



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

OIA-2024-5223

3rd February 2025

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@nzme.co.nz

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your emails of 4 December 2024 and 5 December 2024 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information concerning 1st New Zealand Special Air Service Regiment (NZSAS) support to Managed Isolation and Quarantine facilities (MIQF), specifically with 501 deportees as noted below:

What involvement did members of the NZSAS have with 501 deportees – can you explain their role?

During which period did this occur? Is it still ongoing?

Who authorised this? Were any ministers involved in signing this off?

Why was it deemed necessary for the NZSAS to be involved and was this a good use of their time? Why were other members of the NZDF unable to complete these tasks?

What feedback did members provide about their involvement?

Why has this not been publicly announced before (again, if it has, please let me know)?

Any internal documents and correspondence about the involvement of members of the NZSAS with 501 deportees

Any correspondence with ministers (and their offices) or other agencies about the involvement of members of the NZSAS with 501 deportees. Please include any briefings, memos or other documents provided/received.

Any feedback received about the involvement of members of the NZSAS with 501 deportees

In March 2020, the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) initiated Operation Protect that contributed to the all-of-government response to COVID-19. On any given day, approximately 1,200 personnel were performing Operation Protect duties. This required the involvement of all available personnel from all three Services and from various units. This was widely reported on at the time.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment was the agency responsible for MIQF. Given the restrictions at the time on movement around New Zealand, personnel were deployed within their respective regions. Being located in the Auckland region, NZSAS personnel were deployed to two MIQF, Jet Park and the Ramada Auckland. The Ramada Auckland was the designated facility for 501 deportees. All NZDF personnel at MIQF

undertook management and security duties to protect New Zealanders from the spread of COVID-19.

Following the Government decision to increase the involvement of the NZDF with respect to MIQF, the deployment of personnel began in August 2020 and ended in May 2022. Enclosed is the Chief of Defence Force Operational Directive 27/2020 that gave effect to the Government's decision to increase the role of the NZDF at MIQF. Where indicated, the names and contact details of operational personnel are withheld in accordance with section 6(a) of the OIA to avoid prejudice to the security and defence of New Zealand. Information for internal NZDF purposes is withheld in accordance with section 9(2)(k) to avoid the malicious or inappropriate use of staff information, such as phishing, scams or unsolicited advertising.

All isolated/quarantined individuals were managed under the policies established by the agency responsible for MIQF. There are no NZDF documents or correspondence concerning the involvement of NZSAS personnel with 501 deportees. As you were notified, any feedback about the involvement of NZSAS personnel with 501 deportees would be held by the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment, and this part of your request has been transferred accordingly.

You have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to ask an Ombudsman to review this response to your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that responses to official information requests are proactively released where possible. This response to your request will be published shortly on the NZDF website, with your personal information removed.

Yours sincerely

GA Motley

Brigadier

Chief of Staff HQNZDF

Enclosure:

1. Chief of Defence Force Operational Directive 27/2020 – NZDF Support to Covid-19 Managed Isolation and Quarantine Facilities



Headquarters
New Zealand Defence Force
Defence House
34 Bowen Street
Wellington 6011
NEW ZEALAND

NZDF 3302/1

28 Jul 20

See distribution

**CDF OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVE 27/2020
NZDF SUPPORT TO COVID-19 MANAGED ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE FACILITIES**

References:

- A. CDF Operational Directive 12/2020 NZDF Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Management Plan dated 13 Mar 20
- B. CDF Operational Directive 17/2020 NZDF Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Management Plan Update dated 19 Mar 20
- C. FRAGO 005 to CDF Operational Directive 18/2020 OP PROTECT - NZDF Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Management Level Four Activation
- D. Defence Act 1990
- E. The 2019-2020 NZDF Output Plan

Authority

1. Issued by the Chief of Defence Force.

Applicability

2. This Directive constitutes a general order to members of the Armed Forces and instructions to the Civil Staff and other persons employed for Defence Force purposes.
3. This Directive applies to all members of the NZDF and to contractors, consultants and other persons and organisations engaged for Defence Force purposes. The orders, directions and instructions in this directive are to be considered applicable to all to whom they may concern.
4. Non-compliance with this directive may result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the Armed Forces Discipline Act 1971 or may result in possible sanctions in accordance with the Civil Staff Code of Conduct.
5. This directive provides supplementary orders in addition to those outlined in references A and B. Reference A remains the NZDF prime reference for response management supplemented by reference B and these orders.

