



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

OIA-2024-5233.1

24th February 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 26 January 2025, following the response to you of 23 January 2025, seeking a copy of the assumptions that inform work being undertaken by independent actuaries. This request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

As you have correctly noted, Veterans' Affairs New Zealand (VA) has a process for determining estimated veterans' entitlement liability, and that response incorrectly stated that modelling is being undertaken when it had been completed.

For clarity, the liability associated with veterans' entitlement is the Crown's liability and not a VA liability. The 2024 New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) Annual Report¹ presents the schedules of non-departmental expenses managed by NZDF on behalf of the Crown. The general assumptions associated with veterans' entitlement, are outlined on pages 209-212 of that Annual Report.

Given the nature of the veterans' entitlement and the factors that drive it, there can be a very high level of variability in the actuarial forecast in the value of the liability. This is noted on page 78 of the 2024 Half Year Economic and Fiscal Update².

It is also assumed that the Gardiner decision will increase the volume of claims received by VA and the acceptance rate of claims will significantly increase. The decision will impact all three entitlement areas (Veterans Support entitlements; assessment, treatment and rehabilitation; and, the Veterans Independence Programme), thus lifting the projected future liability for each of these areas.

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

GA Motley
Brigadier
Chief of Staff HQNZDF

¹ https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/Uploads/DocumentLibrary/NZDF-Annual-Report-2024_Web-version.pdf

² <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2024-12/hyefu24.pdf>