



Rautaki Ngā Take Tūmatanui a  
Te Ope Kātua o Aotearoa

# NZDF PUBLIC AFFAIRS STRATEGY



TE OPE KĀTUA O AOTEAROA  
DEFENCE FORCE

## **This Te Ope Kātua o Aotearoa | New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) public affairs strategy is an organisation-level view of the NZDF's approach to public affairs.**

It supports the NZDF Strategy (previously known as the Strategy25), and provides guidance to the organisations and personnel of the NZDF that play a role in the NZDF's public affairs. The public affairs activities of the NZDF are much broader than just the activities undertaken by Defence Public Affairs (DPA). They include activities of senior leaders, public facing NZDF organisations and our people as a whole when they engage with external and internal publics. This strategy is applicable to all NZDF organisations and personnel as everyone, through their actions, can affect the public affairs of the NZDF.

The aims of this strategy are to define public affairs in the NZDF, to articulate the purpose and goals of our public affairs and to describe the resources and methods used to achieve the goals. The goals, resources and methods are respectively the ends, means and ways of this strategy.

The context for the NZDF public affairs strategy includes the NZDF Strategy, the accountability relationships between the NZDF and Ministers, Parliament and the public, the Official Information Act and also the current strategic and societal landscape and characteristics. NZDF public affairs exist in a complex and disrupted information environment where the public consumes information in many ways from a variety of providers.

Central to NZDF public affairs is the importance of social licence, trust and confidence, and transparency. Social licence gives the NZDF permission to operate and is contingent on establishing and maintaining trust and confidence of Ministers, Parliament and, by extension, the New Zealand public. Social licence has a strong link to the principle of democratic oversight of the military which requires the Minister of Defence to have sufficient understanding of the NZDF's activities to fulfil their accountability obligations to Parliament and the New Zealand public. Transparency enhances the NZDF's wider standing and purpose by enabling trust and confidence. The NZDF and its leaders must manage for transparency, by taking public affairs decisions that are informed by the public affairs principles detailed in this strategy. In support of this, public affairs training, provided across all levels of the organisation, must emphasise the importance of transparency, trust and confidence, and social licence. In 2021 New Zealand topped international rankings of the Transparency International Government Defence Integrity Index for integrity for the defence and security sector. However, the NZDF must continue to strive to maintain social licence, trust and confidence through its public affairs, by being transparent and having an outward and proactive intent to meet contemporary public interest expectations.

The strategy is guided by the NZDF public affairs principles of truthfulness, transparency, alignment, action, responsiveness and security. This document details the definitions of those principles, with an emphasis on transparency.

Implementation of this strategy requires supporting plans, policy and doctrine. This includes plans for channels, media interaction, engagement, public affairs campaigns, education, and monitoring and evaluation.

The public affairs strategy is summarised by the 'plan on a page' graphic (on pages 4–5) of this publication. The remainder of the publication details the context for NZDF public affairs and then explains the elements of the strategy represented on the 'plan on a page'.

*The original version of this strategy was approved on 22 April 2021 by Chief of Staff HQ NZDF following consultation with Services, portfolios and other key stakeholders. This second version of the strategy was approved on 21 September 2022 following revisions in response to the Expert Review Group report.*

## **All NZDF personnel (past and present), through their actions, can and do contribute to public affairs of the NZDF.**

The NZDF conducts public affairs to enhance relationships, strengthen trust, inspire confidence and achieve communication and engagement outcomes, in order to enhance the NZDF's and New Zealand's strategic and operational effectiveness, and to secure and maintain social licence.

**PRINCIPLES:** Truthfulness    Transparency    Alignment    Action    Responsiveness    Security

**RESOURCES/MEANS**



The NZDF has a range of resources that it must use judiciously to achieve public affairs strategic goals.

- People
- Information
- Relationships
- Capability
- Public facing organisations
- Channels
- Activities – operations, exercises, courses
- Recruiting marketing activities
- Social responsibility activities
- Public commitments
- Policy and doctrine
- Identity and culture
- Trust and Confidence

**METHODS/WAYS**

The NZDF informs, educates and (in appropriate circumstances) persuades identified audiences about the NZDF and its activities in ways that are consistent with NZDF values, adheres to our legal requirements, and meets the moral and ethical expectations of New Zealanders.

