

# ARMY NEWS

ISSUE 543  
JUNE 2023



## **BUSHMASTERS**

They're here!

## **BRAVO WHA**

On exercise in the snowy south

## **OUR NZDF NURSES**

A capability we couldn't do without

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Photo: Corporal Sean Spivey



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Editor: Judith Martin  
Ph: 021 240 8578 E: armynews@nzdf.mil.nz  
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*“Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei”*

**Leading-Positive – Seek the treasure you value most dearly!**

I often think about how fortunate we are. Both as a country and as a people I think we live a fairly protected life, but of late we've made a habit of turning challenges into 'hardships'. Uncertain times have transformed into a sinking gloom and what have been quite situational and explainable woes – into self-doubt. Given the chance, I wonder what our forebears from previous times of uncertainty, adversity or conflict might say about us?

My guess is, they'd assess the state of things then quickly tell us to 'pony-up'! As the whakatauki eludes – if we're going to bow our heads – let it be a loftier mountain and for a damn-good reason. This month's short article is about managing the hard times – while

leading with optimism. My sense is that we could all do worse than turning up to mahi with a smile and an upbeat approach.

As a Warrant Officer, our appointments as Sar-Majors are somewhat stereotypically grumpy and disapproving, but these mature colleagues make it through most days glad to serve, grateful for comradeship and eager for other challenges. My wish for you – no matter where you sit in the Army organisation – is to lead-self and lead-others positively. In recent weeks I've seen a host of units enjoying training and generating for deployments. Despite that wide majority, more than a few pockets of our Army were in a negative funnel! From my standpoint it's OK to be frustrated and to voice that – but it's not OK to allow that to be a permanent state of mind. If we are to be successful – we must shift.

I rarely talk about hard-times, but alongside some pretty amazing people I've experienced some very uncomfortable situations.

Being out on that edge of physical safety, fatigued and in austerity has helped me appreciate life's gifts – and its actual challenges. Living through a few of these evolutions helps you calibrate the difference between the realities of military-service and unrealistic expectations of it. Reflecting on a long-combat patrol circa 2002 – an experienced officer and close friend recently confided how at the end of that task – a simple piece of fried bread, a brew and a Kandahar sunrise was as good as it gets, and I tended to agree. The point to take-away is that treasure exists in the most obscure places of our careers. Sometimes hardship and hurdles are the very levers that bring out the best in us. Our roles are to navigate and lead through those troubles.

Retired USMC General, Jim Mattis has said '...leading and motivating people comes from being highly motivated ourselves'. More often than not, soldiers are naturally drawn to leaders who can derive purpose and deliver on task.



As you move through June and set tone for July – take a moment to lift your sights from issues beyond your control. Focus on your people and your mission, shifting attention from impossible to the possible – life will look much better.

**WO1 Wiremu Moffitt**  
16<sup>th</sup> Sergeant Major of the Army

# WHAT IS THE CHIEF OF ARMY'S FORUM?

**The Chief's Forum is a niche group of soldiers and officers specially selected to represent the thoughts of junior members of the NZ Army. Chaired by SMA and the Soldier of the Year (SOTY), the forum historically assembled as a method of engaging with soldiers, but has since matured into a valuable think-tank. The Chief's Forum reports to the Chief of Army and members of Army General Staff, and its members have opportunities to provide considered ground-truth to senior leaders based on agreed topics, research and collective sensing.**

The Chief's Forum meets and operates across the year's four-quarters, focussing their attention on topical issues important to soldiers and NCOs. This year, under the direction of SOTY SGT Jack Colton and his peer-leadership team, CF23 embarked on evaluating four challenge areas – Army Welfare, evidence-based Decision Making, Land Force Readiness, and finally – Army People-Policy. These are tough conversations and the work requires committed people. If you are interested in becoming a member – submit your intentions through your Command team.

**Q1 23 – Welfare**

During our inaugural 2023 meeting, the CA's forum focused on examining the Army Welfare system, with the intention of addressing the various challenges faced by junior soldiers. Our analysis identified three primary issues that need to be addressed in order to improve the overall effectiveness of the system.

Firstly, we found that the accessibility of the Army Welfare system is hindered by its distribution across multiple platforms, which are often overly complex and difficult to navigate.

This fragmentation creates barriers for those who seek to utilize the services offered.

Secondly, there seems to be a general lack of awareness, especially among junior soldiers about the welfare services available to them. Many individuals remain uninformed about the resources at their disposal resulting in underutilization of the support systems in place. This may be attributed to insufficient education on the subject matter at the junior level. This has been confirmed by discussions with senior leadership and our own analysis.

Lastly, the absence of a centralised one-stop platform makes it difficult for service members to easily access the welfare resources they need.

To address these issues, we presented our recommendations to senior leadership. We suggested the creation of a comprehensive one-stop platform that is accessible to everyone including service members' families via the unclassified internet. This platform should consolidate all welfare services and be as user-friendly as civilian equivalents, such as booking a hotel room on Booking.com.

The ideal solution would be a website that is simple to locate, easy to navigate and designed with a user-friendly interface. Furthermore it should not require the download of another app as that could create additional barriers for users. It is important that this platform is heavily utilized by junior ranks who comprise the majority of military personnel. If they are not using it then the platform is not effectively serving its intended purpose.

By implementing these recommendations, we aim to streamline the Army Welfare system and make it more accessible to junior soldiers, ultimately providing better support for our service members and their families.

The CA's forum is always looking for suggestions and ways in which we can better support our serving members and families, if you have suggestions on ways or issues that we can improve please feel free to get in touch with us by emailing the forum at [ChiefsForumArmy@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:ChiefsForumArmy@nzdf.mil.nz)



## A MESSAGE FROM THE LAND COMPONENT COMMANDER



**The first half of 2023 has been a busy time for the Land Component. TRADOC has continued to deliver excellent individual training whilst working to update how training is delivered.**

Joint Support Group is working hard to support the NZDF by providing health and policing effects. 1 (NZ) Bde has led responses to natural disasters, and re-booted collective training. Pleasingly the Land Component has worked together to engage with our international partners in really tangible and meaningful ways, and we continue to deploy skilled and well led contingents on operations. Our land forces have represented the New Zealand Army exceptionally this year, delivering real effect, well done!

After the last three Covid-19-affected years, our Army still needs to be rebuild capabilities that have waned, something that many of our partner nations are also experiencing. In December 2022, a plan to ensure this happens across the Land Component was released. This is a good plan that remains relevant, it provides a pathway to ensure that the New Zealand Army can continue responding effectively to a broad range of security challenges into the future. I intend to amend aspects of this plan to emphasise the importance of being able to operate effectively today, whilst building interoperability with partner nations in order to provide security in our part of the world. I also wish to continue to place emphasis on our excellent standards of individual training, the absolute foundation of our capability.

The Land Component is currently progressing well on its journey towards improved capability. By the end of 2023 we will have successfully conducted HADR operations at Task Group level (OP AWHINA in response to Cyclone Gabrielle), tested the HRTU in the conduct of contingency operations (EX VALKYRIE RISING), assessed our ability to deploy an interoperable LAV Combat Team into an ally's battle group (EX TALISMAN SABRE) and practised the provision of fires within a coalition brigade in a littoral environment (JPMRC). As our regeneration continues, we will continue to review and amend our plans, to ensure that we can balance individual and collective training, operations, and rest and respite.

Ensuring that regeneration is done correctly and effectively is important, but we must also consider the readiness states that our forces are currently at. As we know, adversaries and natural disasters will not wait for us. We must focus on our current readiness state, and be ready to deploy now, as we are. As adaptable war fighters, we must be prepared to take the training and equipment that we have right now, and apply ourselves to the mission we face. That is where your first class training, your professionalism and your mind-set will be key.

Keep up the great mahi!

**Brigadier Matt Weston**  
Land Component Commander



## CO 2CSSB HONoured

**Lieutenant Colonel Vanessa Ropitini had just two weeks' notice that she was deploying to Europe to support the New Zealand Government's contribution to the international response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.**

Her outstanding efforts as the Logistic Task Group Commander with the International Donor Coordination Centre (IDCC) in Germany have now been recognised with the New Zealand Distinguished Service Decoration, an honour she thought was "the sort of thing that happens to other people".

During the early stages of the IDCC, she assisted in assessing and prioritising the Government of Ukraine's equipment and capability demand against the offers of donated capability and support by many nations.

"As you go through your military career you go through peaks and troughs, and this came at a good time for me. It reinforced why I stay in the military, it gave me a sense of purpose, I was engaging with such a highly diverse group of people and it was just an amazing opportunity," she said.

With more than 30 years' experience in the Army, Lieutenant Colonel Ropitini was a key member of the small command team which designed the future structures of the Headquarters.

Her diplomatic skills in capturing and channelling the international response was key in advancing the IDCC from a bilateral organisation to a cohesive international team from 26 nations.

"When it was confirmed we were going on the deployment we had between 10 to 14 days to when we got on the plane, so this feels like a little bit of a reward for just ditching the family at that short notice and it makes everything all worthwhile on reflection."

While deployed, Lieutenant Colonel Ropitini addressed shortcomings, ensuring donations could be transferred to the Ukraine Armed Forces as a

complete capability, such as matching donations of equipment with training expertise in that equipment offered by different countries.

"It's a weird feeling, seeing someone else's perception of what your performance has been," she said.

"We are underestimated as a small Army on what we can actually bring to the party."

# PIONEER PASSES ON:

## A tribute to one of the NZDF's first explosive detector dogs in Afghanistan

By Andrew Bonallack

**When explosive detector dog Yardley was deployed to Afghanistan in 2012, his success on operations was only tempered by two minor mishaps.**

One day the slightly accident-prone canine got his leg caught in wire and on another occasion he ate rat poison which resulted in him having his stomach pumped.

Two strikes down, thought his handler then-Lance Corporal Regan Blogg; what would be his third?

