



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

OIA-2025-5553

12<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 6 October 2025 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information concerning HMNZS Manawanui, HMNZS Te Kaha, and HMNZS Canterbury. I apologise for the delay in providing this to you, responses to the various parts of your request are provided below.

*Questions related to HMNZS Manawanui:*

- 1. Please provide details in relation to any charges that have been laid under the ADFA 1971, in respect to any person regarding the sinking of HMNZS Manawanui on 6 October 2024, since the incident occurred.*
- 2. If no charges have been laid, please provide an explanation as to why no charges have been laid.*

These parts of your request were addressed in the email to you of 3 November 2025. The disciplinary investigations have since been completed and the outcome provided to the relevant authority to consider any charges. No decision about charges has yet been made.

- 3. Please provide copies of any messages, emails, text messages, or any other correspondence, such as reports, Aides Memoire or minutes of meetings, between the Captain of HMNZS Manawanui (Commander Yvonne Gray) and the Maritime Component Commander (at the time) regarding the preparedness or readiness of the Manawanui, and the preparedness or readiness of the ship's company to undertake a voyage to sea and to execute the hydrography mission in Samoa as directed. Such messages are only required for the date range between 1 August 2024 and 6 October 2024. Any attachments, such as reports, analysis or incident logs that were included in the requested correspondence should be included within the scope of this request.*

Following a search of the New Zealand Defence Force email archive, there are more than 700 emails (this includes duplicates of emails in various email trails) between Commander Yvonne Gray and the Maritime Component Commander at the time. Because of limitations of the search functions, a manual search of these results would be required in order to identify what, if any, emails are relevant to your request. For this reason, this part of your request is refused in accordance with section 18(f) of the OIA.

- 4. Please can I have copies of any messages, emails, text messages, or any other correspondence, such as reports, Aides Memoire or minutes of meetings, between the*

*Maritime Training Group, or the Maritime Regulator and the Maritime Component Commander (at the time) regarding the preparedness or readiness of the Manawanui and the preparedness or readiness of the ship's company to undertake a voyage to sea and to execute the hydrography mission in Samoa as directed. Such messages are only required for the date range between 1 August 2024 and 6 October 2024. Any attachments, such as reports, analysis or incident logs that were included in the requested correspondence should be included within the scope of this request.*

5. *Please provide copies of any messages, emails, text messages, or any other correspondence, such as reports, Aides Memoire or minutes of meetings, between the Maritime Component Commander (at the time Commodore Garin Golding as Acting Chief of Navy) and the Chief of Defence Force AVM Tony Davies regarding the preparedness or readiness of the Manawanui, and the preparedness or readiness of the ship's company, to undertake a voyage to sea and to execute the hydrography mission in Samoa as directed. Such messages are only required for the date range between 1 August 2024 and 6 October 2024. Any attachments, such as reports, analysis or incident logs that were included in the requested correspondence should be included within the scope of this request.*

No relevant communications exist with respect to these parts of your request, and they are therefore declined in accordance with section 18(e) of the OIA.

*Command of HMNZS Te Kaha:*

1. *Any messages, emails, text messages, or any other correspondence or documents, such as reports, Aides Memoire or meeting minutes from the Navy Leadership Board, the Outputs Committee and the Executive Committee (EXCO), between the 1) Maritime Component Commander and 2) Chief of Navy; and any other person, surrounding the fitness of the Captain of HMNZS Te Kaha to serve as Captain between the date range of 1 November 2023 and 31 August 2024. This date range refers to the correspondence being sought, not the posted dates of the personnel concerned.*
2. *Any messages, emails, text messages, or any other correspondence or documents, such as reports, Aides Memoire or meeting minutes, between 1) the Maritime Component Commander and 2) the Chief of Navy and any other person regarding the decision to have two people with the rank of Commander occupying both the Captain's post and the Executive Officer's position for the Te Kaha mission to the Indian Ocean in 2025. Information related to this mission was publicly available. Where internal or external legal advice was obtained in relation to this decision, please indicate whether this advice was provided to the Minister. I do not seek the contents of that legal advice.*

No relevant communications exist with respect to these parts of your request, and they are therefore declined in accordance with section 18(e) of the OIA.