- Public affairs principles-based decisions
- Clear responsibilities, authorities, mandates
- Key themes and messages – focussed and consistent
- Channel, media and engagement plans
- NZDF and Service public affairs campaigns
- Tailored public affairs planning and execution
- Inclusive communications techniques
- Clear, coordinated, consistent internal communications
- Clean, contemporary and consistent branding
- Monitoring, assessment, benchmarking
- Risk management
- Education and training in public affairs for NZDF leaders and personnel
- Collaboration with counterparts

**GOALS/ENDS**

Successful public affairs by the NZDF will support the following NZDF Strategy elements, enhancing strategic and operational effectiveness:

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**Relationships and Organisational Excellence**  
Enhanced trust and confidence of the NZ public:

  - that the NZDF is a professional organisation;
  - in the mandate of the NZDF and its activities;
  - in the investment of the government and public into the NZDF; and
  - that the NZDF is transparent and accountable.
- 

**Joint Operational Excellence**  
A trusted strategic and operational partner through providing confidence to our international and domestic counterparts.
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**People**  
The NZDF has a skilled and sustainable workforce by attracting and developing talented New Zealanders who are informed and motivated. Internal communication enables the success of our workforce by keeping our people informed about:

  - the strategic direction and organisational objectives of the NZDF;
  - NZDF operational, training and readiness activities;
  - the tools, resources and opportunities that the NZDF provides to support their success.
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**Operational Domain Mastery**  
Public affairs are synchronised with NZDF integrated information capabilities to achieve NZDF information objectives.

**ENHANCED  
EFFECTIVENESS**  
**SOCIAL  
LICENCE**

**NZDF VALUES:** Tū Kaha | Courage    Tū Tika | Commitment    Tū Tira | Comradeship    Tū Māia | Integrity

## What is public affairs in the NZDF?

**Public affairs in the NZDF includes information communication and other activities that contribute to knowledge of the NZDF, and its activities, by external and internal publics.**

Public affairs activities are undertaken to build mutually beneficial relationships between the NZDF and our publics. All NZDF personnel (past and present), through their actions, can and do contribute to public affairs of the NZDF. This is because every action our people take, on or off duty, can be perceived by the public to meet, exceed or fail their

expectations of the NZDF. If those actions are discussed on social media or by traditional media, then the impact on trust and confidence (good or bad) can be significantly magnified.

Key NZDF personnel, such as senior leaders and those in representative appointments, have a significant role in public affairs, particularly when making public statements. Public facing NZDF organisations, particularly Defence Public Affairs, Defence Recruiting Organisation, and Heritage, Commemoration and Protocol similarly have a significant role in NZDF public affairs, along with other NZDF organisations and entities such as camp and base

headquarters, reserve units, Service museums and Service bands.

Public affairs can span from the strategic to the tactical and straddle both the organisational and operational functions of the NZDF as shown in the table below. Public affairs personnel provide direct support to NZDF senior leaders in organisational and operational headquarters as well as deployable teams. They can provide support remotely either to NZDF personnel overseas or as a reach-back capability for deployed public affairs teams.

Level of Command	NZDF Organisational Functions	NZDF Operational Functions
Strategic	NZDF/Service to Public Relationships – Trust and Confidence	Military Strategic Effects Planning, Advice, Execution
Operational	Public Affairs Support to HQ JFNZ	Public Affairs Support to Operational HQ Commanders and Staff
Tactical	Issue and Activity Public Affairs Plans and Tasks	Deployable Public Affairs Teams planning and executing

## The primary reference for the NZDF’s public affairs strategy is the NZDF Strategy.

Public affairs directly contributes to a number of the targeted investment areas and strategic goals of the NZDF Strategy (previously known as Strategy25). The NZDF Strategy is encapsulated in the diagram on page 8 with the red boxes highlighting those elements of the strategy that successful public affairs will directly contribute to.

The principle of democratic oversight is critical context for framing the accountability relationships between NZDF and Ministers, Parliament and the public. Members of the NZDF are responsible and accountable to the Government of the day through the Minister of Defence. CDF is responsible to the Minister of Defence for carrying out the functions and duties of the NZDF. The ‘no surprises’ convention provides that the Minister should be promptly informed of matters of significance. The Minister is answerable to Parliament for the exercise of their responsibilities in relation to the armed forces. These relationships ensure civilian control of the NZDF is exercised by the Minister, Cabinet and Parliament.

Making information available for public scrutiny facilitates transparency and is a precursor for democratic accountability. Effective accountability requires the provision of accurate information. Transparency enables the media and the public to raise issues and enables Parliamentary scrutiny.