Ten years later that turned out to be cancer. Yardley died recently aged 13.

Speaking about his beloved sidekick, Blogg said the pure-bred golden Labrador was a product of Australia's Border Force breeding programme in Melbourne.

The NZDF had flagged it urgently needed to deploy Explosive Detector Dogs (EDDs) to Afghanistan to assist the New Zealand Provincial Reconstruction Team (Task Group Crib).

Yardley was imported to New Zealand and was one of five EDDs trained in conjunction with the New Zealand Police Dog Training section.

Yardley possessed the right stuff – the drive to succeed, to work all day to earn the right to claim the rubber ball toy and enthusiastic praise from his handler.

In November 2012 he and another canine, Chuck, became the first NZDF EDDs to be deployed to Afghanistan, heading to Bamiyan with Blogg.

Yardley and Chuck's job was to detect hidden explosives. They carried out vehicle and route searches, and building and compound clearances. If one of the dogs found an explosive, they would 'indicate' this by sitting beside it.

Blogg said it was an awesome experience, although at the start of their deployment everyone ignored them; it turned out personnel had been told not to interact with the dogs and their handler.

He said once that miscommunication had been cleared up, the dogs became an important part of the camp's welfare and morale, always ready for a pat.

Blogg said Yardley was known for his relaxed, easy-going attitude and love of company.

For their outstanding work in Afghanistan, both Yardley and Chuck were unofficially given the NATO Medal for the Non-Article 5 International Security Assistance Force, issued to personnel who served with Task Group Crib.



When the team returned to New Zealand, Blogg continued on as Yardley's handler until they parted ways at the end of 2014. He was asked if he would want to take Yardley home when the dog retired.

Four years later, newly-retired Yardley arrived in Picton on a ferry from Wellington. Blogg, who by that time had also left Army life, pursed his lips and gave a special whistle. Yardley came running over, easily remembering his former handler, before sulking for 24 hours to let Blogg know he wasn't impressed about being apart for so long.

Blogg, who now lives in the Selwyn District and works as a firefighter in Christchurch,

marvelled at how easily Yardley handled the transition from a working dog to a loving family pet.

He said Yardley clearly relished his retirement with a growing family that included Ace, the family's other dog.

But Yardley retained a lot of his Army life routine, including expecting a walk first thing in the morning.

In February this year the family noticed Yardley was off his food. The vet discovered a lump that turned out to be a carcinoma. Yardley was still running around, but Blogg said by March their faithful pet was almost completely off his food and the cancer had spread throughout his entire body.

A dog certainly lets you know when they've had enough, Blogg said. He spent Yardley's last night sleeping beside him and in the morning, despite it all, Yardley was ready for his morning walk, which he got.

On April 1 Yardley was put to sleep, knowing his family were holding him and he was safe.

Yardley was cremated with a letter from Blogg, a family picture, and the patches of a soldier – the Kiwi badge, the New Zealand flag, and his Afghanistan badge.

We salute an NZDF pioneer, a brave dog and loyal friend.

## A drive to succeed

**When it comes to the Defence Force's Explosive Detector Dogs (EDD), what counts is personality.**

Rita, a Labrador cross, has that attribute in spades, even if her origins are humble. In fact, her background and age are uncertain, having been discovered wandering and taken in by the SPCA.

She now comes under handler and combat engineer Lance Corporal Luke Martin, of Military Working Dogs 2 Section. He thinks Rita may be an ex-farm dog, but she definitely has the right temperament for her new working life as an EDD.

"All dogs go through a selection process, but there's a real basic test. You take them out into a field with a ball and you throw it. Are they into chasing it? And then you throw it into the long grass and you find out how long it takes the dog to find it. Have they got the drive to keep looking for it?"

In Rita's case, she kept hunting and hunting for 15 minutes – she was determined.

"We also test them in urban environments, to see what they react to. Are they scared of built-up places, or even their own shadow?"

Rita has been a trained EDD for four years and is a pleasure to

work with, he says. "Every engineer is going to say, their EDD is the best dog. But Rita was very quick to learn. She's still eager, still got the drive. She has a personality, she's not a robot. She's waiting for me in the morning, knowing she's going to have a good day."

He's worked with other dogs, but Rita is definitely the best, he says. "She's very responsive and easy work, and it shows from the start. There's a whole bunch of commands to get a dog to do a pattern of search, but with me and Rita, it's like telepathy. I'll think of something, and she will do it. It's that bond you create, that mental respect, and that's what I feel with Rita."

Rita has deployed to Christchurch during security operations for the one-year anniversary of the mosque shooting, and during a bomb scare at Palmerston North airport in 2021.

And what does she get when she's done a good job? "An orange 'chuck it' ball. That's payday for her."





## The first 24 Bushmaster protected mobility vehicles for the New Zealand Army have arrived at Trentham Military Camp.

"The arrival of the Bushmaster fleet represents a significant uplift in capability and protection for defence force personnel, and a milestone in the Government's historic investment in our defence kit," Defence Minister Andrew Little said.

A total of 43 Bushmasters which are Australian-designed and built vehicles have been purchased and will replace the New Zealand Army's ageing armoured Pinzgauers.

Bushmasters carry more troops than the Pinzgauers and offer greater blast and ballistic protection to personnel.

They are multipurpose vehicles that can be used in New Zealand, the Pacific, and overseas in a range of missions and operations.

The Bushmaster fleet was designed specifically for New Zealand Army use. It comes in five different variants to carry out a range of tasks, including mobile communications and command hubs, troop transport, and protected ambulances.

Many of the New Zealand Defence Force's overseas partners already use them.

The remainder of the Bushmaster vehicles will arrive in batches throughout 2023. They are being tested and certified for use at Trentham Military Camp, before being sent to their home bases.

The 43 Bushmaster vehicles in the fleet are made up of five variants: 25 troop carriers; 10 command and control; four ambulances; two for logistics, and two for maintenance support.

## HUNTSMAN – AN EW WINNER FOR NEW ZEALAND

**The past few years have been trying for many... both for the NZ Army and for the country. Covid-19 presented many challenges as the nation headed into multiple lockdowns. In efforts to keep busy and distracted, many people turned to baking, exercise or binge watching TV shows. However, within the barracks of Burnham a group of young soldiers got busy developing what is now known as HUNTSMAN.**

HUNTSMAN is a geolocation device that can isolate and transmit an emitted radio signal within a given area. These New Zealand soldiers have travelled to Exercise Stormforce in the United States for the past three years. The exercise offers the opportunity for friendly collaboration with other developers, as well as to both define and test HUNTSMAN as a capability.

HUNTSMAN has produced the most accurate geolocation over the past two years at the exercise. It offers the most cost-effective solution for New Zealand to keep up with the coalition partners and introduces automation features to the geolocation space.

While engaging with other visitors at the exercise, it became very clear how impressive this capability really is. A US Navy Officer remarked, "New Zealand has done a lot with very little, what they have accomplished is inspirational". One visitor highlighted how much money other militaries have poured into contractors and vendors to produce a capability that is not as good – some have spent over one billion dollars with its industry partners.

New Zealand is disproportionately represented in the electronic warfare space, and HUNTSMAN has propelled the country forward onto the international stage. This is an excellent example of the

transformation that is occurring within the NZ Army as soldiers embrace existing technology and focus on future digitised capabilities.

New Zealand's partners have expressed their desire to purchase this capability and focussed their interest on the minds of the New Zealand soldiers behind the capability.

HUNTSMAN is an innovative capability that beats others in both cost and effectiveness. This showcases everything the New Zealand Army stands for – leadership, ingenuity, and interoperability.



# LENDING A HAND IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

Reservists are often called on to help in the area near where they live when disaster strikes.

Such was the case when Cyclone Gabrielle struck in the Hawke's Bay, Taupō-based Lance Corporal Brad Woodford had no qualms heading to Hawke's Bay as a first responder, to assist the district he was raised in.

His local knowledge was imperative as part of the initial New Zealand Army response with Reserve Force East Coast Company, 5<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment, based in Napier.

Still with strong ties to the Puketapu, Rissington, Dartmoor, Patoka and Puketitiri areas, the Army was able to leverage on his local knowledge. With an understanding of the agricultural sector, the AFFCO livestock buyer had an appreciation of the needs within the rural community. Relaying that information into military language back to the army meant assistance arrived to the communities swiftly.

"Seeing the devastation in the community I grew up in, and seeing those people upset who I grew up with, was heart-breaking," he confesses. Hit by the extent of the devastation, Lance Corporal

Woodford's enthusiasm and dedication to assist the district never faltered.

"It was a real highlight for me, being able to bridge the gap between a community close to me, and the Army. Dealing with the community concerns, and directly relaying that information back to the Army meant we were seeing results pretty much immediately."

Along with a small team of Regular and Reserve Force soldiers, the 39-year-old played a key part in ensuring the cut off community of Dartmoor had food, water and fuel available. With the bridge washed away, the main line of resupply delivery was by air, by the Royal New Zealand Air Force NH90 helicopter.

Lance Corporal Woodford, in close liaison with his cousin, Shaun Andrews, a local Dartmoor farmer, paddled across the now quiet Mangaone River, to establish where a pulley system could be set up in hopes that a dinghy be made available. This way supplies could be ferried across more efficiently, giving the community an element of independence. Andrews was also



able to speak with the community, clarifying everyone was accounted for and okay.

With the availability of a dinghy and all hands on deck, Lance Corporal Aaron Marinus, who was in charge of the resupply said, "It blew my whole estimate out of the way. I thought we'd have to leave the fuel at the river's edge. It worked well within our time frame, and we managed to give them something that hopefully really helped them until a more permanent structure arrived."

The pulley system was a welcome relief and met with delight from those isolated, and as the team was setting up, supplies from friends also arrived, creating an optimistic atmosphere.

LCPL Woodford was the first soldier to put feet on the ground in the townships of Waihau and Dartmoor too, and was met with tears of relief from some locals, which was both humbling and moving, he recalls.

