



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

OIA-2024-5117

13 September 2024

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@stuff.co.nz

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 16 August 2024 requesting information regarding *the 2024 change process* under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) is making workforce savings as part of Budget 2024 to ensure it can continue to deliver its core military functions. Where appropriate, responses to the various parts of your request are provided in that context below.

- *How many roles have been or will be disestablished overall? How many have been established?*
- *Any communication internally regarding concerns on the impact to the frontline from March 1 to August 16 2024*

Decisions related to the reduction or creation of roles as a result of Budget 2024 have not yet been finalised. These parts of your request are therefore declined in accordance with section 18(e) of the OIA as the information does not yet exist.

- *Any communication between management and leadership regarding leaks around the change process, from March 1 to August 16 2024*

No leaks concerning NZDF workforce savings have been identified. This part of your request is also declined in accordance with section 18(e) of the OIA for the reason explained above.

- *All communication between the CE and the Minister from March 1 to August 16, 2024 regarding the change process.*

The consultations necessary to make a decision on this part of your request are such that a proper response cannot be made at this time. An extension to 11 October is therefore required.

- *How much has been spent on leadership leaving/arriving events or parties in 2024?*

There have been no leaving/arriving events as part of NZDF workforce savings efforts in 2024. This part of your request is also declined in accordance with section 18(e) of the OIA.

Separate to this, and following consultation with you on 13 September 2024, there have been events in 2024 marking formal relinquishment of Command and Change of Command protocols.

Information concerning the cost of these will be provided as soon as possible.

- *How much has been saved on the contractors and consultant spend through the change process?*

A reduction of \$8.125M in contractors and consultants has been made as part of the Government's Fiscal Sustainability Programme.

- *How many times was the counselling service used between March 1 to August 16 2024, compared to the same time in 2023?*

The table below provides the number of personnel and civilian staff who accessed NZDF counselling services during the requested periods.

	2023	2024
March	31	24
April	19	30
May	32	41
June	40	29
July	20	41
August	29	21

- The change process decision document - Any reviews conducted after the change process was implemented, regarding the change process

As workforce savings remain ongoing, this part of your request is declined in accordance with section 18(e) of the OIA as the information requested does not yet exist.

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



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New Zealand

OIA-2024-5117

21 October 2024

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@stuff.co.nz

Dear [REDACTED]

Further to the response to you of 13 September 2024, the following parts of your request are addressed below:

- All communication between the CE and the Minister from March 1 to August 16, 2024 regarding the change process.

On 11 July 2024 at 3:50PM, the Chief of Defence Force sent the following message to the Minister of Defence regarding New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) workforce savings efforts:

Our key talking points for the PM and MinDef on emerging workforce affordability aspects are:

- 1. The NZDF is being rigorous in its task of implementing its budget and I support that. It is important not to speculate but to instead focus on the NZDFs task to continue to achieve its core business.*
- 2. [Re workforce plans] I understand work on the NZDF workforce is still ongoing and no decisions have been made at this stage.*
- 3. The NZDF has to be ready to respond to military tasks as a priority so I accept that there are hard decisions that have to be made NZDF activities. The NZDF are keeping me up to date on these decisions.*

The core purpose of the NZDF has not changed – if anything it has become sharper and more in focus as we look at the geo-strategic environment the Defence Force operates in.

The Minister responded on the same day at 3:51PM with *These seem good.*

The Minister of Defence also received the following updates within Defence Weekly Reports:

Defence Weekly Report (25 – 31 July 2024)

NZDF Workforce Update

A series of Town Halls across NZDF Camps and Bases and online Q&A sessions have commenced, as part of the engagement plan to inform NZDF personnel on the workforce savings programme. Expressions of interest for voluntary redundancy will open on the week starting 12 August, and personnel will be provided key information on Thursday 8 August. Union engagement will begin this week to inform them of our approach on voluntary redundancy. A verbal update on Town Hall feedback will be provided for the Defence Officials meeting on 5 August.

Defence Weekly Report (1 – 7 August 2024)

NZDF Workforce Update

Senior NZDF leadership have continued with a series of town halls and online engagements with staff concerning workforce matters. Last week there were four in-person Town Halls in Defence

House, Petone, Trentham, and Ohakea with each of these having people physically attending or dialling in via MS Teams; and three virtual Town Halls where people attended via MS Teams only. This week there were seven in-person Town Halls across Burnham, Whenuapai, Linton, Hokowhitu, Waiouru, Devonport and Papakura. More than 4000 NZDF staff attended.

With respect to events in 2024 marking formal relinquishment of Command and Change of Command protocols, these are traditional ceremonies of long standing. They have occurred many times in the past for the relinquishment or change of commands, particularly at a senior level for Service Chiefs or the Chief of the Defence Force.

For instance, the New Zealand Army conducted a relinquishment of command ceremony for Major General Boswell DSD at the New Zealand Army National Marae. This involved a 50-person guard of honour with the display of all Army colours, guidons, and banners. For the Chief of Defence Force the Change of Command Ceremony was hosted by Her Excellency The Right Honourable Dame Cindy Kiro, GNZM, QSO, Governor-General of New Zealand at Government House. It involved a tri-Service 50-person Guard of Honour, the Royal New Zealand Air Force Band, and a Maori cultural element.

The below table provides the costs (GST exclusive) for each of the relevant Change of Command parades and relinquishment of Command ceremonies:

Parades & Relinquishment of Command	Position	Amount (\$)
Change of Command Parade	Chief of Defence Force Air Marshal Kevin Short	22,398.71
Change of Command Parade	Chief of Air Force Air Vice Marshal Andrew Clark	13,010.85
Relinquishment of Command Ceremony	Chief of Army Major General John Boswell	11,112.28
Relinquishment of Command Ceremony	Chief of Navy Rear Admiral David Proctor	10,747.09

You retain 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

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