Central to NZDF public affairs is the importance of social licence, trust, confidence and transparency. Transparency enhances the NZDF’s wider standing and purpose, and as such the NZDF and its leaders must ‘manage for transparency’, by taking public affairs decisions that are informed by the public affairs principles detailed in this strategy. The NZDF is fortunate to be in a position of relative strength in terms of transparency and integrity compared to international counterparts as evidenced by the Transparency International Government Defence Integrity Index results (released on 16 November 2021) which assessed New Zealand at the top of international rankings for integrity for the defence and security sector. Additionally, public perception surveys consistently find that 75–80% of the NZ public consider the NZDF trustworthy despite only 42–47% of the NZ public considering the NZDF open and transparent.

This indicates a public acceptance that some military activities need to be classified and that transparency isn’t essential to being trusted, however upholding appropriate transparency of military activities

is a critical enabler for building and maintaining a social licence to operate. The importance of social licence is described in the introduction to this strategy. Modern demands for greater transparency and assurance around defence activities require behaviours and attitudes that are not risk averse to the disclosure of information to the right people at the right time. NZDF public affairs must have an outward and proactive intent to meet contemporary public interest expectations.

The Official Information Act provides important context for the conduct of NZDF public affairs activities. Public affairs efforts and activities must be conducted in accordance with both the legislated requirements and the spirit of the Act. This supports the Act’s purposes with respect to providing proper access to official information, enabling the people of New Zealand to participate in the making and administration of laws and policies, promoting accountability of Ministers of the Crown and officials, enhancing respect for the law, and promoting the good government of New Zealand. While the Act also protects some official information, such as information which if available would be likely to prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand, provision of timely and accurate information by the NZDF supports social licence, trust and confidence, and transparency.

## CONTEXT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The context is also informed by the strategic environment, New Zealand societal views and expectations, the characteristics of the NZDF, and the media and information landscape. NZDF public affairs exist in a complex and disrupted information environment where the public consumes information in many ways from a variety of providers. Analysis of these factors (provided in Appendix 1) demonstrates that public affairs of the NZDF must clearly and accurately represent the NZDF and the role it plays as part of the NZ Government.

In the interests of social licence, trust and confidence, the NZDF should be active with engaging stories, and responsive in a timely and accurate manner, using a wide range of channels, including traditional media, digital platforms and direct engagement. While the NZDF as an organisation, and its channels and statements are trusted, the NZDF public affairs approach to different channels must continue to evolve as the media landscape evolves. We need to be cognisant of the risks and opportunities that the activities we undertake offer and the consequences of any perceived shortcomings in professionalism and transparency.

## NZDF STRATEGY



# Purpose

The NZDF conducts public affairs to enhance relationships, strengthen trust, inspire confidence and achieve communication and engagement outcomes, in order to enhance the NZDF's and New Zealand's strategic and operational effectiveness, and to secure and maintain social licence.

Public affairs activities are predominantly undertaken to improve relationships, primarily by enhancing trust and confidence. Public affairs can also achieve other objectives through its ability to communicate professionally prepared messages, integrating multiple communication forms, through a variety of channels, to identified audiences. NZDF stakeholders, which are audiences for NZDF public affairs, are detailed at Appendix 2.

Public affairs effort should be guided by consideration of how activities increase the NZDF's and New Zealand's effectiveness, both in support of strategic and operational objectives, as well as securing and maintaining social licence.



# Goals of public affairs for the NZDF



Successful public affairs by the NZDF supports the following NZDF Strategy elements, enhancing strategic and operational effectiveness:



## Relationships and Organisational Excellence

- Enhanced trust and confidence of the NZ public:
  - that the NZDF is a professional organisation;
  - in the mandate of the NZDF and its activities;
  - in the investment of the government and public into the NZDF; and
  - that the NZDF is transparent and accountable.



## Joint Operational Excellence

- A trusted strategic and operational partner through providing confidence to our international and domestic counterparts.



## People

- The NZDF has a skilled and sustainable workforce by attracting and developing talented New Zealanders who are informed and motivated. Internal communication enables the success of our workforce by keeping our people informed about:
  - the strategic direction and organisational objectives of the NZDF;
  - NZDF operational, training and readiness activities; and
  - the tools, resources and opportunities that NZDF provides to support their success.



## Operational Domain Mastery

- Public affairs are synchronised with NZDF integrated information capabilities to achieve NZDF information objectives.