He went on to assist the Regular Force engineers, and while in Patoka he spent time at a local church service.

He admits he's been lucky that his employer has allowed him time off to assist.

"AFFCO have been terrific allowing me to assist in the response. They've always been supportive of my Reserve Force employment though."

#### Correction:

The commemoration to be held at Pukeahu National War Memorial Park in Wellington on June 25 is of the ceasing of hostilities between the United National Command Forces, North Korean Forces, and Chinese Volunteer Forces, not the end of the Korean War as stated in the May issue of *Army News*.

## RESERVE FORCE Q&A

A regular column answering your questions about the NZ Army Reserve Force (ResF).

What questions do you have?

Send queries to [timothy.sincock@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:timothy.sincock@nzdf.mil.nz)

### Attachments to foreign Army reserves

Members of the Reserve Force living overseas may meet their military training obligations through attachments to the reserve forces of another nation.

Attachments to foreign militaries' army reserves assist in the development of NZ Army capability by enabling Reserve Force people to broaden their military experiences.

Attachments seek to:

- Grow expertise and professional knowledge
- Enhance interoperability and integration with other nations
- Development international Reservist networks

To be attached to the army reserve of another nation, a member of the ResF must make an offer of special service through their chain of command to the Chief of Army.

The period of attachment is to be for not less than six months and for not more than two years. Application may be made during an attachment to extend this period by one further year, up to a maximum total attachment of three years.

In considering whether to approve a request for extension, CA will consider the applicant's:

- ResF performance to date
- Regular attendance at training
- The training benefit of the attachment

Members of the ResF attached to a foreign reserve force continue to be paid by the NZ Army. This includes any relevant allowances members may be entitled to during their service.

### Update on making an ACC claim for an injury sustained on duty

Here is further clarification of how to claim ACC if you are injured during Army/NZDF training/duty:

- When you fill out the ACC claim form, note that the injury is work-related and that the employer is NZDF.
- Tell your health provider that the claim should be processed through the ACC AEP (Accredited Employers Programme).

Following the above process should ensure that you are not invoiced for any surcharge on an ACC claim by your health provider. However, if you are presented with an invoice for a surcharge, pay it and then claim a refund from the NZDF by emailing your invoice to: [nzdfaep@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:nzdfaep@nzdf.mil.nz).

### Reserve Force Officer selection boards

Potential ResF officer candidates are nominated by their units to the Directorate of Army Career Management to attend an officer selection board (OSB) which are held three times a year. Units will consider the following when recommending a potential officer candidate for an OSB:

- Service experience
- Performance
- Motivation
- Leadership
- Problem solving
- Drive
- Written and verbal communication skills
- Planning

Nominations for the two remaining OSBs for the 2023 close on the following dates:

- OSB 2 (to be held 1 to 5 Oct) close 7 Aug 23
- OSB 3 (to be held 26–30 Nov) close 6 Nov 23

The next ResF commissioning course is forecast to be held Jan–Mar 2025.

If you're interested in becoming an officer in the ResF you should discuss your suitability with your reporting officer/NCO.

# DOUBLE BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR

By Charlene Williamson

**At the age of 27 New Zealand Army Nursing Officer Major Buffy Little discovered a lump which resulted in a diagnosis of breast cancer.**

MAJ Little will co-captain the 22-strong New Zealand Invictus Games team heading to Düsseldorf, Germany in September.

Following a biopsy and lumpectomy she required a mastectomy and reconstruction.

"I had my mastectomy and reconstruction and I didn't need any follow-up treatment. I had minimal amount of time off work, and continued life as though it was not a big deal.

"In 2016 I deployed to Iraq, and while deployed I found another lump on the same side, but I initially put it down to a knot in a strained muscle. But it didn't go away, so due to my history on return to New Zealand I got it checked out and was referred back to my surgeon."

Another biopsy showed the cancer was back, and after more surgery and lumpectomy she was referred to oncology and underwent radiotherapy.

"My surgeon believes that my second diagnosis is related to my first and that it was likely some cancer cells that got left behind after my mastectomy.

"Again, I told minimal people and just carried on with life as normal as possible," she said.

When her wife, also in the military, was diagnosed with breast cancer a few years later, she realised that she hadn't really dealt with her cancer journey and needed to do a lot of work both mentally and physically to "get back to being me".

"My wife and I have very different ways we dealt with our cancer. I told minimal people and carried on with life as though nothing really happened, my wife however was the opposite and told everyone and blogged her whole journey."

After people reached out to them both to talk about their cancer diagnoses they found that there was a need for a cancer support group, which they set up in Linton in 2021.

"We discussed the need for a cancer support group in Linton as there was an increasing number of personnel getting diagnosed, or being directly affected by a diagnosis.

"We also identified that there are a lot of military people who just wouldn't feel comfortable going to civilian support groups, but a military based one might be easier for them to attend, and feel they belonged," she said.

The group still runs today with MAJ Little's wife at the helm and continues to provide support to those who have been or are affected by loved ones with cancer.

MAJ Little said both times she was diagnosed were "pretty unbelievable" especially being so young but the support from her family has been great.

"I really could not have gone through it without them. They have been there for appointments and taken me to hospital visits. They never felt sorry for me, and they allowed me to take the path I wanted to take with my journey, even if it wasn't the best way I chose to deal with it for a long time.

"It is also extremely special for me that I get to share this part of my journey with my wife and mum who have been such strong support to me during this whole process, from diagnosis to now.

"Without them I would not be where I am today and so being able to bring them along on this journey is a way of saying a massive thank you to them," she said.

MAJ Little will compete in cycling and wheelchair basketball events at the games and said that sport has always been a massive part of her life, and she has found it very therapeutic in the past.

"It's helped me get stronger both mentally and physically.

"I think sport is an easy tool to help with recovery for people that have always enjoyed sport, and it allows you to feel that you can still do things physically even when you think you can't anymore due to illness or injury."

Her goal for Germany is to achieve personal best in the cycling events and to be able to walk away knowing that she gave it everything.

She said the benefits of the Invictus Games for the injured, wounded or ill community are immense.

"Physical activity is a massive part of being in the military and it connects likeminded individuals who are on their own different journey, but able to support each other and grow in a safe supported environment."

The Invictus Games is the only international adaptive sporting event for injured, wounded or ill current and former service men and women.

The sixth Invictus Games will take place in Düsseldorf from 9-16 September under the motto "A home for respect" and together with the German Armed Forces, will welcome around 500 competitors from more than 20 nations, as well as around 1,000 family members and friends, to compete in ten sporting disciplines.





# SOLDIERING SKILLS HONED BY BRAVO WHA

**Soldiers from Bravo Company  
2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Royal New Zealand  
Infantry Regiment in Burnham  
operated in both close country and  
urban environments while on Exercise  
Bravo Wha recently.**

They tested skills similar to what they may encounter on deployments using a fictitious scenario to immerse themselves in a complex situation in order to ensure they are prepared for any eventuality thrown at them.

The exercise started with them trying to locate and destroy an enemy which wanted to observe but not be found. It then transitioned into them attacking an enemy command and control node with the assistance from Recon and Surveillance Platoon also from 2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment.

The scenario had them using live ammunition, finally destroying the illusive enemy, but then subsequently seeing the enemy get immediate revenge by shelling our soldiers. Post this scenario, soldiers then moved to interacting with the local populace in Castle Hill and operating in and around the village attempting to take control of the environment away from another enemy group. The exercise culminated in a platoon urban attack at an alpine village which the enemy had commandeered from the locals. The exercise forced soldiers to solve complex problems in an austere environment against a tricky enemy.





Photos: Corporal Sean Spivey



# NZ ARMY HELPS REPAIR COMMUNITY HALLS AND WATER TANKS IN TONGA

**New Zealand Army personnel have pitched in with their Tongan counterparts to help restore community buildings and other structures as the country continues to recover from last year's volcanic eruption and tsunami.**

During adverse weather events shelter is becoming an increasing need in Tonga and recently personnel from 2<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Regiment were welcomed as part of Exercise Tropic Twilight.

The exercise is an annual Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) series of activities conducted in the South Pacific, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Seventeen 2<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Regiment personnel, along with five support personnel, worked alongside His Majesty's Armed Forces (HMAF) personnel to complete construction and maintenance tasks around the main island of Tongatapu, where ash still clogs some guttering, roofs and pipes.

Captain Dan Blake said they worked on three community halls. All received new toilets, hand basins and doors while two halls were fitted with wooden protective covers over the windows to protect the glass during storms.

Carpenters constructed partition walls and lockable storage boxes to provide families with a secure and private area to shelter in.

"This will support Tonga in addressing the safety and protection of women and children during a natural disaster," Captain Blake said.

That aligned with Tonga's commitment to meet elements of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security, he said.

At Ahau Community Hall, the veranda roof was replaced, spouting added and fans and lights installed.

Captain Blake said they also installed three rain water tanks and a pump was placed to distribute the water to three taps, so the community has clean drinking water.

At Ha'atafu Community Hall the spouting was redone, interior and exterior lighting replaced and an old meter board removed and replaced.

A concrete water tank was demolished and two new rain water tanks installed, also with a pump to supply three community taps.

Captain Blake said they learned that some of the less mobile residents of Ha'atafu could not access the toilet block out the back of the building.

"We excavated and then cleared a path before laying a concrete slab. Lights were also installed outside the hall and this has made the toilet block accessible to all members of the community."

Working alongside the HMAF personnel had been awesome as they participating in physical training together, attended social events, as well as supporting the HMAF rugby team during two of their matches, he said.

"We welcome working with more of our Pacific neighbours on future exercises."

This is the second Tropic Twilight to take place in the past 12 months, with an Exercise Tropic Twilight taking place in Niue last July, involving New Zealand Army engineers and Royal New Zealand Navy hydrographers.



