current working example within Army that can be referenced for improves to the latter. The RSA should be looked at as a model,³ they have a systems approach with a Maj (lead systems) appointed as the OC H&S. All of the camp advisors including the two LMGI personnel are willingly part of the system. They are in support of the OIC defence Area or OC RSC as the regional lead. Their H&S system has regular contact whenever needed through their formal comd chain via MS teams etc. A monthly meeting schedule builds towards quarterly meetings in an identified camp (rotating each quarterly), including Army H&S and DoS as standing invites. The RS(A) Project One Way includes initiatives for H&S within the regions.

Are there any gaps in, or issues with, NZ Army's health and safety system?

³ Health and Safety RS(A) Process and Procedure OC LSRC MAJ s. 9(2)(g)(i)

34. There are a number of cross command issues identified that ultimately prevent or slow shared timely information on notifiable events to ensure awareness. This isn't helped by the inability of SEMT to support and provide to a lessons loop.

35. A greater awareness of the ability to include or have Army H&S input into identified COI or to support command investigations for better outcomes.

36. Relationships with the local worksafe organisation could be grown. Engagement needs for a stronger relationship around the HSW Act, this could be as simple as a remit given to engage locally for 'cup of tea.'

Is the reporting system (SEMT) fit for purpose for use by NZ Army? If not, why not?

37. The SEMT reporting system isn't well regarded by NZ Army commands and representatives during discussions. The themes from almost every level focused the limitations around wide access due to it being on the Dixs, it's difficult to interrogate for useable information to prevent reoccurrences, identify trends to support or recommend changes. The process to mine the information from SEMT was referred to as 'mandraulic' and success in using this tool sat with a small group of users that were highly skilled in manipulating the various screens and options. The SEMT system 'roll out' was inadequately implemented into service and most indicated it was rushed. Commentary around the preference for the previous system of SRS within Army (as it also communicated with PROFILE) was prevalent. SEMT is now unsupported by developers which has further complicated its use as upgrades to improve or fix areas are unlikely to be developed or available.

38. SEMT had issues from beginning. A new tool needs to have the ability to be reviewed annually, upgraded or changed as needed and have a full implementation plan. Use the H&S community to implement including them from the beginning to support both the coursing and messaging.

39. There are a number of off the shelf systems currently available that are less expensive and would support gap analysis and the provision of trends for remediation and or solutions. The availability of these various tools/systems is a source of frustration for the H&S personnel. DoS did indicate that there is another system currently being investigated as a possible replacement.

Is the training provided to all health and safety personnel fit for purpose? If not, why not?

40. The review found that key personnel at formation and above were highly competent and held relevant qualifications. At unit level whilst there were differences between formations and comds on the whole training for individuals and staff was being carried out. The use of outside providers such as impac was an option if suitable trainers were not available locally or within

comds. A discussion on the 'old' Unit H&S Officer⁴ course which was delivered within Army by suitably trained instructors from then NZ Army health organisation. This was considered a successful course producing regular qualified staff within units. It is advised that Standing Orders, the References that these Orders are applicable to, Instructions, Procedures and resulting training delivered were of a sound and consistent standard across units.

41. The discussion on where cmd responsibilities for H&S is best taught and the culture started. Is this professional development and included in formal officer courses? Is this a PDR objective for comds at certain levels? It was understood that inclusion in the current formal course framework for instance Grade three/two or Warrant Officers course would prove problematic. Any inclusion would likely necessitate a full review of the training need, requirements, continuum and actual framework, however this may prove a future workstream. Of interest is that there was a thought that this was indeed once included in officer promotion courses but is now discontinued.

Are there any risks which require immediate attention from NZ Army?

42. At present the review did not identify any risks that require immediate action. Obviously there is a need to address a number of areas in accordance with the recommendations of the review. The current H&S system and personnel at Army, across formations and unit level functions in an informal manner. Personnel conduct their duties and meet their responsibilities as required, compliance is met and guidance appears to be gained through localized networks. There is an awareness of H&S and responsibility for it at all levels within Army. This can be attributed to cmd direction, compliance, recent serious safety events and a greater awareness of the need to develop H&S practices. Understandably the unfortunate record of recent serious accidents have contributed to a greater awareness and focus on H&S and training safe.

43. This current informal line of communication is not sustainable. As per any informal communication stream this depends on the responses and willingness of personnel to be involved.

44. The implementation of ISO 45001 is identified by almost all as a key event that will require focused effort and form a main H&S workstream to adopt it successfully. The ramifications of not doing this correctly was pointed out by all in the H&S field. A large amount of work and engagement will be required between DoS, Army and down to formations and units to ensure the implementation is carried out effectively and with efficiency. At regional level it was suggested that Army conduct regular meetings or workshops in conjunction with DoS direction to allow the roll out process to be shaped. Many cautioned that there is potential to have an almost 'fait accompli' for Army if not involved in the process early and then working within it throughout to actual implementation.