*Command of HMNZS Canterbury:*

1. *Any messages, emails, text messages or any other correspondence, such as reports, Aides Memoire or meeting minutes, that relate to the fitness, ability, or competence of the Captain (or Captains) of HMNZS Canterbury to serve as Captain between the 1) Maritime Component Commander and 2) the Chief of Navy and any other person, between the date range of 1 August 2024 and 6 October 2024.*

Enclosed is a copy of an email trail within the scope of this part of your request. Where indicated, information related to operational personnel is withheld in accordance with

section 6(a) of the OIA; personal information is withheld to protect privacy in accordance with section 9(2)(a) of the OIA; and, the name of an advisor is withheld to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs in accordance with section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA.

*2. Given that HMNZS Canterbury was at sea the time, any messages, emails, text messages, or any other correspondence such as reports, Aides Memoire or meeting minutes, that relate to the fitness, ability, or competence of HMNZS Canterbury or the Captain of HMNZS Canterbury to undertake the survey mission allocated to HMNZS Manawanui in Samoa between the Maritime Component Commander (at the time Commodore Garin Golding) and any other person, between 1 August 2024 and 6 October 2024. This request relates to, but is not limited to, decisions about whether or not the HMNZS Canterbury would be able to undertake the mission assigned to the Manawanui.*

HMNZS Canterbury was not considered to undertake the tasking given to HMNZS Manawanui as the ship does not have appropriate capabilities to undertake a survey mission, consequently there are no relevant communications. This part of your request is therefore declined in accordance with section 18(e) as the information does not exist.

*3. Details of any disciplinary charges for personnel posted to, working on, or attached to HMNZS Canterbury over the period 1st July to 6th of October 2024. Names may be redacted but their role on board the ship is relevant for this request.*

Information regarding this part of your request was provided in the email of 3 November 2025.

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

**Enclosure:**

1. Email

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**From:** s. 6(a)  
**Sent:** Friday, 27 September 2024 4:28 p.m.  
**To:** s. 9(2)(a)  
**Cc:** Golding, Garin, RADM; Woods, Andy, AIRCDRE; Arndell, Shane, CAPT RNZN; s. 9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: New Zealand Herald - Commander Bronwyn Heslop loses command of HMSNZ Canterbury? Bullying claims?

Hi s. 9(2)(a)

Please find below our response. This has been through CN, MCC, and Defence Legal. s. 9(2)(g)(i) has also contributed to this response.

*The Commanding Officer of HMNZS CANTERBURY has not been removed from Command. However, Commander Martin Walker is the Acting Commanding Officer on an interim basis.*

*We can confirm that there is an investigation ongoing and it is therefore not appropriate to comment further.*

Regards

s. 6(a)

Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand  
Te Ope Kātua o Aotearoa | New Zealand Defence Force

s. 6(a)

[www.nzdf.mil.nz](http://www.nzdf.mil.nz)



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**From:** s. 9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Friday, 27 September 2024 2:59 p.m.  
**To:** s. 6(a)  
**Subject:** FW: New Zealand Herald - Commander Bronwyn Heslop loses command of HMSNZ Canterbury? Bullying claims?

s. 9(2)(a)

Content Editor  
Ngā Take Tūmatanui a Te Ope Kātua | Defence Public Affairs  
Te Ope Kātua o Aotearoa | New Zealand Defence Force

s. 9(2)(a)

[www.nzdf.mil.nz](http://www.nzdf.mil.nz)

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**From:** s. 9(2)(a) [@nzme.co.nz](mailto:s.9(2)(a)@nzme.co.nz)  
**Sent:** Friday, 27 September 2024 2:56 p.m.  
**To:** @Media <[Media@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:Media@nzdf.mil.nz)>  
**Subject:** New Zealand Herald - Commander Bronwyn Heslop loses command of HMSNZ Canterbury? Bullying claims?

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Kia ora,

Why has Commander Bronwyn Heslop lost command of HMSNZ Canterbury?

We have been told of several claims of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment. Can the NZDF please respond to these claims, any internal investigations underway, any external investigations, and who will take command of HMSNZ Canterbury?

Ngā mihi,

s. 9(2)(a)

Reporter

s. 9(2)(a)

E: s. 9(2)(a) [@nzme.co.nz](mailto:s.9(2)(a)@nzme.co.nz)



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