Photo: CPL Maddy Butcher



# EIGHT QUESTIONS

*Sapper Jack Gardner*

**A high level of fitness and developing good fire fighting skills has paid off for Linton-based Sapper Jack Gardner who has qualified for the Firefighter Challenge World Championships in Florida later this year.**

**Why did you join the Army, and choose being a firefighter in particular? Were there other options?**

I always wanted to join the Army. Ever since the recruiters came around in high school I was pretty sold on the idea of being a soldier. I joined as an emergency responder because I wanted to help people and also put the skills we learn to use at emergencies. My other options when joining the Army were Armoured and vehicle mechanic. But at the end of the day I knew I wanted to be an emergency responder.

**What sort of training did you receive, and what sort of ongoing training do you do?**

After completing basic training we go through Engineer Corps training which lasts three months. From there we go onto basic fire for an additional three months. After graduating from basic fire I was qualified to ride truck as an emergency responder. On shift, we train at least once a day. As well as keeping up to date with the military aspect of our job, our main focus is on the operational side of being an emergency responder. Some examples are search techniques, medical co-response or motor vehicle accident training. We train with simulated real life emergencies. This means we are exposed to live fire environments that reach temperatures exceeding 400 degrees.

**What parts of your job do you find challenging? Vehicle accidents, large fires etc?**

Some aspects of the job can be hard. Especially when you are dealing with victims who have lost either family or property, or both. But when it comes to a challenging call out we are trained to a very high level. Yes, no two callouts are the same. Whether it be child-related or a family that has lost everything in a house fire, we recognise that "In the absence of experience we fall back on our training." That is a quote that I strongly believe is key for an emergency we haven't encountered before.

**What do you enjoy most about your role?**

I enjoy the work at any emergency. You work so hard at every call-out, that once you get back to station you can feel every muscle in your body. You're all exhausted whether that be physically or mentally. Going through that with your work mates is something that forges a very strong bond. The fact that I can help someone, or do one little thing for them on what could have been the worst day of their life, is something that I find very rewarding.

**What do you do when you are not actually completing a task?**

I keep myself quite busy at station. But when we have down time I tend to find myself in our gym or even just sitting down playing a board game with the crew.

**What is the camaraderie like on station?**

We are a very tight knit bunch on shift, as is expected due to the nature of the job. We go into some very high stress and potentially hazardous situations where you have no choice but to rely on your team mates and in turn that creates a very strong bond with your peers.

**What is the kit like that you work with?**

The kit we use is some of the best kit money can buy. We have industry standards that our equipment needs to meet as well as putting it through a series of rigorous tests that push it far beyond what we'd ever put it through on the job.

**What do you do to relax?**

I'm very much an active person but when I am not at work I attend CrossFit, I go out four-wheel driving and camping. I also play canoe polo and during the winter months I snowboard.



## Fireys excel in national competitions

**New Zealand Army emergency responders shone when they took part in the United Fire Brigades Association North Island Regional Firefighter Challenge took in Auckland recently.**

One hundred firefighters from around New Zealand took part in the competition with the aim of pushing themselves to their physical and mental limits in a high intensity test of firefighting obstacles.

The Army emergency responders teamed up with their RNZAF colleagues to form a 15-strong contingent.

Reservist SPR Aidan Grant placed first overall in the individual category finishing just one second off the national record with a time of 1 minute, 31 seconds.

SGT Tom Grant and CPL Bailey Campbell placed 4<sup>th</sup> overall in the tandem event.

SME Fire wing also competed in the team relay event, beating RNZAF to place second overall.

Members of the team also took part in the National

Firefighter challenge last month in Wellington.

With an increased competitor field of 150 fire fighters, the competition was tough.

SPR Grant placed second overall in the individual category with a time of 1 minute, 34 seconds.

SPR Jack Gardner placed 10<sup>th</sup> overall with a time of 1 minute, 50 seconds.

Both of these times qualified them for the Firefighter Challenge World Championships in Florida later this year.

SME Fire wing again competed in the team relay taking out the title of National relay champions in a tight race that separated first and second by 0.15 seconds.

NZ Army taking out the inaugural NZ Army vs RNZAF competition trophy.



# ARMY CAPSTONE ORDERS

**Army General Staff continues to work through the Capstone documents to make our purpose clear and to deliver the Army Plan.**

Frequent updates have been provided to share where we are at with decisions and our steps towards our goal of sustained operational readiness. This provides clarity on how we will communicate our outputs, and manage tempo, create safe training, and relieve the staff burden on our commanders down. The plan is another step forward. Please know there is more work to be done to get us to where we need to be. Thank you for your patience.

The Command Statement has three key annexes which are currently under consultation. These are:

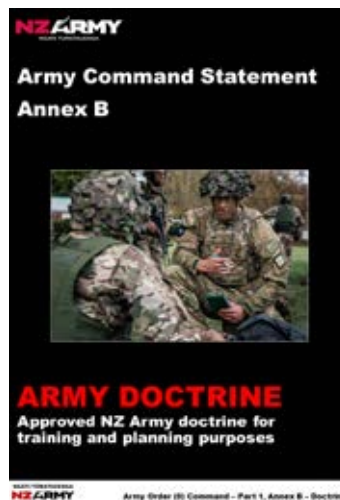


## Annex A (NZ Army ORBATs: MIBG and SOTG)



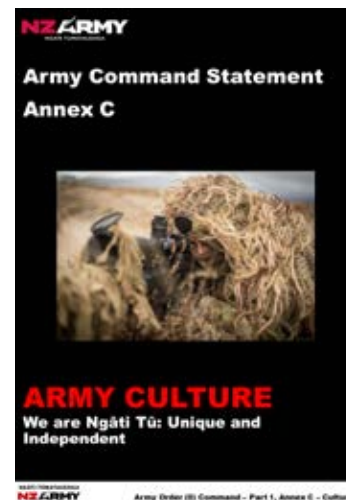
The purpose of this document is to define the Order of Battle used by the NZ Army for operational purposes. This ORBAT also informs capability, training, people and force generation planning. The Army has two universal operational ORBATs, one used by each Army Component Command. The Motorised Infantry Battle Group (MIBG) and the Special Operations Task Group (SOTG).

## Annex B (NZ Army Doctrine)



The purpose of this document is provide orders on the approved doctrinal publications that are to be used by the New Zealand Army for the conduct of land warfare. Doctrine is the primary professional body of work used by military professionals. It provides principles and guidance to plan, integrate and execute military operations.

## Annex C (NZ Army Culture)



The purpose of this document is to make clear our requirement for a culture of professional excellence where we the soldiers, officers and civilians of Ngāti Tūmataunga are empowered to act and prepared to win in combat on the land. A culture where our people are respected, included, and valued members of the Profession of Arms.

The first document of the Capstones that was released was the Army Command Statement (Nov 22). AGS is in the process of enacting the staff work and processes that confirmed the value of five major organisational refinements:

1. Realignment to Australian Doctrine;
2. Reconstitution of the Army Training System;
3. Reconstitution of Capstone Orders;
4. Doctrinal alignment of Army's primary outputs the MIBG and SOTG; and
5. Transition to a deliberate Readiness Model.

## What does this mean for you?

Look out for the NZ Army Plan as it will be the central document to order, manage and guide Army efforts. It will have:

- The Acceptable Enduring Condition – how the Army will be organised, trained, equipped, scaled and supported in order to sustain operational readiness as directed by the Government
- Four lines of operation: Capability; Training; People; and Force Generation (of the MIBG, SOTG, Land Support and Army Reserves)
- A Land Support Plan to enable, support and sustain Army Force Generation
- A Reserve Plan to coordinate the operational and training integration of the Army Reserve
- The transition to a Readiness Model, as we achieve our regeneration milestones.

