



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

OIA-2025-5505

2nd October 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 8 August 2025 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), the following information:

The process and criteria used to select the crew for HMNZS Manawanui's final deployment in October 2024.

Whether any exemptions or waivers were made in the selection or assignment of personnel for this voyage.

Crews are not posted to Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) ships on the basis of specific operational missions, or as a group. Posting cycles are for an average of two years. Individuals are posted on the basis of a number of factors including but not limited to: an individual's readiness or availability; policy; position descriptions; and Operational Orders. As is described in the Court of Inquiry report¹, a total of eight waivers or exemptions were provided to members of the crew of HMNZS Manawanui on the basis of their posting, not on the ship's deployment to Samoa.

Any documentation, policies, or internal communications outlining training requirements, qualifications, or experience levels required for crew members assigned to hydrographic survey operations.

Hydrographic Survey operations are carried out by ratings and officers in a ship's crew who are members of the Hydrographic trade. The Hydrographic trade training requirements at junior level require completion of RNZN professional training courses. Further trade training requires completion of an externally provided International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO) Category B qualification, which confers a Hydrographic Surveyor level 2 (H2) grading. After further experience, officers can then progress to complete an IHO Category A qualification, which confers a H1 grading. The roles and qualifications required for each role within Hydrographic survey activities carried out by the RNZN are provided in the Maritime Component Commander issued directive at Enclosure one.

Any assessments or evaluations conducted prior to deployment regarding crew readiness or suitability for the assigned mission.

On 26 September 2024 HMNZS Manawanui completed an assessment overseen by the Maritime Training Group (MTG) called a Virtual Sea Day (VSD) and was assessed as safe to proceed to sea. The VSD was carried out in lieu of a Safety and Readiness Check (SARC), the

¹ www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/Uploads/DocumentLibrary/MAN-COI-ROP-FINAL-31-Mar-25_Redacted-v2.pdf

waiver for which is referred to in the enclosed VSD report at Enclosure 2. A SARC is a routine activity normally carried out if a ship is alongside for more than 8 weeks. A VSD comprises the assessment activity of a SARC.

Contact information is withheld in accordance with section 9(2)(a) to protect privacy. Signatures are withheld in accordance with section 9(2)(k) of the OIA to avoid the malicious or inappropriate use of staff information, such as phishing, scams or unsolicited advertising.

A glossary of acronyms used in the enclosures is below.

Term	Definition
NZBR69	RNZN Military Hydrographic Instructions
AHSO	Able Hydrographic Survey Operator
LHST	Leading Hydrographic Survey Technician
HM-RNZN	Lead Hydrographer-METOC (Meteorology and Oceanography) of the RNZN
OCFOR	Office of Captain Fleet Operational Readiness
FPTO	Fleet Personnel Training Organisation
VTC	Video teleconference
CFOR	Captain Fleet Operational Readiness
OFI	Opportunity for Improvement
FE	Force Element
SHT	Single Hose Firefighting Team
CAA	Continual Aggressive Attack- a firefighting tactic.
POET	Petty Officer Electrical Technician
LMED	Leading Medic
SOTI	Scene of the Incident
FCP	Forward Control Point
IBC	Internal Battle Controller
DCO	Damage Control Officer
TT3	Tox Team 3- one of several damage control teams on the ship.
SKED Stretcher	A lightweight, folding stretcher
SSEP	Standing Sea Emergency Party
ACH	Able Chef
SMET	Ships Medical Emergency Team

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. Maritime Component Commander Directive 101/25
2. VSD Minute and Report

HEADQUARTERS JOINT FORCES NEW ZEALAND

MCC DIRECTIVE 101/25

14 Apr 2025

D0-0145/0-1-03

See distribution

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS FOR HYDROGRAPHIC OPERATIONS – AMEND ONE IN RED

Reference

- A. CN Directive 02.2024 – Chief of Navy Directive for the Review of the Hydrographic Trade

Purpose

1. The purpose of this directive is to direct the required qualifications to be held by personnel in order to conduct Hydrographic small craft operations. This directive will remain in force until NZBR69 is updated to incorporate these requirements.

Background

2. During a full review of Hydrographic Operations as directed at the reference, it was identified that clear qualification requirements for personnel conducting hydrographic small craft operations was not promulgated.
3. This has created a lack of understanding of what activities can be conducted, and whom should approve such activities.