Situation

6. As stated in reference C, NZ has moved to Alert Level 1, which includes border controls and international travel restrictions. Subsequently there has been direction for increased NZDF involvement with respect to Managed Isolation & Quarantine Facilities (MIQFs). A hierarchy of COVID-19 Isolation / Quarantine Structures is attached as Enclosure 1.

Mission

7. NZDF is to provide support to the AoG response to COVID-19 in order to minimise the impact of the virus and maintain the well-being of the New Zealand population.

Execution

8. **Intent:**
 - a. **Purpose.** To provide support to the AoG managed isolation and quarantine effort as part of the overall response to minimise the impact of COVID-19 to the population of New Zealand; while maintaining operational outputs and missions.
 - b. **Method.** The NZDF will provide capabilities and staff support to assist in the coordination and operation of the AoG managed isolation and quarantine facilities.
9. **Endstate.** The NZDF has supported the AoG managed isolation and quarantine effort and enhanced its reputation within the inter-agency, and public, environments. NZDF force elements are reconstituted in their home locations and prepared for subsequent tasks.
10. **Tasks:**
 - a. Tasks at references B-C remain extant. COMJFNZ, Service Chiefs, Heads of Portfolio, Officers in Charge of Defence Areas and all other commanders and managers are to ensure compliance with the orders contained in this directive.
 - b. **COMJFNZ is to:**
 - (1) Command and coordinate all NZDF support to the AoG managed isolation and quarantine effort, including but not limited to:
 - (a) support to MIQFs,
 - (b) support to Regional Isolation & Quarantine Coordination Centres (RIQCCs),
 - (c) staff support to the Isolation, Quarantine & Repatriation (IQR) Cell of the Operational Command Centre (OCC).
 - (2) prepare, deploy and sustain personnel supporting the AoG managed isolation and quarantine effort.

- (3) provide tracking, reporting and oversight of NZDF personnel deployed for support; and
 - (4) provide regular sitreps of past and future activities in support of the AoG response.
 - c. **Chiefs of Service, CoS HQNZDF and Portfolio Heads** are to:
 - (1) provide COMJFNZ with FE/personnel as requested; and
 - (2) prioritise resources and facilities in support of Op PROTECT.
 - d. **AC SCE** is to:
 - (1) maintain strategic liaison between NZDF and OGAs; and
 - (2) review all requests for NZDF support, and approve as appropriate.
 - e. **CDI** is to:
 - (1) provide personnel to the JIG; and
 - (2) BPT provide intelligence support as required.
 - f. **DDLS** is to:
 - (1) provide legal advice and support to COMJFNZ and deployed FE/personnel as required,
 - (2) BPT provide legal advice and support to AIRCDRE Webb, if requested.
 - g. **DDPA** is to:
 - (1) develop key NZDF media messages relating to NZDF support to managed isolation and quarantine efforts; and
 - (2) if requested, provide messaging advice for AIRCDRE Webb as Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) of Managed Isolation Facilities (MIFs), in conjunction with other response agencies, and OCC Public Affairs.
 - h. **DCTM** is to support COMJFNZ in the identification and provision of personnel for Wellington-based AoG support roles.
11. **Coordinating Instructions:**
- a. **Priority of COVID-19 Response.** NZDF Outputs prioritisation is shown in annex A. COVID-19 response tasks are priority 2 as part of Output 4.3. Priority 1 being Output 5.1 and 5.2, delivery of current Cabinet-approved operations and associated pre-deployment training.
 - b. **Planning Guidance:**
 - (1) Likely tasks include:
 - (a) management and coordination of isolation/quarantine facilities;