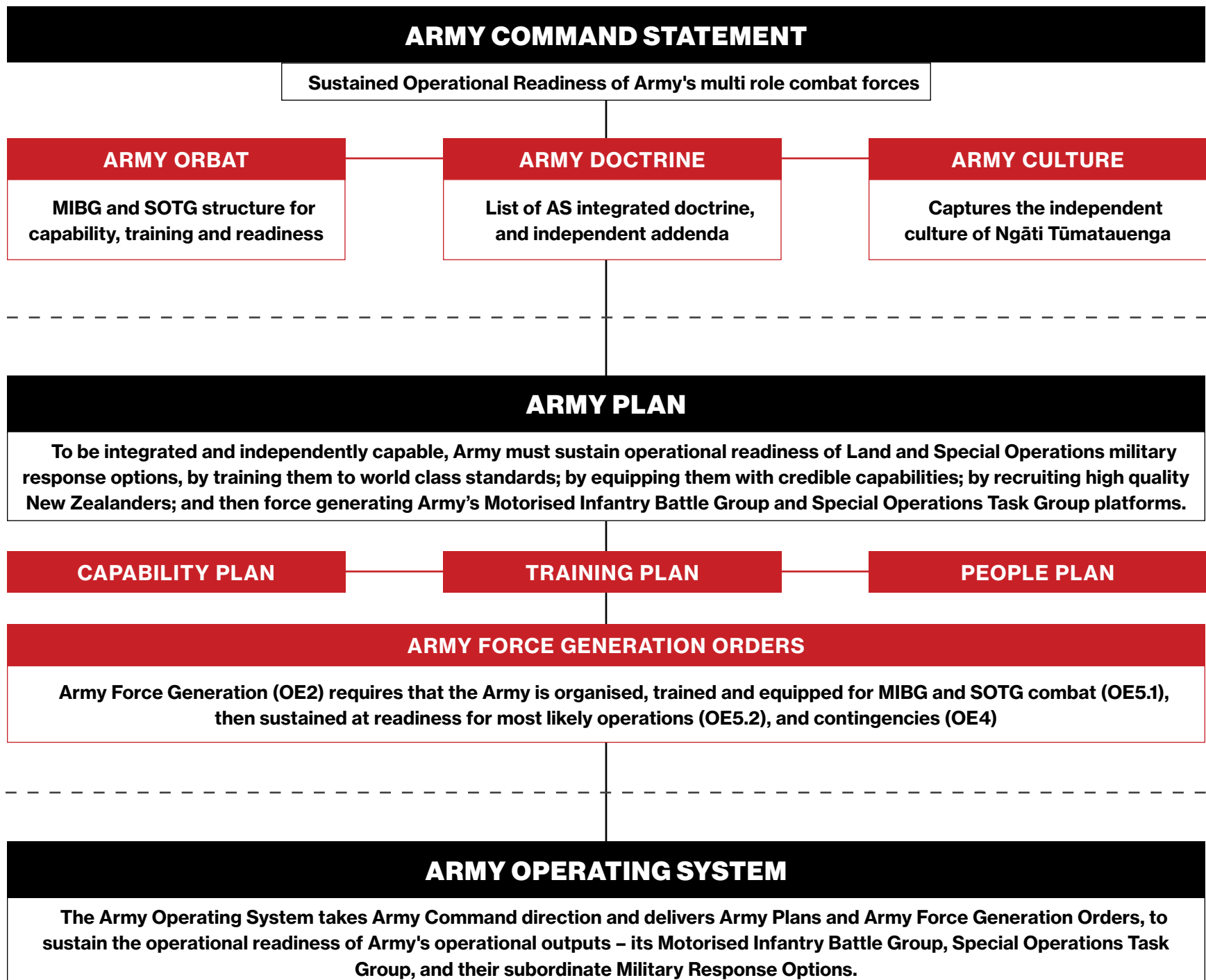
## Next steps

- Ongoing engagement with the Defence Policy Review and the Defence Capability Plan
- Increased cooperation under Plan ANZAC will be initiated with AGS working groups, and reciprocal visits
- On Talisman Sabre 2023 (TS23), the deployed force elements, the G7 and elements from 1BDE will analyse the employment of selected doctrine. The G7 will then report back with appropriate observations on doctrinal alignment and impacts across Army's lines of operations
- The observations from TS23, and broader doctrinal alignment, will be matched to Government policy direction in the Defence Policy and Strategy Statement
- These observations and direction will, after completion of the current Army force design project, allow DCA and AGS to start analysis on the next iteration of Army's force design – matched to our doctrinal alignment
- This analysis will, like last time, include consultation with the chain of command and Regimental Colonels.



## ARMY CAPSTONE ORDERS

CREATING THE STRUCTURES TO COMMAND, CONTROL AND MANAGE ARMY AS A SYSTEM





# ALPHA CRUSADER HITS THE MARK

**Exercise Alpha Crusader cemented the key lessons learnt for both individual and collective training in the first quarter of 2023 for 2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, RNZIR.**

With the backdrop of the Southern Alps, Alpha Company personnel were put through their paces to achieve live field fire at Army Training Level 2B, putting the new Army training levels and tiers through a test during a seven day field firing assessment. This exercise enabled the conduct of the most live fire manoeuvre and complexity since pre-Op Protect times. During the exercise participants conducted some of the following activities:

- Close combat shooting
- Long range shooting
- Static night shooting with reactionary targets
- Fire and manoeuvre with complexity and battlefield inoculation enhanced with the inclusion of over-head fire and the throwing and posting of HE, and
- The unit also conducted its first 60mm light mortar LFF serial in a number of years.

Officer Commanding Alpha Company, Major Josh Sullivan, said Alpha Crusader served as an excellent opportunity to showcase the trained state of both trainers and exercise participants.

“The complexity of the training required detailed planning and orchestration, which enabled the development of everyone from Company HQ through to individual operator.”

It was clear that the additional complexity incorporated into the exercise, which was needed to develop and implement complex and innovative training had direct impacts on the participants' job satisfaction and outlook.

Company Sergeant Major Alpha Company, WO2 Joseph Van Arendonk said there were a lot of good learning points and feedback from the team during the field training exercise.

“What was obvious was that inclusions such as incorporation of night firing, HE, OHF, 60mm LM LFF and more, should become business as usual. This will enable the continuation of job satisfaction and the general upskilling of combat capabilities.”

Alpha Company and the wider 2/1 RNZIR, will now extend on these experiences with their REGEN milestone activity FTX Whakamahi Wahaaro.







# 108 YEARS OF NURSING

**Nurses are the heart of healthcare playing a vital role in the delivery of care, compassion, and comfort to patients; being their eyes, ears, or voice when they are unwell, injured or requiring support.**

The Army's Royal New Zealand Nursing Corps recently celebrated its 108<sup>th</sup> year of being a Corps.

Nurses are known to have been active in the New Zealand Defence Force since as early as the Boer War, 1899, when 27 nurses actively served, with many more serving throughout the years both in New Zealand and overseas until the present day.

Throughout this time the role of the military nurse has adapted and grown. Currently there are 19 nursing officers within the Royal New Zealand Nursing Corps, the majority of whom work within the Deployable Health Organisation (DHO).

Nurses within the DHO are expected to work in a variety of environments and have a vast skill-set, ranging from providing primary healthcare in military camps to treating trauma in austere environments. Nurses must be adaptable, flexible and continually maintain current clinical practice in order to fulfil a wide range of military outputs and provide professional up-to-date healthcare for military personnel.

The role of the DHO Nursing Officer is to provide healthcare and support to the Role 1 and Role 2 medical space. They work closely with the medical team which consists of medical officers, medics, allied health and assistant staff. Nurses often lead the extended care for the patient when there may be a delay in transfer or medical evacuation.

DHO nurses have a number of medical outputs that they maintain in order to remain deployable. One of these is clinical time spent working in public hospitals around the country. This is completed when they are not busy providing medical care for patients in the field, on exercises, delivering clinical care in various health centres and bases around New Zealand, or retaining all expected military skills.

DHO nurses spend a number of weeks working in their chosen specialty to remain clinically up-to-date and enhance their nursing skills, while also representing the NZDF. You may find our nurses working in a variety of areas from the Emergency Department through to the Intensive Care Units in different hospital settings throughout New Zealand. Despite a high tempo work load and current limitation in numbers, nursing officers continue to contribute towards significant health outputs within New Zealand and abroad.

## DHO Nursing Experiences

**The Army's nursing officers become involved in many aspects of Defence. In recent years nursing officers and especially those working in DHO have been involved with many different types of health responses both at home and overseas. The nurses continue to prove they are flexible and can adapt to any working environment across land, sea and air domains.**

One of their most recent tasks was the vital support and dedication they provided during the Covid-19 pandemic. They took on various roles such as helping lead the NZDF national response, being national and regional clinical leads, working throughout the various vaccination campaigns nationally and taking the lead for the vaccination roll out for Pacifica and Māori PHO members in the Hastings and Napier region.

When not busy responding and supporting something like the pandemic, DHO nurses are involved in overseas exercises or operations to provide additional health assets. DHO NOs were recently tasked with to cover exercises in places like Fiji, Australia, Hawaii, and

Papua New Guinea. They have had integral roles in operations in countries such as Sinai, Iraq and Afghanistan. Whilst history dictates that all nursing officers are Army within the NZDF, at times you will see them immersed in the day-to-day life at sea on some of the New Zealand's Navy ships or providing medical assistance on aircraft in and around New Zealand.

One of NZDF specialized aero-medical nurses was put through their paces in 2021 in the aero-medical space when providing support during Afghanistan repatriation efforts, then supporting a risky winter patient evacuation from Antarctica.

On New Zealand soil, you will often find NOs providing medical support during field exercises, working in the regional health centres, or delivering health care during HADR responses. While nurses are actively involved in all aspects of Defence they make the time to be involved in non-nursing elements and you will come across some of them competing in the Invictus Games, representing Defence in sport and even at times in roles such as aide-de-camp to the Governor General.

## Organisational fit

**The role of the nurse in Defence is one that is often overlooked, as the competency and ability of a NO cannot be easily compared to that of a soldier. Nurses are often working tirelessly to put the wellbeing of patient and others they are working with first.**

The work of a nurse is largely unseen.

It is not flashy but provides solid consistency. Nurses are an integral resource in providing healthcare. Just one look at the number of nurses required to keep a hospital or health facility running highlights the importance of the role. Nurses are actively involved in all realms

of healthcare, and the basis of their training revolves around delivering best practice patient care, infection control principles and maintaining clinical plans set by doctors.

Within the Defence environment nurses liaise with their multi-disciplinary or external provider's team to provide the best care for their patients. There is always a competing priority to follow military ideology yet put their patients first, as this is the foundation of nursing. The nurse is the patient's best advocate for health and wellbeing, and is seen as the grounding force in whatever they do.

Nursing officers are proud to be a part of the New Zealand Defence Force and contribute to impactful missions both here in New Zealand and overseas.

Although the Corps is small it makes a big impact on health outputs across the all three Services both in New Zealand and overseas. The Corps, like many in Defence, has its current challenges with attrition and retention in a globally competitive health market. The Nursing Corps, along with all the nurses that work in the Defence Force, are committed to improving professional practice. As NZDF's Principal Nursing Officer, MAJ David Greenhough says: 'He iti mokoroa nāna te kahikatea I kakati'. Even the small can make an impact on the big.

As nurses, uniformed and civilian we all strive to deliver best quality patient care; Kia aroharoha Kia maia – compassion with courage.







## 28 Maori Battalion battle honours paraded

**Tā Sir Robert Gillies, Kamupene B, 28 (Māori) Battalion paraded the 28 (Māori) Battalion Campaign and Battle Honours Colour, Āke Ake Kia Kaha at Te Whare Runanga, Waitangi on Anzac Day before resting the Colour at the 28 (Māori) Battalion Memorial House, Te Rau Aroha.**

Earlier in the day Tā Robert and Mr Hone Harawira paraded with the 28 (Māori) Battalion Campaign and Battle Honours Flag at the Dawn Parade at Ngaiotonga before travelling to Kororāreka where, accompanied by local whanau, he raised the Battalion's Campaign and Battle Honours Colour at Te Maiki Hill where it flew at half mast until the conclusion of the Civic

Memorial Service at Village Green, Kororāreka.

