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New Zealand Defence Force
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New Zealand

OIA-2025-5555

15th
October 2025

Duncan Kenderdine
fyi-request-32471-f0a89ecc@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Duncan Kenderdine

I refer to your email of 4 October 2025 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

Please confirm ;

1. the purpose of the flight from Christchurch to Central Otago, 2. who requested this flight and why, 3. any correspondence with people outside the NZDF regarding this flight, 4. who the passengers were, and 5. the approximate cost of flying from Wellington to CHC return for the crew and plane, and from CHC to Central Otago and back to CHC similarly.

The Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) Boeing 757 was in the area taking the opportunity to do some work-up training ahead of next year's Warbirds Over Wanaka airshow before returning to RNZAF Base Auckland. There were no passengers on this flight.

This flight was not requested by anyone externally. The purpose of the flight is as detailed above and is part of No 40 Squadron's preparation and area familiarisation authorised by the Air Component Commander.

The correspondence outside the NZDF was the standard flight planning and required radio calls to civil aviation air traffic control, as well as contact with the Wanaka airport operations manager. The Wanaka operations manager also advised that they were going to put a notice regarding the flight on the community social media page.

Display flying is funded from RNZAF baseline budgets. The RNZAF participates in airshows as this provides the opportunity to showcase the skill of the crew involved and capabilities of the RNZAF to the public. The preparation for such events requires regular practice to ensure the crews remain current in their ability to safely do so. For the two flying hours of the flight, the marginal cost was approximately \$17,500. As noted above, this represents no extra cost to the taxpayer as the Squadron is required to maintain their currency as part of their baseline qualifications.

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