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OIA-2025-5342

12 May 2025

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 9 April 2025 to the Ministry of Defence, requesting information about the Kauri Point armament depot. Your request was transferred to the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) for response, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

1. *In 2011, the National government Minister of Defence, Wayne Mapp, announced publicly that the depot was to be upgraded in the next 2 years with "modern ammunition bunkers and Igloo Huts". Can you confirm that this work was completed? And has there been any further upgrades since?*

The planned modernisation from 2011/12 is not complete. Considerable work has been undertaken to date, and the project is ongoing.

2. *Does "modern bunkers and Igloo Huts" mean that at least part of the depot facility is underground?*

None of the facilities are underground. Further detail about the facilities is withheld in accordance with section 6(a) of the OIA to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of New Zealand and the international relations of the Government of New Zealand.

*...I recall a letter to...[the North Shore Times Advertiser]...stating that from an engineering point of view, the topography of the depot site meant that the force of any unexpected explosions would be directed towards the harbour.*

3. *See my comment above re the site topography mitigating potential harm from an explosion - is it possible to confirm this?*

Natural topography and human-made earth traverses can assist in providing protection or a buffer against an unintended explosion. Where practicable, the NZDF has used Kauri Point topography to site explosive facilities to best protect the public and members of the NZDF. In addition, the NZDF conforms to international best practice, New Zealand hazardous substance regulations, and NZDF policy regarding safe and compliant Class 1 hazardous substance storage facilities.

4. *Newspaper articles about the depot mention that this is the primary site for the import of ammunition for the NZ Defence Force. Does that mean that the Army and*

*Air Force use the depot as well as the navy? If so are military supplies on-shipped by road and what kind of safeguards apply to such transport? XXX*

Kauri Point is a NZDF facility that supports all NZDF assets. Class 1 hazardous substances are transported by road to and from Kauri Point. The NZDF or commercial operators that move class 1 hazardous substances to or from Kauri Point conform to New Zealand Land Transport Regulations and/or NZDF policy pertaining to the safe and compliant transportation of Class 1 hazardous substances.

*5. Does the nature of modern weaponry pose threats that did not exist when the depot was founded pre WW2? Have upgrades to the site taken this into account?*

As mentioned above, the NZDF conforms to current international best practice, New Zealand hazardous substance regulations, and NZDF policy regarding safe and compliant storage facilities to hold NZDF specific class 1 hazardous substances (ammunition and explosives).

When establishing and maintaining a Class 1 hazardous facility, the NZDF is bound by specific rules and criteria that govern what volume/quantity and type of items can be stored in any one facility, and location within that facility. Safe storage can depend on the distance between a particular explosive storage building and a public road or residential house, for example. The shorter the distance, the more restrictive the storage capacity is.

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](http://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