During the Service Tā Robert addressed the gathering and said "war never solves anything".

"We've had so many of them, and we are still having more. So I say to the whole world let us have peace," he said.

During his whaikōrero Mr Peter Tipene, Chairman of the Waitangi

Trust Board reinforced Tā Roberts sentiments that the New Defence Force 28 (Māori) Battalion flag and the 28 (Māori) Battalion Campaign and Battle Honours flag stand side-by-side as pou maumahara that acknowledge the parallel sacrifices of Tangata Tiriti and Tangata Tikanga Māori during World War II.

At the conclusion of the Service Tā Robert marched the

28 (Māori) Battalion Campaign and Battle Honours Flag into Te Rau Aroha. This was followed by a wreath laying ceremony and karakia led by Bishop of Te Tai Tokerau, Te Kitohi Pikaahu. The Battle Honours Colours were mounted and rested in perpetuity.

## REST IN PEACE, SERGEANT DON, RNZA

**161 Bty, 16 Field Regiment recently welcomed home, and then farewelled the ashes of one of the first New Zealand soldiers killed in action in Vietnam, SGT Alastair John Sherwood Don.**

SGT Don, along with BDR Robert "Jocko" White were the first NZDF personnel killed in action in Vietnam when the Land Rover they were travelling in hit a command detonated mine during Op Ben Cat on 14 September 1965.

Op Ben Cat was the first large scale military operation conducted by 161 Bty during the Vietnam War that commenced with the 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade conducting a brigade-sized road move. The Land Rover they were travelling in was 6<sup>th</sup> in the order of march. As per standard operating procedures at the time the Land Rover was stripped down with no doors, windows or roof, with the floor covered with sand bags. The hope was that the occupants would be thrown clear, as occurred to the two other occupants of the vehicle. L/Bdr Rodney Edwards and NZPA

War Correspondent Chris Turver MNZM were thrown clear, though both suffered wounds.

At the request of SGT Don's family his remains were welcomed onto the Bty lines prior to a blessing. A short presentation on SGT Don was given and a number of Vietnam veterans, including Chris Turver were given the opportunity to speak about their experiences, SGT Don, and the incident where he was killed. SGT Don was described by those that knew him as the epitome of what a SNCO and a soldier should be.

Prior to his service with 161 Bty in Vietnam SGT Don had served with 1RNZIR in the Malaysian conflict.

SGT Don's remains were initially buried at Terendak Barracks, Malaysia, but were returned to New Zealand in 2018 as part of the Te Auraki Repatriation Project.

His remains were buried in a family plot along side his late wife Isabel at the Awa Tapu RSA Cemetery in April 2023.

SGT Don was awarded the Military Merit Medal and the Cross of Gallantry with Palm by the South Vietnamese Government. He was 27 when he was killed and left behind his wife and his three children.



# APIATA MEMORABILIA AUCTION

## MORE THAN \$200,000 RAISED FOR CYCLONE-HIT NGĀTI POROU

**Victoria Cross recipient Willie Apiata, with help from his former New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) colleagues, has raised more than \$200,000 for the people of Ngāti Porou hit by Cyclone Gabrielle on the East Coast.**

Personnel from Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) and New Zealand Army joined the former Special Air Service soldier at an auction in Auckland in April to raise funds for the rebuild following the cyclone.

A wide range of guests and bidders heard from speakers including Sir Graham Henry, Wayne Smith and Black Fern Ruahei Demant and they also got the opportunity to talk to members of the NZDF about their experiences responding to Cyclone Gabrielle.

"Ngāti Porou has been doing incredible mahi assisting those

impacted. They are my whānau. We moved to Te Kaha when I was seven years old and I've been looked after by Ngāti Porou ever since, and now this is a way that I can show my appreciation and support the community until it's thriving again," Mr Apiata said.

"Ngāti Porou need our help and we must keep the story of the East Coast alive. We have an opportunity to build a sustainable recovery. We need to come together to support the future and way of life for the East Coast and its people."

The live and silent auctions included a replica of Mr Apiata's Victoria Cross medallion, a copy of Queen Elizabeth II's funeral programme signed by recipients of the Victoria Cross and a Special Air Service brooch and book.

Works by New Zealand artists Steve Baker, Tom Gould, Derek Henderson, Holly Burgess and Finn Cochran were also auctioned, along with a signed Black Ferns rugby jersey.

A photographic portrait of Mr Apiata on his horse 'Blue' raised \$35,000.

"This portrait featuring my horse Blue is very special to me. I have 13 horses. Wild horses have taught me so much," he said.

At the height of the response to Cyclone Gabrielle, the NZDF had nearly 1,000 personnel, along

with several ships, aircraft, and numerous military vehicles involved.

"The tireless and unstinting service of our NZDF personnel in response to Cyclone Gabrielle really underpins our core values and I am humbled by the mahi of our people for the greater good of New Zealanders," Warrant Officer of the Navy, Lance Graham said.

"Supporting this fundraiser event was another way we can continue to show our service to those affected by the cyclone."

Corporal Storm Harrison from NZ Army 5<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment is Ngāpuhi, the Northland-based iwi, and was at the forefront of the NZDF Cyclone Gabrielle response.

"Willie's invitation to help the people of Ngāti Porou affected by the floods is immense. NZDF personnel did such a tremendous job to help Tairāwhiti at the time and now we can help with this. It really is humbling," he said.



Warrant Officer of the Navy Lance Graham, above, and CPL Storm Harrison (below) with Willie Apiata.



## Come together to kōrero about our NZ Army's cultural diversity

**Where:** Rongomaraeroa o nga hau e wha Marae (New Zealand Army National Marae) Waiouru

**Wāhine Wānanga:** 27–28 Jun 2023

**Tāne Wānanga:** 18–19 Jul 2023

**Register to attend in person:** sign up online at the KEA website

**Register to attend via MS Teams:** express your interest online at [Army.PeopleAndCulture@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:Army.PeopleAndCulture@nzdf.mil.nz) and will be in touch

Wānanga have a critical purpose within our learning journey where success, growth and the creation of a strong understanding can be achieved in a safe and supportive environment.

Both Wānanga are sponsored by our Deputy Chief of Army, Brigadier Rose King with the purpose being to provide an opportunity for Wāhine and Tāne at the 2LT to CAPT, PTE to SSGT and equivalent civilian levels to come together in a respectful and safe environment to share perspectives and develop an understanding of the cultural diversity across our NZ Army.

The aim is to bring together personnel from across Ngāti Tūmataua to help form a strong and culturally resilient organisation ready and able to represent Aotearoa New Zealand.



## Young enterprise kit for potential field use

A Year 13 Marton student has designed a cutlery-on-the go kit she thinks could be ideal for soldiers to use in the field.

Judy Liu, from Nga Tawa Diocesan School designed the kit as part of the Youth Enterprise Scheme. She wanted to make a product that would not use plastic, and would not add to the marine debris issue, nor end up in the landfill after a couple of uses.

She says the product could be used by anyone who ate outside "and cared for the future of the earth".

"The hardest part of the design process, in my opinion, was deciding which utensils to include in the set because we didn't want to include too many that people wouldn't use and would just add to the waste stream, but we also wanted to include utensils from other cultures, like chopsticks."

The kit is contained in a roll up fabric case. Judy is marketing and selling it through her email address Tyfe2703@hotmail.com



TE OPE KĀTUA O AOTEAROA  
DEFENCE FORCE

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HEI MANA MŌ AOTEAROA  
A FORCE FOR NEW ZEALAND

# Our people

## Sappers help a soldier coping with Duchenne muscular dystrophy in the family

**After their son was diagnosed with Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) in 2019, Gemma, Adam and their children moved to the lower North Island to be closer to family.**

Not knowing what was ahead of them, the family of then four, now six, moved in with Adam's mum while they came to terms with their son Owen's diagnosis.

Shortly after the move, they bought the house off Adam's mum, deciding to stay in the area so they had family support.

Now, with the help of the New Zealand Army, that house is undertaking a significant face-lift to make it mobility friendly for Owen.

Owen, now five, was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy just before his third birthday, a disease that causes muscle weakness, which gets worse over time. The disease

leads to immobility, which sees most children confined to wheelchairs before the age of 12.

Adam said they had no idea when Owen was born that he had the disease, and it wasn't until he was two and hadn't learnt to walk yet that red flags were raised.

"Our GP had not seen the condition before. It's one in 5,000 boys roughly that get it, and he was the first case our GP had seen, and he had been there for over a decade."

Adam, a New Zealand Army soldier, said they started looking into getting the house renovated to be more mobility friendly in 2020, but Covid-19 hampered their efforts.

The idea took a back seat for a while, and then they decided to try and get one deck and one ramp done in 2022, but getting a builder was close to impossible.

Adam said in 2020 a community facilitator at Linton Military Camp had suggested using the Army trades to get the work done, so he got back in touch with her to see if this might still be a possibility in 2022.

From there, things started to swing into action.

After contracting an architect to design the layout, and getting council consent, the New Zealand Army are now moving through their house in two stages to substantially renovate their home.

This will include building ramps at the front and back of their home connecting to decks, with the decks being covered in with a veranda.

Inside the house the bathroom is getting turned into a disability bathroom, all the doorways are being widened and the kitchen and living area are having walls knocked out to turn it into one space, with that space also being expanded.

The carport will be turned



into the laundry, with the current kitchen being extended into the current laundry, which will make it large and spacious, so Owen can move around the kitchen, even when in a wheelchair.

"The disease, it takes hold pretty quickly.

"We know people who have children with DMD, they are mobile for a while and then all of a sudden they rapidly decline in mobility.

"The parents are left scrambling trying to get ramps and hoists and vans sorted," Adam said.