Qualifications for Hydrographic roles

4. The following table specifies what qualifications are required for each role within a hydrographic activity:

Role	Qualification required
Survey Authorising Officer	Survey Authorising Officer training ¹
Mission Lead	H2 qualified Hydrographic LHST, senior rating or officer
Boat Cox'n	CAT A, B, or C (as appropriate for vessel) qualified and endorsed NZDF Small Boats Coxswain
Online Operator, Cable Attendant	AHSO, LHST, or H2 Course qualification
Boat Crew	Basic Mariner Training qualification ² and endorsed.

Table 1: Qualifications required for hydrographic roles

¹ Until a formal course is established, the intent of this training has been developed by HM-RNZN in consultation with OCFOR.

² Basic Mariner Training is delivered by FPTO as part of Basic Branch Training.

5. All hydrographic activity is to be planned and authorised through the RNZN230(H) Survey Operations Authorisation Form. While conducting the roles identified in the 230(H), the qualifications listed in Table 1 above are required.
6. CFOR is to maintain a published list of personnel who have completed the Survey Authorising Officer training, and promulgate it as required.

Cancellation

7. Cancel this directive when NZBR69 is updated to include this direction.

s.9(2)(k)



SD ARNDELL
CDRE, RNZN
MCC HQJFNZ

Distribution:

CFOR
CO MAT
HM RNZN

Royal New Zealand Navy

MTG MINUTE 66/2024

27 September 2024

PHL 4920-0002

MCC JFNZ (Through: CFOR)

For information
CO MAN

HMNZS MANAWANUI PARTIAL VIRTUAL SEA DAY (VSD): 26 SEP 24

Reference

A. HMNZS MANAWANUI LAG/LAM R190302ZSEP24 SARC WAIVER REQUEST.

Purpose

1. The purpose of this minute is to outline the result of HMNZS MANAWANUI's (MAN) Partial VSD, conducted 26 Sep 24 in support of the request at the reference.

Result

2. MAN conducted a short notice MTG covered VSD during the afternoon of 26 Sep 24¹, alongside DNB, Auckland. This focused primarily on Damage Control (DC) through the conduct of a Minor Fire and Toxic Gas exercises (both with casualty handling elements), along with a full run out of the DC Command and Control aspects.
3. MAN is assessed as **SAFE** overall having performed well throughout the VSD.²
4. The final report is at the Enclosure.

Conclusion and Recommendations

5. The VSD provided a level of assurance in support of the waiver request to complete a full SARC after MAN experienced personnel changes and an extended time alongside. The VSD was well executed by an enthusiastic team, where newly posted personnel were seen to be engaging and keen to become involved. Any OFI's identified in the VSD are well within ships capabilities to address during planned training days.

6. It is recommended that MCC:
 - a. **Note** MAN has received a SAFE assessment during the partial VSD conducted 26 Sep 24;
 - b. **Note** that it is recommended that MAN's waiver request is approved;

¹ Endorsed by CFOR at the MCC weekly VTC (25 Sep 24)

² Detailed reports are at Enclosure 1

- c. **Note** that a robust internal training plan has been observed, where the OFI's from the VSD can be addressed (as they are within the ship's capabilities to address); and
- d. **Note** that MAN is scheduled to complete a full SARC in Q1 2025.

s.9(2)(k)



MJ PEBBLES

CDR, RNZN

CO MTG

DTeIN 

Enclosure(s)