Public affairs can't on its own provide trust and confidence, build trust with partners, or provide a skilled and sustainable workforce. However, successful public affairs will complement the actions of the NZDF to enhance the trust and confidence of the NZ public and our partners, and improve the workforce by assisting with the attraction, retention, inclusion and motivation of personnel.



METHOD FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
BY THE NZDF

**NZDF informs, educates and (in appropriate circumstances) persuades identified audiences about the NZDF and its activities in ways that are consistent with the NZDF values, adheres to our legal requirements, and meets the moral and ethical expectations of New Zealanders.**

The following methods are the ways which NZDF resources are used to achieve public affairs goals:

**Public affairs principles-based decisions**

Public affairs principles provide a foundation for public affairs decisions. There are inherent tensions between some principles. The aspiration to be both truthful and responsive can create dilemmas as accuracy can compete with timeliness. Similarly transparency and security can be in tension where the information in question is sensitive to the operations, capability or personnel of the NZDF or our partners. The tensions must be recognised and these principles considered when these dilemmas exist.

The NZDF additionally has the following established norms:

- We tell our people first.
- We ensure that information is provided on suitable channels and platforms.
- We are aware of our Te Tiriti o Waitangi | Treaty of Waitangi commitments.
- We acknowledge and celebrate diversity (including culture, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality) and inclusion.
- We seek to be respectful of the local and regional cultural environment.

# Principles of Public Affairs

## Truthfulness

The credibility of the NZDF contributes to operational success. Credibility and trust is earned by telling the truth and aligning words, images and deeds.

## Transparency

Transparency is the central pillar of liberal democracy. The NZDF remains accountable to the public at home and on operations. Public affairs plays a key role in meeting transparency obligations within the requirements of organisational and operational security. Providing named spokespeople for interviews and statements as a norm, supports transparency.

## Alignment

Consistent messages support the strategic narrative, build credibility and create trust. Public affairs actions should support the NZDF Public Affairs Strategy. On operations, public affairs actions are coordinated and synchronised with other information related capabilities and partners.

## Action

Public affairs requires an active posture to frame public understanding of policies, actions and events effectively. Without action, the advantage is lost. This may result in the NZDF appearing unprepared, uncoordinated and unresponsive. Delegation of authority to speak and act on behalf of the NZDF empowers our people to take action.

## Responsiveness

Public affairs must aim to be timely and accurate in responding to requests for information or action. Slow responses erode trust in the organisation's transparency. Where appropriate, communication may need to be a two-way engagement that accounts for the needs of an audience. Public affairs must balance responsiveness with security.

## Security

Public affairs must protect sensitive and confidential information about the NZDF, its activities and people. Security is paramount but must be balanced with truthfulness and transparency. This tension represents a key challenge for the NZDF, its leaders and personnel. Security should not be used as an excuse for being unresponsive.

## Transparency

Of the public affairs principles, transparency is a priority for the NZDF. The NZDF approach to transparency is based on credibility, trust, respect and openness.

**Credibility:** We provide correct information, are honest and value the truth and the role it plays in building trust and confidence.

**Trust:** We front up and build trust by balancing responsiveness with security, reflecting at all times the values of the NZDF.

**Respect:** We respond in a timely matter and engage proactively with our audiences and value the role of being transparent.

**Openness:** We proactively share information where security considerations permit such as by publishing corporate documents online.

## Clear responsibilities, authorities, mandates

NZDF public affairs is a command and management responsibility at all levels. At the highest level, responsibility for the public affairs of the NZDF rests with the Chief of Defence Force. NZDF policies, directives and established norms delegate authority for public affairs responsibilities to staff within the Office of the Chief of Defence Force and to other NZDF organisations and appointments. Clear articulation of responsibilities, authority and mandate as well as regular review and adjustment if appropriate, supports public affairs effectiveness.

The following table details the indicative responsibility for issues with a public affairs aspect based upon the nature of the issue, noting the responsibility may be adjusted for specific issues when appropriate. These roles own the risk for publicly releasing information related to their command or management responsibility.

Nature of issue	Responsibility – Risk Owners
High profile/high risk issues	CDF
Whole of NZDF organisational issues	CDF or VCDF
NZDF organisational issues specific to a portfolio	CDF, VCDF or Portfolio Head (CPO, CFO, CJDS)
Service issues (raise, train, sustain and Service equipment)	Service Chiefs, Deputies, Component Commander
Operational issues	COMJFNZ, Commander, Senior National Officer, Component Commander
Base/Camp/Formations Unit issues	Commander, Commanding Officer

## Key themes and messages – focussed and consistent

Consistent use of a common set of key themes and messages provides the greatest opportunity to ensure those messages resonate with, and are remembered by, identified audiences. Key themes and messages for both the NZDF and the Services support the achievement of NZDF and Service public affairs objectives, particularly when the messages are complementary and the use of them is coordinated.