By being able to do the work now, Adam said it makes life a little easier, as they know once it's all complete the house will be a home Owen can move around in, even when he is in a wheelchair.

Adam said he found it fine to talk about Owen's condition as it helped him accept it and not resist it, but Gemma said it took her a while longer.

"It took me two years of crying a lot. I accept it more now."

She said having the house started made things easier, as they had heard about some families who faced issues because their house wasn't equipped to deal with someone with a disability, which wouldn't be something they would face with Owen.

"We don't know at what age he will need to go into a wheelchair, but at least now he will be able to move around the house when he does."

The renovations are set to be completed by the end of 2023.

Adam said having Army personnel there undertaking the work was great as they had been really respectful towards the family and fit in well.

"We are so appreciative of the work they are doing."

Major Gabrielle Gofton, Chief Instructor of the School of Military Engineering, Land Operations Training Centre, said being able to undertake work like this for the family was rewarding. Being able to help out another soldier and their whanau demonstrates comradeship and enhances trust that the NZDF will assist their own people in a time of need.

"We train people to be soldiers first and entering the New Zealand Army in any kind of trade, like a carpenter, electrician or a plumber, lends itself to a very varied career. This can include working on a project for a family in need, to heading to a partner nation in the Pacific to help rebuild after natural disasters."



Owen (left) with his brother.

## RF CADET SCHOOL – 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

**2023 marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Regular Force Cadet School, a NZ Army unit which operated from 1948 to 1991.**

During those years, more than 5,200 New Zealand youths, including 16 girls in their last year, graduated from the school, or "The Club" as it was colloquially known.

The school began life in Trentham Camp, then shifted to Waiouru in 1952. Each year an annual intake marched in, apart from its last year, which saw two 6-month groups. An intake, of which there were 45 in total, was known as a 'Class'. Each class was named after a NZ Army soldier of note who then became the class patron.

Fewer than three percent of those who applied to join as RF

Cadets made the grade. The Army accepted entrants as young as 15, offering them continued education, trade and soldier training, and apprenticeships.

Most would go on at age 18 to become the backbone of the New Zealand Army, serving with distinction in Korea, Borneo, Malaya, Vietnam, Bosnia, Afghanistan, East Timor, Iraq and other regions of conflict as Senior Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs). A few would earn commissions as officers. Some went on to serve with the SAS and as key personnel of other Regular Force units.

Coinciding with the end of the cold war, the school closed its doors in 1991. Today, the school's graduates can be found in leadership roles in all aspects of business, social services, government and politics following their successful careers in the Army and other arms of the services, both at home and abroad. Many are also still serving in the Armed Forces.

Two ex-Regular Force Cadets who had distinguished careers in the NZ Army are:



**Brig Bret Bestic**, a 1958 Weir Class Cadet, graduated with the RMC Duntroon Sword of Honour in 1962. He saw active service in Borneo and Vietnam and held a number of senior NZ postings and also several UN positions after his retirement in 1993. (Four other RF Cadets have achieved general officer rank.)



**WO1 Rusty Taylor**, MBE, BEM (RIP), was the first SMA of the NZ Army (1977). (Three other RF Cadet graduates have been SMAs.) WO1 postings included RSM NSTU; SWI, RF Depot; RSM The Army Schools; and RSM LSG. Rusty's Class was Miles (1948).



### Regular Force Cadet School 75<sup>th</sup> Reunion

All ex-RF Cadets and staff welcome!

The 75th RF Cadet School Reunion will be held from Friday 10th – Sunday 12th November 2023 in Wellington. For details about the reunion and how to register, go to:

<https://www.rfcadet.org.nz>



## Change at the Top – Commander Joint Support Group

The new Commander Joint Support Group is Colonel Anthony Blythen, who replaces COL Ben Pitt. The change of command was recognised and celebrated at a small function in Trentham recently where diners and guests included Mrs Erica Pitt, Mrs Deborah Blythen, the Land Component Commander Brigadier Matthew Weston, current and previous members of the Joint Support Group, and other key personnel from outside the Joint Support Group.

The dinner was marked with the introduction of command artefacts that provided both a physical and spiritual symbol of command. Aweawe, a patu made from heart rimu was carved locally and represents influence, and the holder of aweawe is influential.

In addition, Aweawe sits upon a timber base known as Pūtake o te Matapopore. Pūtake o te Matapopore is as one with the patu. It is constructed with four pou (pillars or posts) and a foundation.

The four pou are Ngāti Tūmataunga – representing Army personnel, Te Taua Kaimahi – representing civilian staff, Te Tauaarangi – representing Air Force personnel and Te Taua Moana – representing Navy personnel, all within the Joint Support Group. These pou are of different sizes, but equally as important as the others, with a single focus. They are all connected by a single timber foundation, all made from middle rimu representing strength and unity. The backing is made from modern materials representing forward travel, and has the proverb: 'Waiho i te toipoto, Kaua i te toiroa' 'Lets us be as one and not individuals'.

Colonel Pitt was appointed Commander Joint Support Group after the transition from the Joint Support Component Command to what is now the Joint Support Group. Colonel Pitt and his whānau are heading to Pennsylvania, USA where he will attend US Army War College, Carlisle.

Colonel Blythen, an engineering officer has served in various positions within the NZ Army.

His career has included a tour of duty as a Troop Commander – 77 Armoured Engineer Squadron, Royal Engineers, British Army; and an appointment as the Regimental Diving Officer of 2 Engineer Regiment. He has subsequently held appointments with 1<sup>st</sup> New Zealand Special Air Service Regiment, Officer Cadet School (NZ), School of Military Engineering (NZ), 2 Field Squadron and 25 Engineer Support Squadron – 2 Engineer Regiment, and the Land Operations Training Centre.

He has conducted operational deployments and training activities in numerous regions including the Pacific, Europe, South East Asia, and the Middle-East.



In July 2018, Colonel Blythen was awarded the United States Meritorious Service Medal in recognition of his work while deployed in Iraq. On 31 December 2021, Colonel Blythen was awarded the Distinguished Service Decoration in recognition of his work on a number of national responses while in the role of Deputy Director Strategic Commitments (Domestic).

## NEW JSG APPOINTMENTS

**Joint Support Group welcomed LTCOL Mark Richards, ED, RNZAMC, as the Joint Support Group Reserve Force Executive Officer (JSG ResF XO), and WO1 John Jessop, RNZAMC, as the Reserve Force Sergeant Major Joint Support Group (ResF SM JSG) recently.**

These are newly created positions designed to enhance the contribution that JSG reservists can make across the NZDF.

The purpose of the JSG ResF XO position is to contribute to Headquarters Joint Support Group (HQ JSG) annual planning and execution of ResF collective training, and monitoring and reporting on the progress of delivery through the command chain.

This position is supported by JSG ResF SM whose purpose is to monitor, evaluate, analyse and advise on training and training policy for JSG NZ ResF personnel. As the formation senior ResF WO, the ResF SM JSG provides advice to the ResF XO JSG and the Chief of Staff Joint Support Group (CoS JSG) on matters affecting the employment, management, discipline, welfare and morale of ResF personnel in JSG.

In his new Reserve Force role with JSG, LTCOL Richards says that Reserve Force Integration is critical for mission success within JSG, and both he and the JSG ResF SM, will be working with their JSG and Tri-Service colleagues to help shape the future ResF outputs for JSG, noting that some operational health elements are entirely

Force Generated from within the Reserve Force.

"We want to ensure that all Reservists within JSG can add value by fully utilising their individual skillsets in order to provide support to operational missions, support the force requirements, and achieve collective results," says LTCOL Richards.

In his Reserve Force role with JSG, WO1 Jessop says he is looking forward to bringing his combined knowledge, experience and passion to the position to enhance training, provide mentorship and guidance, and to advocate for the soldier whilst in support of the JSG ResF XO.

"I have a passion for both training and advocating for the soldier, and am looking forward to providing opportunity for the JSG ResF to reach their potential in contributing to JSG outputs, and integrating effortlessly into the wider NZDF," says WO1 Jessop.

Both LTCOL Richards and WO1 Jessop agree that this is a time of opportunity for JSG ResF, and the integration into the wider NZDF environment will be key to achieving NZDF current and future outputs.

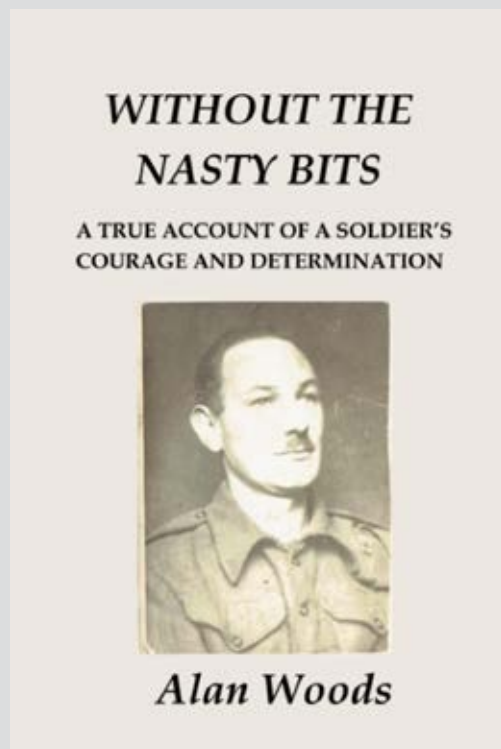


LTCOL Richards



WO1 Jessop

# BOOK REVIEWS



## Without The Nasty Bits

**A true account of a soldier's courage and determination**

By Alan Woods

Published by Alan Woods

**Without The Nasty Bits is a different approach to the presentation of war history. The book is half wartime memoir, half contemporary travelogue. I'm not always sure this genre mash-up works but it is an interesting read.**

Alan Wood's father, Norman (2NZE) was captured in Africa and spent most of the war as a PoW. Many years later, Norman told the young Alan that he would like him to see where he had spent the war years, but "without the nasty bits", hence the title.