- (b) staff support to RIQCCs;
 - (c) staff support to the OCC, including the IQR Cell;
 - (d) staff support to OGAs;
- (2) The current planning duration for the provision of support is until 4 Oct 20.
- c. **Freedom and Constraints:**
- (1) **Approval/Authorisation of tasks.**
 - (a) All requests for COVID-19 support—from outside NZDF—are to be submitted to SCE Branch, HQNZDF, for approval.
 - (b) SCE Branch is authorised to approve tasks in support of OP PROTECT unless those tasks could compromise essential outputs shown in annex A, paras 3.a.1-4.
 - (c) HQJFNZ is authorised to conduct rotations of personnel as required for approved tasks.
 - (2) **Employment of Foreign Forces.** Foreign troops posted or attached to NZDF Force Elements are not to be directly employed in response activities without clearance by SCE Branch. This does not include personnel posted into headquarters roles and continuing to fulfil those functions.
 - (3) **Use of Reserve Forces.** Reserve Force individuals may be engaged to undertake COVID-19 response roles; however no widespread 'activation' of Reserves is to occur at this time. The persex cost for use of Reserves is to be captured against the individual's unit cost centre, using the COVID-19 SPC.

Administration and Logistics

- 12. **Category of Service.** All support to the COVID-19 response is an Output 4.3 activity and is Non-Operational Service IAW DFO 3.
- 13. **Veterans' Affairs.** Personnel deployed to support the COVID-19 response will be covered by the Accident Compensation Corporation Act 2001. This support is not currently qualifying service for the purposes of the Veterans' Support Act 2014.
- 14. **Public Information and Public Affairs.** The HQNZDF point of contact for public and media enquiries regarding NZDF's role, is DPA. DPA will develop key NZDF media messages and provide these to HQJFNZ.
- 15. **Legal.**
 - a. The legal basis for NZDF support to the COVID-19 response is provided in s9 (1) (a) of reference D.
 - b. All operations conducted by NZDF in support of the COVID-19 response are to be conducted IAW domestic and international law.

16. **Finance.** All expenditure for COVID-19 related activity is to be captured against unit Cost Centres. SPC s. 9(2)(k) is to be used for all expenditure directly related to the COVID-19 response. Credit cards may only be used in emergency situations or for essential requirements for Op PROTECT. All extant NZDF purchasing and financial policies are to be complied with. Any questions should be referred to the NZDF Financial Controller, Fiona Stockdill.

Command and Control

17. **Command Status.** NZDF personnel assigned to support the COVID-19 response remain under the Full Command of CDF, and are deployed under the OPCOM of COMJFNZ.
18. **Liaison Authority.** DIRLAUTH is approved for HQJFNZ, and delegates, with:
- a. IQR Cell,
 - b. RIQCC, and
 - c. MIQFs.
19. **Reporting.** HQJFNZ is to establish reporting lines as appropriate, including EARLLS.
20. **Points of Contact.** Contact details are detailed below:

- a. **SCE Br, HQNZDF.**

Primary:

s. 6(a)



- b. **HQJFNZ.**

Primary:

s. 6(a)



Alternate:

s. 6(a)



Acknowledge Instructions

21. Action addressees are to **acknowledge** receipt of this directive to HQNZDF SCE Branch at the following address s. 9(2)(k)
- 

Cancellation

22. This Directive is cancelled on completion of the operation or on order of CDF.



KR SHORT
Air Marshal
Chief of Defence Force

Annex:

- A. COVID-19 Response – Outputs Prioritisation

Enclosure:

1. COVID-19 Isolation / Quarantine Structures (Correct as at 2 Jul 20)

Distribution List:

Action:

VCDF
CN
CA
CAF
COMJFNZ
CoS HQNZDF
AC SCE
AC CAP
CDI
DDLS
CDSM
DDPA
CFO
CPO (Attn: DCTM)
CJDS
DDPA

COVID-19 RESPONSE – OUTPUTS PRIORITISATION

Prioritisation of NZDF Outputs

1. The NZDF Output Plan 2019/20 implements the Government's requirement of the Defence Force and the outputs to be delivered. The effects of COVID-19 have the potential to impact on output delivery.
2. Commander Joint Forces, Service Chiefs, and Portfolio Owners will need to be cognisant of the vulnerability of some enabler capabilities during the ongoing response to COVID-19, such as NZDF Health elements. The maintenance of NZ based force protection functions is likely to reduce capacity to support and/or sustain a range of response options across the scope of NZDF outputs. Specific priorities may need to be established for some enabler capabilities to reflect, not only the maintenance of Essential Outputs, but also essential force protection requirements.
3. Service Chiefs and Portfolio Owners are to take appropriate measures to maintain the following priority order of NZDF Output activities and sub-components:
 - a. **Essential**
 - (1) **Output 5.1 & 5.2:** Delivery of current Cabinet-approved operations and associated pre-deployment training;
 - (2) **Output 4.3:** Military assistance to civil authorities in emergency situations;
 - (3) **Output 6.2:** Situational awareness;
 - (4) **Output 4.1:** Resource and border protection:
 - (a) military operations and capabilities that directly contribute to all of government operations and responses to protect NZ's borders and offshore maritime interests, and maintain the integrity of NZ's sovereign territory, such as short-notice response tasks requested by NMCC to respond to actual or potential non-compliance with NZ and international legislation;
 - (b) maritime search and rescue;
 - (c) maritime counter-terrorism; and
 - (d) support to operations on the Antarctic continent.
 - (5) **Output 5.2** Generation of military operations that contribute to regional security:
 - (a) preparedness of military capabilities for Counter-Terrorism Operations;
 - (b) preparedness of military capabilities for Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations;