In order to prioritise limited public affairs resources it is necessary to prioritise key themes and messages. Having focus areas with identified audiences enhances the effectiveness of the public affairs effort by preventing effort being diluted in an attempt to achieve too many objectives.

Key themes and messages, and their priority, should consider and be coordinated with how the NZDF represents itself to NZ government, other government agencies and international partners and how we articulate that in documents such as the Annual Plan and International Defence Engagement Strategy.

## Channel, media and engagement plans

Clear articulation of how the NZDF uses its channels and interacts with the media to maximise reach and engagement provides consistency and clarity when planning to enhance the success of public affairs activities.

Articulation of the purpose and use of owned channels (digital and print), and how those channels relate to and support each other, is essential to ensure information is provided on suitable channels and platforms. Over time channels evolve in how they are used and who they reach. They become ineffective if their purpose and use isn't regularly reviewed.

Articulation of how the NZDF interacts with the media, including the preparation and approval of press releases and media responses, as well as the identification of spokespeople where appropriate, supports all of the public affairs principles.

Enhancing engagement with identified audiences is critical to ensuring the NZDF is able to reach those audiences with our messages. While reaching a large audience isn't necessarily a success, failing to reach any audience is almost certainly failure.



## **NZDF and Service public affairs campaigns**

Public affairs campaigns are a set of public affairs activities, sustained over a length of time with objectives associated with a particular issue or theme. For key messages that are focus areas for public affairs effort, campaigns offer the opportunity to increase both effectiveness and efficiency in terms of the resources required to achieve public affairs outputs and outcomes.

## **Tailored public affairs planning and execution**

The development and execution of public affairs plans, tailored to the circumstance, is a fundamental mechanism for undertaking public affairs. Plans can range from annual organisational level plans to operation, exercise or issue specific plans. While not all issues require written plans, all issues do require considered planning and where activities or issues span multiple areas, consistent approaches to public affairs planning enhances the likelihood of successful execution.

## **Inclusive communications techniques**

Inclusive communications techniques include not just communicating in an accessible manner such as multiple languages, but also by incorporating cultural and accessibility considerations as part of public affairs planning. Application of these techniques not only provides the opportunity to reach a broader audience, but also to enhance perceptions of the NZDF through how our messages represent our organisations.

## **Clear, coordinated, consistent internal communications**

Proactive internal communication enhances morale and empowers our people, creating proud and

effective representatives of the NZDF. It enables NZDF personnel to be informed of organisational direction, objectives, developments, activities and events to enable them to be effective in their work and enhance their connection and engagement, thereby enhancing culture and effectiveness.

Application of best practice internal communication methods enables the NZDF's leaders to be better informed and more effective leaders. This is because internal communications provides situational awareness and puts our leaders and managers in a better position to respond to current or future issues and to circumvent problems before they occur.

Best practice internal communication supports crisis communications by providing trusted, timely channels with reach across the organisation to inform staff what to do in situations requiring an acute response, potentially by a substantial number of our personnel. Change management, whether for structural, cultural or other change programmes, can substantially benefit through consideration of internal communications requirements and sequencing being determined in consultation with stakeholders and affected personnel.

## **Clean, contemporary and consistent branding**

A brand is the articulation of an organisation's purpose, and the way it is presented to external and internal publics. Branding is the creation of a clear and consistent message for an organisation. The goal of branding is to foster understanding and goodwill, which complements public affairs strategic goals. As such, the use of best practice branding methods, including consistent use of messages detailing who we are and what we do, as well as a strong visual identity representing the NZDF and its organisations, supports public affairs goals.

## **Monitoring, assessment, benchmarking**

Monitoring and assessment of public affairs, where possible benchmarked either against historic measurement or counterpart organisations, enables the success of public affairs efforts to be quantified and application of effort to be adjusted as required. Assessment of both outputs and outcomes provides the most comprehensive understanding of effectiveness. Public perception surveys by the NZDF now provide a substantial historic record of perception trends. Future refinements to analysis must consider both the consistency of the questions with historic surveys as well as alignment of data collected against strategy goals.

