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OIA-2025-5542

14th
October 2025

[REDACTED]@rnz.co.nz

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your emails of 16 and 22 September 2025 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information about [REDACTED] and Operation Tieke:

- *How many NZ soldiers have been injured in operation Tieke?*
- *what is the nature of the injuries ?*
- *What mental health/ psychological support is offered to personnel deployed on Operation Tieke?*
- *What is the current process for re-integration after personnel return from Operation Tieke?*
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- *What mental health support was offered to personnel deployed in [REDACTED] rotation of Operation Tieke?*
- *What was the process for re-integration after personnel return from Operation Tieke during [REDACTED] deployment?*
- [REDACTED]
- *Has NZDF changed the process or plans around mental/ psychological support since [REDACTED] deployment?*
- *Does NZDF know the numbers of Ukrainian recruits it trained who are now dead?*
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- *Were personnel told not to build rapport with Ukrainian recruits while on Operation Tieke?*
- *Is there a culture of not reporting incidents at NZDF?*
- *Is there a culture that views seeking mental health support as negative within NZDF?*
- *How many NZDF soldiers have been sentenced to community or home detention in the past 2 years?*
- *How many of them had their jobs terminated?*

- *How many NZ soldiers have been injured in operation Tīeke?*
- *What is the nature of the injuries?*

There are no records in the Safety Event Management Tool of any New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel sustaining injuries on Operation Tīeke.

With respect to mental health and/or psychological support, the NZDF employs a systems-level approach called the Psychological Support to Deployment Program to prepare, maintain and, where necessary, support the recovery of the mental health and wellbeing of deployed personnel. Psychological support is available and provided prior to, during, and after deploying on Operation Tīeke.

This support takes the form of psycho-education, the provision of mental health resources, mental health screening (on two separate occasions), decompression and debriefing (at the end) with a military psychologist. Depending on assessment of individual needs, additional medical, clinical and specialist support is available.

The psycho-education provided prior to and following the deployment included education on exposure to potential critical incidences, mental health, and support avenues. In addition to this, at the end of the deployment Operation Tīeke personnel undertook a Third Location Decompression process in the UK. Over several days they were able to decompress as a group while participating in psychological support activities. This included a group psycho-education brief, individual mental health screening, and an individual psychological debrief – all conducted by a NZDF psychologist.

After returning to New Zealand, Operation Tīeke personnel were sent a second psychological screen approximately six months later to check progress on reintegration. Following completion of the screen, a local Camp/Base psychologist conducted an in-person debrief.



Operation Tīeke continues to provide psycho-education, mental health resources, mental health screening, decompression, and debriefing with a military psychologist. Some changes have occurred whereby the psychological briefs prior to deployment are now a combination of online modules followed by a face-to-face tailored workshop. Also, while all Operation Tīeke personnel undergo decompression, the screens/debriefs are now optional for some groups.

In accordance with Operation Tieke Training Directives, instructors were told to be friendly and respectful toward the Ukrainian recruits and to maintain professional boundaries between instructors and recruits.

One NZDF soldier has been sentenced to community or home detention in the past two years, and one NZDF soldier has consequently been released from service.

The NZDF holds no information on NZDF-trained Ukrainian recruit deaths.

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