1. HMNZS MANAWANUI VSD Report

RNZN MTG ASSESSMENT REPORT		
HMNZS MANAWANUI	MINI VIRTUAL SEA DAY	Thu, 26 Sep 24
Assessment	Meaning	Result
Safe	A department and/or ship is deemed safe to proceed to sea when all organisation and management processes are deemed effective in achieving state three readiness. The ship will be assessed as safe if an evolution is conducted in a manner that poses no risk of injury to personnel or damage to equipment other than that inherent in the evolution. An assessment of 'Safe' implies that there are no CRITICAL weaknesses.	FE is safe to continue with its programme
Unsafe	A department and/or ship is deemed unsafe to proceed to sea when some or all organisation and management processes are deemed ineffective in achieving state three readiness. These will include but are not limited to, personnel, machinery and materials. A ship will also be assessed as unsafe if an evolution is conducted in a manner that poses any amount of risk of injury to personnel or damage to equipment other than that inherent in the evolution. An assessment of 'Unsafe' implies that there are CRITICAL weaknesses.	FE is deemed not safe to continue to next period of operations until all CRITICAL weaknesses have been rectified
Preparations/Execution Today's mini VSD, Minor Fire, initial containment actions were well-executed despite the IC being new to the role. Confidence grew with feedback, but there was a lack of task knowledge post smoke boundary setup. Sound drills were observed, but one SHT member did not engage fully. Issues included hoses leading to smoke migration and slow de-smoking routes. Toxic gas, gas boundaries were efficiently set, but boundary breaches and incorrect casualty handling were noted. Continuous practice and SOP development are recommended for improvement in evacuation and communication processes. Overall, dynamic coordination was evident, but areas for procedural enhancement remain.		
Serials Completed 1. Minor Fire + Casualty 2. Toxic Gas + Casualty		SAFE/UNSAFE 1. SAFE 2. SAFE
Observations Minor Fire + Casualty 1.1 I/C containment First time in the role, standing in for POET who was on light duties 1.2 Initial reactions well preformed. 1.3 Lack of knowledge for task required after setting initial smoke boundaries. 1.4 Timid due to uncertainty of role, however very receptive to feedback and gain confidence throughout the EX. 1.5 HQ1 to give better direction for IC Containment 1.6 Sound dressing and BA wearer drills well by those observed. 1.7 Lack of CAA, by the SHT - 1 member of SHT did not commit themselves to the compartment. SHT was at SL location 04.23. When asked. 1.8 TL SHT arrived at SOTI without a TIC. 1.9 Hoses through boundaries, this would lead to smoke migration and pushed the SL all the way back to the working deck. 1.10 De- Smoking route took too long to implement. 1.11 Casualty was relocated between SOTI and FCP. Creating a situation where they could be caught by smoke migration. 1.12 LMED good brief to CO on casualty status. 1.13 Sound dynamic with the HQ1 organisation well supported by the CR. Good oversight/control by the IBC. Good use of Flash reporting regime 1.14 Attempt made to report Hands to Emergency Stations complete but one member was unaccounted for.		

1.15 IBC track timing to set best effect with the DC Huddle tempo (prompted at minute 18 by the CO. This can be also be discussed with the XO to allow sufficient to assemble.

1.16 DCO good utilisation of the SOPs, suggest tick off SOPs as scenario develops. Also provide DC summary at the DC Huddle.

Toxic Gas + Casualty

2.1 IC containment, Gas boundaries set fast and efficiently

2.2 Two minutes passed before committing TT3 after casualty pipe had been made.

2.3 Numerous Boundary breaches between primary and secondary whilst setting up for CASEVAC

2.4 Rescue mate Carabiner (top stairwell) not correctly secured.

2.5 Greater understanding of how the rescue mate works is required by TT3 pers.

2.6 CAS evacuation safe but plenty of room for improvement. Better ways of achieving this. SKED stretcher or reversing how the lifting strop is fitted. Better communications between CAS handler and Rescue mate operator. (Continual practice and development of SOPs required.)

2.7 Control of secondary boundary door on the dive deck. - During the Ex It was a. left opened b, uncrewed and c. too many people crowding around when casualty got to the dive deck.

2.8 Casualty handling utilising the Fore and Aft carry was incorrect and requires retraining across SSEP.

2.9 Use of the rescue mate for evacuation needs thorough and repeated rehearsal.

2.10 Ineffectual initial attempts to support the head during the lift.

2.11 Transition from 1 rescue mate to the next should be swift using the carabiner

2.12 Casualty breathing checks should be conducted after each phase of movement to ensure signs of life.

2.13 1 person from SSEP needs to lead the evacuation process to enable a smoother process.

2.14 ACH in SEEP had good presence and direction for other members of SSEP during evacuation

2.15 SMET need to be better prepared to receive a casualty from SSEP having extra equipment ready and a carrying device in location.

2.16 LMED good brief to CO emphasising limited status knowledge and are assessment would be forthcoming.

2.17 Improved timing awareness with Huddles.

2.18 Either DCO or IBC are to acknowledge direction from CO on arriving at HQ1.

2.19 I/C Containment follow the CR lead with strong announcement of presence on the bridge.

2.20 Sound C2 within the HQ1 organisation and interaction with the CO, CR and I/C Containment.

Strengths

- Command Team Liaison
- Ships Company enthusiasm and Communication

Target Date

[Click here to enter a date.](#)

Inspecting Officers Summary

MAN short notice tailored VSD was well executed by an enthusiastic team. Newly posted personnel were seen to be engaging and keen to become involved. Ships company performed serials well with minor OFIs detailed above being well within ships capabilities to address.

MAN is scheduled to conduct a SARC Q1 2025 in order to permit full assurance and safety training enabling continued FGEN and operational deployment.

Inspecting Officers Grading

SAFE

Inspecting Officer:

CDR MJ PEEBLES

Signature:

s.9(2)(k)