Measurement of this strategy is planned to be informed by the following surveys:

- Public perception survey for NZ public related goals.
- Pulse survey for NZDF personnel related goals.
- NZ government 'agency overall satisfaction with NZDF service support' survey for domestic counterpart related goals.

## **Risk management**

All of the risk appetite anchors, strategic risks and operational risks identified in the NZDF Enterprise Risk Summary have corresponding public affairs risks. Some elements of that risk summary such as 'stakeholder trust and confidence', 'building and maintain trust' and 'erosion of strategic relationships' have a very direct relationship to public affairs. Other risks such as 'strategic execution', 'failure in upholding the ethos, values and standards of the NZDF', 'operational effectiveness' and 'organisational efficiency and affordability' can all impact the public affairs goals of the NZDF.

Significant NZDF risk related decisions must consider public affairs implications including risk mitigation measures specific to the public affairs consequences of the risks. Public affairs risks can create risks for other organisation objectives such as recruiting and retention.

Public affairs activities (and this strategy) must align with NZDF risk appetite settings. Drawing on the NZDF Enterprise Risk Summary and risk management methodology assists public affairs planning to determine the optimal approach to an issue or activity.

## **Education and training in public affairs for NZDF leaders and personnel**

As all NZDF personnel can contribute to or have an effect on NZDF public affairs, provision of education and training in public affairs can enhance opportunities and reduce risks. Education and training should be tailored to the roles personnel fill within the organisation. A learning continuum corresponding to career development, complemented by role-specific and refresher training provides a comprehensive approach to providing our people with public affairs skills and knowledge.

## **Collaboration with counterparts**

NZDF Public Affairs effectiveness can be significantly enhanced through collaboration with counterpart New Zealand government agencies and partner military and security organisations in the region and abroad. Effectiveness can be enhanced not just by sharing knowledge, but also by collaborating towards the achievement of common or complementary objectives. In some circumstances developing common approaches and a deeper understanding of other organisations' practices can substantially enhance effectiveness.

# **Proactive internal communication enhances morale and empowers our people.**





## The NZDF has a range of resources that it must use judiciously to achieve public affairs strategic goals.

While it is in the interest of NZ to have a strong relationship between the NZDF and the NZ public, the NZDF must ensure it is sparing in the amount of resources utilised for public affairs to avoid detracting from delivery of core outputs. Judicious prioritisation of the limited resources of public facing organisations of the NZDF is therefore required to achieve the goals of this strategy. Similarly, public affairs activities, whilst important for NZDF objectives, must be cognisant of the extent of the demand for resources they create across the organisation and the resulting tension that may create against other requirements.

### People, Information, Relationships, Capability – the NZDF Strategy Targeted Investment Areas.

All four targeted investment areas of the NZDF Strategy contribute to public affairs strategy.

- **People** – the stories of the people of the NZDF provide some of our most engaging content. Relatable stories that present the human side of the NZDF have broad appeal and provide the opportunity to engage sections of NZ public that might not otherwise be interested in NZDF related issues.
- **Information** – public affairs inherently involves the communication of information.

Ensuring the information is accurate and timely is a responsibility shared by all that contributes to the development, recording and storage of information, as well as the organisation's information management systems.

- **Relationships** – effective relationships are critical to public affairs. Relationships internal to the NZDF as well as between the NZDF and domestic and international partner organisations enables collaboration. Relationships with media and communications organisations support a mutual understanding of each other's drivers, constraints and opportunities.
- **Capability** – the capabilities developed and maintained by the NZDF are the means by which the NZDF delivers its outputs for the NZ Government. The stories of those capabilities and their value to NZ is therefore central to telling the NZDF story. The military capabilities that utilise the equipment such as military ships, aircraft, land-based vehicles and weapons can provide engaging content for a variety of public affairs purposes.

### Public facing organisations

While all NZDF personnel can contribute to public affairs of the NZDF, some organisations within the NZDF have functions which have a substantial focus on interacting

with the NZ public. Within HQ NZDF this includes Defence Public Affairs, Defence Recruiting Organisation and Heritage, Culture and Protocol.