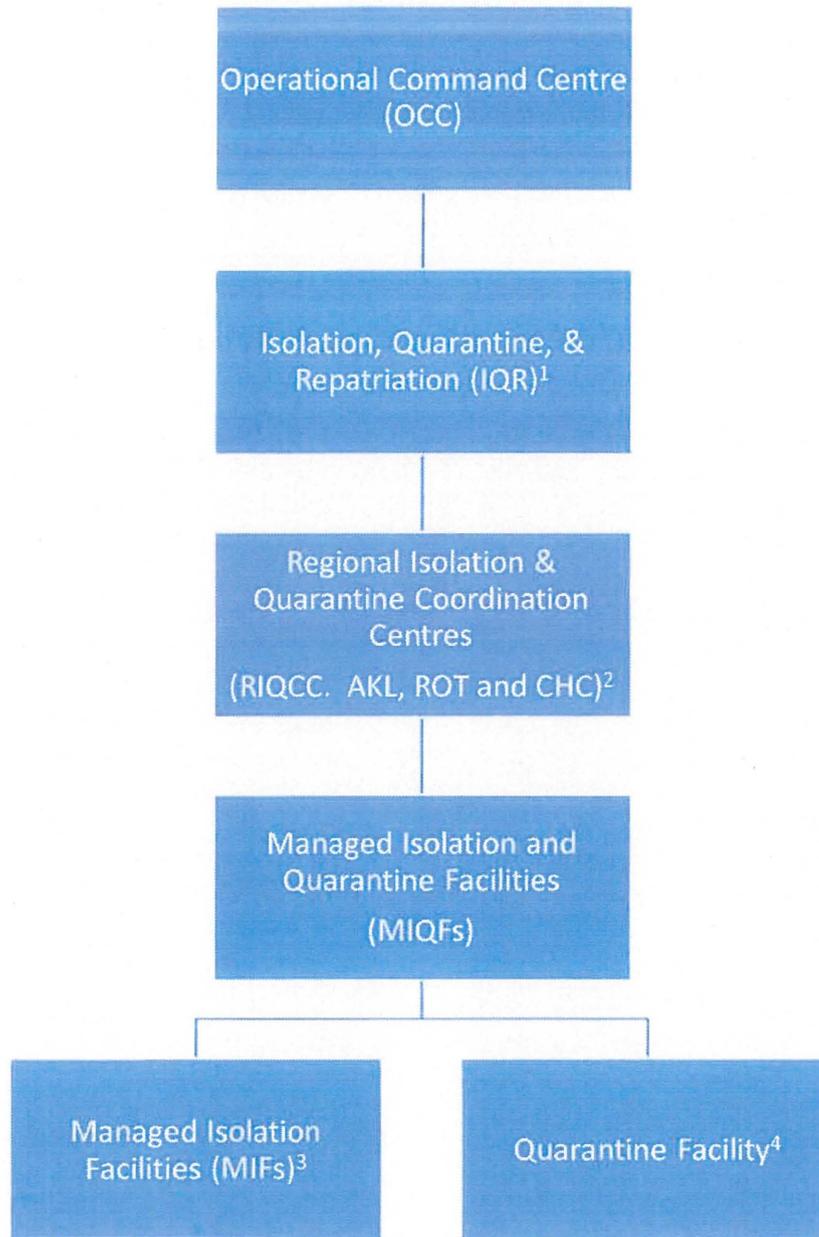
- (c) preparedness of military capabilities for a South West Pacific HADR response; and
 - (d) preparedness of military capabilities for a regional stability and support operation (but not concurrent with a major HADR response operation).
- b. **Highly Desirable**
 - (1) **Output 6.1** Policy advice;
 - (2) **Output 4.2** Defence international engagement:
 - (a) critical international engagement activities associated with maintaining minimum levels of support to mandated Australia, FVEY and South Pacific activities / forums, and postings;
 - (b) the Defence Mutual Assistance Programme; and
 - (c) critical engagement and support for the procurement and sustainment of approved new capabilities.
- c. **Desirable**
 - (1) **Output 5.1** Generation of sustainment forces for current mandated operations; and
 - (2) **Output 7.1** Veterans Affairs. Including policy work and routine BAU functions.¹
- d. **Non-Essential**
 - (1) **Output 4.4** Military assistance to civil authorities in non-emergency situations; (Includes such things as Guards of Honour, parades, support to the Vice-Regal Household (including assignment of ADC) etc.); and
 - (2) **Output 4.5** Defence Support to the community (incorporates LSV Scheme and NZ Cadet Forces).

Prioritisation Triggers

4. The para 3 priorities are not a mandate to significantly impact or cease entirely lower priority outputs. Should COVID-19 reduce the NZDF's ability to deliver outputs, CDF will authorise the cessation and redirection of resources from lower priority outputs towards maintaining those higher priority effects. Advice from Service Chiefs and Portfolio/Capability Owners, COMJFNZ, Health Directorate and other key stakeholders will be applied to decisions accordingly.

¹ Operational work impacting the well being of Veterans (eg. paying and administration of benefits, health services and support) should be considered Essential and managed on a case by case priority basis.

COVID-19 ISOLATION/QUARANTINE STRUCTURES



Notes:

1. Also referred to as Border Control, Repatriation and Managed Isolation.
2. Also abbreviated as A-RIQ, R-RIQ, and C-RIQ for AKL, ROT and CHC respectively.
3. Currently located in Auckland, Wellington, Hamilton, Rotorua and Christchurch. Of the above facilities all except two in AKL have NZDF staff on site.
4. Currently one facility located in Auckland. Nil NZDF coordination support (this remains a BPT task).