Norman Woods worked in the South Island back country when war was declared and like many young men of the time, volunteered for the Army. Initially captured by the Italians, he ultimately ended up at a camp in Poland where he laboured in a coalmine. The PoWs worked under the supervision of Poles who shared their attitude toward the Germans, so they tended to get on quite well with the allied troops.

Alan was long fascinated by his father's stories of Europe and after retirement, decided to make a pilgrimage to Poland to see what remained (if anything) of the places Norman had been and to try and meet descendants of the Poles Norman had befriended.

Norman, like all his comrades, experienced great privation at the hands of their captors. He details an almost constant shortage of any of life's essentials like food, clothing, footwear, warmth or any form of comfort. He was clearly pragmatic and fairly stoic as there is no self pity and you can't help but be in admiration of these men, given what they had to endure. Norman recorded his wartime memories as a form of therapy many years after the war and frankly, given what he had endured, it is no surprise that he had to eventually exorcise his demons.

As an older man, inexperienced at international travel, journeying on his own and not speaking the language, Alan comes across almost as being on a fools errand, but eventually he finds the people and places he was seeking and

has the trip of a lifetime. Norman frankly has a more engrossing story to tell than Alan, not helped by Alan's desire to include details not integral to the story, but making the pilgrimage after a lifetime of thinking about it, was clearly an incredibly rewarding experience.



## New Zealand Honours and Awards 1840 - 2020

By Graeme McLeod

Published by High Tech (NZ)

**At just over 700 pages of fine type, at first glance this book appears to be not dissimilar to a telephone directory. However to dismiss it as 'only' a list of names would be to not only miss the point entirely but also do its author, Graeme McLeod a phenomenal disservice.**

This book is the most comprehensive list ever published of Royal Honours awarded to New Zealanders from 1840 to 2020. It is organised alphabetically and each entry states the full name of the recipient, the type of Honour awarded and provides details of where and when it was promulgated. McLeod has also included those New Zealanders honoured by foreign nations, where those awards have been approved by the sovereign.

The book does not provide any detail on the evolution of, and changes to, both the Honours

System and the way Honours are promulgated. This information is readily available elsewhere and would have distracted from the central focus of the book which is to provide THE definitive list of those Kiwis honoured from 1840 to 2020.

NZ Honours and Awards is a unique resource not only for collectors and researchers of Honours awarded to New Zealanders but invaluable for anyone seeking to confirm or clarify the type, date and grade of any Honour awarded to a New Zealander. All awards made for gallantry or any other reason on operational service are included but it (obviously, as the title implies) does not include long service awards or campaign and other service medals.

McLeod has created a phenomenal resource for anyone researching their forebears' service to New Zealand. The importance of having this work publicly available cannot be overstated. A copy of this record should be available through every library and research institution in New Zealand.

We are used to seeing media coverage of the bi-annual Royal Honours lists; New Years' Honours and King's Birthday Honours. However, it has not always been this simple to track honours and awards, hence McLeod, an acknowledged expert and long time collector and researcher of world orders, medals and decorations has had to dedicate decades of sleuth work to producing this masterpiece.

**Book reviews by Jeremy Seed**

# HUMAN PERFORMANCE

## Intermittent Fasting

By Major (Dr) Jacques Rousseau,  
OIC JSG Human Performance Cell

**Intermittent fasting has become a popular ‘eating plan’ with many in the NZDF. What is it and is it safe? This month we provide a brief explanation of what it is and what effects it has on human performance.**

### Key points:

- Intermittent Fasting (IF) can result in less energy consumed, this can be beneficial when attempting to lose weight, and detrimental to physical performance.
- If the energy deficit is too low this can result in loss of muscle mass as well as fat mass. IF can also limit opportunities to consume protein which is absorbed best when spread throughout the day.
- No current evidence about hormonal changes that benefit physical performance, some evidence for improving insulin sensitivity, and lipid profiles.
- Some evidence for improving endurance performance (not strong enough to recommend), detrimental to high-intensity performance.
- IF is a diet. In nutrition we often prefer to work on improving your lifestyle as this stays with you for your life, whereas a diet usually will only be for a short period of time.

Intermittent fasting (IF) is a dietary pattern that involves cycling between periods of fasting (abstaining from eating) and eating. The two main types of fasting are: time-restricted feeding (TRF) where you limit yourself to only eating within a window of time to eat each day (e.g. an 8-hour window from 10am – 6pm), and alternate-day fasting where you eat normally for usually around 5–6 days a week, then fast or have very low calories in the next few days. We will discuss the main points seen in the scientific literature regarding IF, and what points to consider before choosing to undertake an IF diet.

### 1. Energy availability:

Intermittent fasting can restrict calorie intake due to a limited amount of time to eat within. This can be an issue for highly active individuals who may require a high amount of energy to fuel their activities, and can decrease overall performance, particularly during high-intensity activities that rely on stored energy sources such as sprinting, weightlifting, or a HIIT workout. So as an athlete, if you choose to go on an IF ensure you are eating enough to fuel your training. On the flipside, for individuals who have a goal of losing weight IF can help reduce the amount of calories consumed for the same reason, which may be beneficial to some.

### 2. Muscle preservation:

The potential for muscle loss is in part linked to the previously mentioned energy availability. This is because if energy intake is too low the resulting weight loss will result in a loss of muscle mass as well as fat mass, which is detrimental in health for both athletes and the general population. The other consideration with muscle preservation during IF is protein intake, which is important regardless of if you are using IF for weight-loss or performance. Your body has a maximum amount of protein that can be processed at one time, with the optimal range of protein for one meal being 20g – 40g, eating more than this in one meal does not provide any additional benefits to muscle mass and is wasted in your body. So particularly for heavier and more active people who require a large amount of protein, IF can be a struggle as it limits their opportunities to have their 4–6 protein rich meals needed in a day to optimise muscle building and preserving properties.

### 3. Hormonal adaptations:

There is very little evidence currently published that has directly examined the link between IF and different hormonal changes that can impact physical performance. There has been some evidence for improvements in insulin sensitivity and lipid profile improvements in individuals with metabolic syndrome (pre-diabetes, type-2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, etc). Individuals with these conditions are advised against a diet such as IF without the supervision of a nutritionist or doctor to ensure it is done safely. They should discuss options with their health practitioner.

### 4. Training adaptation:

Currently there is a small body of evidence that intermittent fasting may improve VO2max (measure of endurance performance), particularly in steady state lower intensity exercise where it may possibly improve the ability to utilise fat as an energy source. Although, due to the small amount of papers done on this topic it is not enough evidence to recommend it to all individuals. It should be noted however, that training fasted, particularly for high-intensity exercise can impair performance, as they rely heavily on stored and available energy to fuel the exercise. It could be worth experimenting with different training and eating schedules can help determine what works best for an individual's performance. Be sure to try new ways of eating in a training setting before utilising them for exercise or competitions

### 5. Diet vs. lifestyle change for weight-loss:

Intermittent fasting like many diets, can be effective in the short-term to lose weight, and as long as the principles discussed above are followed along with general healthy eating guidelines, it is likely that most of this weight loss would be body fat. However, like with most diets this short-term weight loss is only effective providing the lifestyle factors that led to the initial accumulation of excess body fat are managed. It is important that if you are using this diet for weight-loss you work with a doctor, nutritionist, or similar to help identify what aspects of your diet/lifestyle led to the initial weight gain, so these can be worked on to prevent weight gain after the diet.

For any queries and questions, email:  
[HumanPerformance@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:HumanPerformance@nzdf.mil.nz)



# CROSS-FIT ENTHUSIAST KEEPS ARMY ON ITS TOES



**Lance Corporal Caitlin Snyman wasn't always into fitness. Today, she wonders why everyone isn't doing it.**

The Linton-based NZ Army Physical Training Instructor (PTI) recently assisted throwing down the gauntlet to determine the fittest in camp, devising a portion of and supervising a CrossFit fitness challenge that had multiple units competing for bragging rights.

It's something she loves doing: designing workouts, testing them, and seeing people push themselves through them.

LCPL Snyman joined the Army in 2015, as a medic. She says she was "real baseline" when it came to exercise back then. "Running, PT and maybe a couple of HIIT circuits every now and then."

A few years later she fell in love with CrossFit training. "I was getting fitter, seeing results, and liking the confidence that came with it. I started talking to physical training instructors about the idea of changing trade."

The idea went on hold as she got busy with demands for medics on major exercises in New Zealand and Australia. She left the Army in 2021 to work as a clinical coordinator for an Auckland health care provider. She saw the benefits of preventative therapies and contemplated staying as a wellness adviser, or coming back to the Army to train as a PTI.

Coming back was the best thing she could have done, she says. "There's so much variation in this job. You could be taking classes for most of the day, or just the one class and then doing sports and working out. One thing I should say, there is paperwork that comes with the trade – quite a lot at times."

She loves seeing people do well. "It sounds silly, but for me it's seeing people sweat and struggle and then hearing them share stories about the workout in a positive manner afterwards."

Back in the day, PT was considered harsh and instructors were sometimes considered malicious. "It meant people didn't want to do PT. Today, PTIs are usually considered to be coaches



as well as instructors. You explain what they are doing and why they are doing it. Sure, if people mess up there's a bit of corrective training involved, but people usually know what to expect from you."

One of her roles at Linton is being the PTI for 16 Field Regiment. She'd like to build them up to win the next fitness challenge, a title currently held by the Queen Alexandra's Mounted Rifles (QAMR).

She is currently on the 'shop floor', but there's plenty more ahead if she wants. "PTIs have a reasonably short shelf-life solely taking classes, but the confidence and leadership that comes with this trade is astonishing. You can also move into the rehabilitation field, or there are many other study options that align with the civilian sector."

***"It sounds silly, but for me it's seeing people sweat and struggle and then hearing them share stories about the workout in a positive manner afterwards."***