- **Defence Public Affairs (DPA)** – DPA creates, engages, educates, advises and promotes transparency, in the interests of maintaining social licence, enhancing relationships, strengthening trust, inspiring confidence and achieving NZDF communication and engagement outcomes. A central purpose of DPA is to inform the NZ public of the activities and capabilities of the NZDF's organisations and people, in a transparent manner. DPA drives the NZDF's efforts to be transparent to the NZ public about who we are, what we do, what we are doing, how we do it and why we do it. The role of DPA is to provide communication, media and public affairs expertise and services. It develops communication strategies and sponsors media and communications policy; provides media liaison services; manages external internet news content and internal intranet news content; produces NZDF, Navy, Army and Air Force magazines; generates, processes and/or disseminates official imagery and video; manages NZDF social media channels; produces NZDF graphical products and provides subject matter expertise in visual identity.

- **Defence Recruiting Organisation (DRO)** – DRO aims to inspire, engage and recruit the number of personnel required by the NZDF with the quality and diversity needed to support the NZDF Strategy. Its vision is to seamlessly connect future generations of sailors, soldiers and airmen with a career that reflects their values and goals.
- **Heritage, Culture and Protocol (HCP)** is the CDF's principal policy advisor on the NZDF's military and tikanga ceremonial protocols, its heritage and medallic recognition; planning and delivery lead for the organisation of New Zealand's overseas military commemorations and the NZDF support to state and national occasions: and organisational lead for CDF-hosted senior military visits and specified activities.

Collaboration and coordination between NZDF organisations interacting with the public is essential to ensure effort to achieve the objectives of respective parts of the organisation are complementary. Numerous other parts of the NZDF such as camp and base headquarters, reserve units, Service museums and Service bands can also substantially contribute to public affairs. The efforts of those organisations to engage the public should also be coordinated and aligned to the achievement of public affairs goals.

### Channels

The NZDF owns a variety of print and digital channels including the Service magazines, a variety of NZDF external websites, social media accounts on a variety of platforms, and the NZDF internal intranet and digital poster boards throughout camps and bases. This variety of channels provides a number of avenues to communicate with different audiences. The high level of trust the NZDF has with the NZ public means our channels are considered credible, and provide the opportunity to directly engage with a variety of audiences.

### Activities

NZDF operations, exercises, courses and other activities are the ways in which NZDF capability is developed or utilised. Telling the story of these activities, particularly operations and major exercises is a key component of the NZDF story. Operations in particular demonstrate the NZDF delivering outcomes for the NZ Government and public. Given that many areas of operations are difficult to access, NZDF resources are critical for developing high quality written and visual material for communicating the conduct and purpose of operational activities within the constraints of operational security.

## Recruiting marketing activities

The NZDF's primary marketing purpose is to achieve recruiting objectives. The public relations industry concept of integrated marketing communications provides a philosophy to connect recruiting activities with public affairs activities that contribute to recruiting objectives. Integrated marketing communication aims to blend communication activities towards common goals. Close coordination between public affairs and recruiting, including understanding respective priorities, aligns to an integrated marketing communications approach.

## Social responsibility activities

It is in the interests of NZDF relationships with the public to act, and be seen to act, as a socially responsible organisation. Activities undertaken to endorse or support causes and charities should be aligned with NZDF values and NZDF objectives. Judicious selection of official causes or charities, based on alignment of purpose and organisational goals, can ensure that effort and effect isn't diluted and that the amount of NZDF effort that is contributed to non-core outputs is appropriate.

## Public commitments

NZDF's public commitments and associated accreditations contribute to the NZDF's social licence, supporting our public affairs. These include:

- Rainbow Tick Accreditation.
- White Ribbon Accreditation.
- Adoption of the United Nations Women's Empowerment Principles.
- Committing to address the gender pay gap via the Gender Pay Gap Action Plan.

## Policy and doctrine

A range of policy and doctrine supports the conduct of public affairs of the NZDF.

- NZ Government, Ministry of Defence and NZDF policy, plans and strategy provide the context within which the NZDF exists, and its role. These documents inform and drive many of the key themes and messages for public affairs of the NZDF.
- NZDF orders, instructions and directives provide parameters and explicit tasks for NZDF organisations and personnel conducting public affairs related activities. Specific orders with direct relevance include those covering official information, release of publication into the public arena and assistance to community organisations.
- Doctrine assists planners and commanders by providing guidelines on the 'how' to plan and execute activities in support of objectives. Public affairs doctrine is valuable for standardising understanding and approaches to public affairs planning and execution.

## Identity and culture

A well-articulated and widely accepted identity connects the people of the organisation to its public image. The collective purpose articulated as 'A Force for New Zealand' and the NZDF values articulate central components of the NZDF's identity and provide a frame for public affairs messages.