⁴ A guide to being the Unit Health and Safety Officer

What is the perception of occupational safety and health within NZ Army?

45. The definition of occupational safety and health is identified as the discipline dealing with the prevention of work related injuries and diseases as well as the protection and promotion of the health of workers. Ultimately this means the aim at the improvement of working conditions and environment for our personnel. The HSW act is underpinned by the principles that workers and other persons should be given the highest level of protection against harm to their health, safety and welfare from hazards and risks arising from work. Generally the legislation and principles are understood and followed throughout the Army. All levels of comd have an awareness and understanding of the importance of keeping personnel safe whilst on operations, in training and in the various workplaces. There is also an understanding that this covers a wide spectrum of 'Health', including the areas of mental and welfare.

46. Discussion with CoS JSG informed of their workstreams to hire additional occupational health staff and adjust their FHP capability to support camps when not deployed. There are the required skillsets in uniform within Army. An occupational health overlay based on FHO in Linton is currently being worked on.

Is there a continuum of culture from occupational safety and health through to safety in training? If not, why not?

47. There is a continuum of culture from occupational safety and health through to safety in training however this dose need additional examination. This area would benefit from some further research into the effects and benefits of future governance initiatives and any changes to the Army H&S structure specifically information and lessons sharing. The FMNs have directives, orders, personnel, training, and documentation ie risk registers to address their areas when meeting outputs.

Any other issues or observations associated with providing a fit for purpose H&S system within NZ Army.

48. All of the organisations consulted have ongoing work streams that directly relate to H&S within the NZ Army. There are some strong initiatives ongoing from policy, structure changes to the provision of qualified personnel. The majority of units, schools and personnel have an awareness of their responsibilities and H&S compliance to achieve safe training to meet directed outputs. The form of an H&S framework is already prevalent within the NZ Army however there is at present no overall H&S authority that sits over the top of this. The move to the G7 Branch is a positive in this area.

49. The project team lead Ms s.9(2)(a) LCL on land Capability Hazard Management provided a brief on their project.⁵ This is a valuable body of work that will assist across Army. Once completed Army H&S would be a key stakeholder to receive or hold a copy of this database for use by Army H&S community and comds.

50. The current intranet site would benefit from an update to ensure it can provide a suitable level of relevant information, direction to information or guidance. Some reflection of the DoS site information headings and the inclusion of Legislation, NZDF H&S Hierarchy and Governance would assist.

51. Further discussion with IG and Land Worthiness is required to understand and recognize the importance that Risk management shares within H&S.⁶ The recent visit by NZ Army Land Worthiness to its Australian counterpart has provided documents showing their structures and products. The Australian model of compliance⁷ and initiatives is strong. Whilst the scale particularly personnel is unsustainable for our Army, there is value in exploring their structures and adopting some of these artefacts.

Conclusion

52. A number of key staff with roles and responsibilities within Armys H&S framework were consulted. It was found that many of the Fmns and organisations identified the same shortcomings with the current Army H&S organisation. The lack of direction from Army H&S and a functional H&S structure being significant. However all of these Fmns have continued with their own bodies of work and improves to continue to increase H&S initiatives.

Recommendations

53. The review makes the following recommendations to identify and inform subsequent work streams that will require further effort in conjunction with DoS. However some of these are suggested to G7 as short term improves to Army H&S. Accordingly the review identified and recommends the following:

- a. The G7 and incoming G73 assuming comd over Army H&S will provide a 'Champion' as well as move to address the lack of direction, authority and technical communication. Consideration to appointing a Director or head of safety within Army as per the other services to provide overall H&S direction and governance. This could be G73 in the first instance.

⁵ Land Capability Hazard Management Presentation

⁶ Landworthiness Risk Management Presentation

⁷ Australian Army Military Risk Management Cards provided by Landworthiness

- b. Consideration given to move comd of the RSC H&S advisors to G73 from RS(Army) to establish an Army H&S structure. Obviously further work is required to understand the full ramifications of the change and develop a transition plan.
- c. Implement a systems approach for Army H&S utilising the current RSC H&S advisors as a workshop SME group. All of these personnel are qualified and available to assist. This has been discussed and tentatively agreed with CO RS(Army).
- d. Army H&S System plan to lead and institute a suitable timeframe for an Army H&S 'Community' to be established including representation from DoS to combine regularly for info sharing, analysis and to inform higher IR.
- e. Army H&S consider the implementation and provision of a regular report as per other Services to CA/DCA as a 'climate check' for H&S within Army.

Signed on original

s.9(2)(g)(i)

LTCOL

Project Officer G7