NZDF organisational culture, which draws on the NZDF values, as well as organisational norms, attitudes, and beliefs is integral to how our people represent themselves. Characteristics of NZDF culture include our bi-cultural heritage and our connections to the story of New Zealand as a nation. The NZDF's identity and culture is central to how the NZDF and our people represent themselves, and therefore maintaining a strong identity and culture is critical for the NZDF's public affairs.

## Trust and Confidence

The NZDF has a high level of trust and confidence with the majority of the NZ public and many international groups of importance to New Zealand. Surveys conducted by Colmar Brunton of NZ public sector confidence and perceptions of the NZDF indicate that the NZ public perception is consistently high relative to many counterpart organisations. Trust and confidence is hard won but easily lost. As such, while the NZDF can leverage trust and confidence to support its public affairs effort, the NZDF must also continuously strive to maintain that trust and confidence.

### References drawn from in the development of this strategy include:

- *Official Information Act 1982.*
- *New Zealand Defence Force, Strategy25.*
- *New Zealand Defence Force, Annual Report 2022.*
- *Australian Defence Force Publication, ADFP 3.13.2 Military Public Affairs, Ed 1, 14 February 2020.*
- *Ronald D. Smith, Strategic Planning for Public Relations, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, 2017, Routledge.*
- *Ron Murray, Talking with your people – a roadmap to achieve better employee communications in the corporate world, Ed 2, 2021, Murex Press.*
- *Colmar Brunton, NZDF Public Perceptions Surveys and Public Sector Reputation Index, 2016-2021.*
- *Report of the Expert Review Group, November 2021.*
- *Report of the Government Inquiry into Operation Burnham and related matters, July 2020.*

# Appendices



## APPENDIX 1 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

	Features	Implication for the NZDF
<b>Strategic environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased competition between major powers, increased use of information and misinformation as a tool in that competition.</li> <li>Increased competition in our region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NZDF needs to be clear about how to project itself publicly and represents its activities both domestically and internationally to accurately represent the role it plays as part of the NZ Government.</li> </ul>
<b>NZ Society view of the NZDF and their interaction with different media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many New Zealanders are relatively positive about the NZDF but ambivalent about its role.</li> <li>While use of social media continues to rise, traditional media still achieves a much greater reach for the NZDF to the NZ public than social media.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NZDF needs to be active with engaging stories to connect with the NZ public, including actively engaging with traditional media and continued development of social media.</li> </ul>
<b>NZ Society expectations of the NZDF</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing expectations for transparency of government departments including the NZDF.</li> <li>Increasing expectations of community involvement and contribution to non-traditional military tasks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lapses in transparency or failure to support community and non-traditional tasks may present risks to the NZDF's social licence to operate.</li> </ul>
<b>Characteristics of the NZDF</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NZDF is a relatively small, professional force.</li> <li>The NZDF has a relatively high level of trust within the NZ population.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NZDF channels and public statements are generally considered trustworthy by the NZ public.</li> </ul>
<b>Media/information trends</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current trends include convergence, increasing use of digital mediums, and increasing prevalence of misinformation.</li> <li>Citizen Journalism – anyone can be a journalist as a result of social media platforms and smart phones. Traditional media also use social media for tip-offs and news.</li> <li>New Zealand media appears to be reaching a degree of stability after several years of turmoil.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NZDF needs to continue to evolve in its understanding of contemporary media and how to work with it to engage with the NZ public.</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX 2 STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Major Groupings	Sub-groups
<b>NZ Public</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Public (regional/local communities)</li> <li>NZ Government Leadership</li> <li>NZ Government Agencies</li> <li>Iwi</li> <li>Media</li> <li>Prospective recruits/staff</li> <li>Career influencers</li> </ul>
<b>Internal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole of the NZDF</li> <li>Services (incl/excl civilian staff)</li> <li>Civilian Staff</li> <li>Organisations (HQ, Components, Formations, Units)</li> <li>Locations (Defence House, Bases, Camps)</li> <li>Staff led networks</li> </ul>
<b>Defence Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family/friends of NZDF members</li> <li>Former members of the NZDF</li> <li>Veterans</li> <li>Cadet forces</li> </ul>
<b>Defence Industry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Domestic</li> <li>International</li> </ul>
<b>International</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner militaries</li> <li>National populations especially in our region</li> <li>Governments</li> <li>Media</li> </ul>



**HEI MANA MŌ AOTEAROA**  
**A FORCE FOR NEW ZEALAND**