



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

12th
February 2026

[REDACTED]@stuff.co.nz

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 5 January 2026 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

I would like a copy of all documents, reports and briefings leading to the decision to amalgamate Queen Alexandra's Mounted Rifles into 1 RNZIR.

A copy of a Headquarters 1st (New Zealand) Brigade Minute, dated 11 May 2025, is withheld in full under section 6(a) because the majority of the Minute provides detail on specific Army capability, and a redacted version of the document would provide little in the way of understandable information. For your information, however, the following is a summary of key information the Minute provided to the Army Leadership Board regarding the Motorised Infantry Battalion Project:

- Four courses of action (COA) were identified for generating directed Motorised Infantry Battle Group outputs: (a) maintain the status quo; (b) move the protected mobility element to 1 Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment; (c) undertake a partial integration; and (d) undertake a full integration.
- A critical area was the maintenance of two infantry battalions.
- COAs (a) and (b) require the least structural changes.
- COAs (c) and (d) are the only options that provide the full range of objectives set by the Chief of Army Directive 02/2025 (a copy is enclosed).
- COAs (b) and (c) are highly likely to be unsustainable.
- COA (d) delivers the greatest interoperability and readiness outcomes, but requires the most change that could impact morale and attrition in the short term.

As noted above, enclosed is a copy of the Chief of Army Directive and the Assistant Chief of Army (Delivery) Minute. Where indicated: sensitive security and defence information concerning capability is withheld under section 6(a) of the OIA; the names of some military staff are withheld to protect privacy under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA; free and frank advice is withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA; and signatures are to avoid malicious or inappropriate use, such as phishing, scams or unsolicited advertising in accordance with section 9(2)(k) of the OIA.

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

Enclosures:

1. Chief of Army Directive 02/2025
2. Assistant Chief of Army (Delivery) Minute 19/2025



Army General Staff
Defence House
34 Bowen Street
Private Bag 39997
Wellington 5045
NEW ZEALAND

1 August 2025

See Distribution

CHIEF OF ARMY DIRECTIVE 02/2025

OPTIMISATION OF ARMY FORCE STRUCTURES TO DELIVER LAND OUTPUTS

References:

- A. CA Command Directive 02/2024: The Army Strategic Plan dated 01 Dec 24
- B. NZ Army Capstone Orders
- C. AGS Project Approach: Establishment of Garrison Motorised Infantry Battalion (MIB), dated 24 Jun 25

Authority

1. Issued by the Chief of Army.

Applicability

2. This Directive constitutes a general order to members of the Armed Forces and instructions to the Civil Staff and persons seconded to the NZDF from external employers, contractors, sub-contractors and their respective employees.
3. This Directive applies to all members of the NZDF who have responsibilities for planning and initiating direction provided in this Directive. The orders, directions and instructions in this Directive are to be considered applicable to all whom they may concern.
4. Non-compliance with this Directive may result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the Armed Forces Discipline Act 1971 or may result in possible sanctions in accordance with the Civil Staff Code of Conduct.

Purpose

5. This Directive provides direction for the establishment of a Motorised Infantry Battalion (MIB), as well as associated structural changes and tasks, in order to ensure that Ngāti Tūmatauenga, the New Zealand Army (NZ Army) remains optimised to deliver its land combat outputs at specified readiness levels.¹

¹ The MIB is the first major building block of the MIBG. The MIB contains the core combat capabilities and associated CSS. It does not contain the wider combat support and CSS capabilities found in the MIBG.

Situation

6. The strategic environment the NZ Army is operating in has changed dramatically in recent years with strategic competition in our region and ongoing conflicts throughout the Middle East and Europe. This has underlined the requirement for the Army to be postured to 'Fight Tonight', as well as to prepare properly for the operating environment of the near future.
7. The Motorised Infantry Battle Group (MIBG) is the primary platform to deliver our conventional operational outputs, as a sustained force for up to 24 months employing a common series of platforms and capabilities.² It is enabled by a range of Land Support functions designed to support independent operations, or operations integrated with our close ally Australia.
8. Conceptually, an Army s. 6(a) must be able to:
 - a. deploy and sustain an MIBG for up to 24 months with associated Land Support functions (s. 6(a) which equates to two MIBGs and two Land Support groups).
 - b. deploy a Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) and support Special Operations Command overheads s. 6(a).
 - c. support Army and NZDF overheads (HQ NZDF, HQ JFNZ, Army General Staff and Component/Formation roles s. 6(a)).
 - d. maintain Trade and Force sustainment, including training staff, personnel under training and casualty sustainment s. 6(a).
 - e. generate a reserve s. 6(a).
9. Attrition has decreased to match inflow levels, and the Army has stabilised s. 6(a)
10. Optimisation of Army force structures, with a clear focus on our operational outputs, is, therefore, necessary to ensure that the Army is ready to 'Fight Tonight', as well as 'Fight Tomorrow' if we are called on to do so. The establishment of a garrison MIB and broader unit restructures will generate the mass needed to meet MIBG and Land Support operational outputs more effectively, safely and efficiently within specified degrees of readiness.

Mission

11. The Army is to establish an MIB and optimise force structures across the Land Component from December 2025, in order to enable the continued generation of effective land outputs within specified degrees of readiness.

² NZ Army Capstone Orders (ref B)

Execution

12. Intent.

- a. **Purpose.** The NZ Army will establish a garrison structure to support the effective and efficient generation of the MIBG output through the amalgamation of 1 RNZIR and QAMR, and by undertaking a rebalance across the Combat Support and the Combat Service Support (CSS) units within the Land Component.
- b. **Method.** Key Tasks:
 - (1) Amalgamate/Organise QAMR and 1 RNZIR to create the MIB. The MIB will be titled 1st Battalion, RNZIR (1 RNZIR).
 - (2) Review and reorganise CSS garrison structures in the North and South Islands to ensure they are optimised to generate the MIBG and the Land Support outputs.
 - (3) Conduct a phased review of Combat Support units, schools and selected trades to ensure they are optimised to generate the MIBG and the Land Support outputs.
 - (4) s. 6(a)
 - (5)
 - (6) Conduct a review and adjust Health Service Support (HSS) outputs in support of land operations.
- c. **Endstate.** The Army has established the MIB, as well as broader garrison structures, which are optimised to generate land outputs. The Army is postured to 'Fight Tonight', to integrate new capabilities and to prepare for the future fight.

13. Scheme of Manoeuvre: The Army will achieve its transformation objectives in two phases, plus a sequel.

- a. **Phase 1:** Establishment of the MIB (Now - 31 Dec 25).
 - (1) Amalgamate QAMR and 1 RNZIR to create the MIB. **(ME)**
 - (2) Develop a TOEE for the MIB.
 - (3) Develop and implement the MIBG force generation cycle.
 - (4) Review the Combat School structures and RNZIR/RNZAC training pathways to ensure they remain optimised to generate land combat outputs.
 - (5) Set the conditions for the phased reintroduction of the 81mm mortar capability into the MIB and 2/1 RNZIR.
- b. **Phase 2:** s. 6(a)

s. 6(a)

- c. **Sequel: Consolidation and Validation** s. 6(a)
- (1) Consolidate all changes across PRICIE.
 - (2) Validate the generation of land outputs using the new force structures.
 - (3) Focus Army growth and posting priorities to strengthen the generation of land outputs.
 - (4) s. 6(a)
 - (5) Integrate new capabilities to support land outputs.

Tasks:

14. Key tasks for commanders, staff and supporting portfolios:
- a. **DCA** is to oversee the overall change management, and the successful delivery of the outcomes detailed in this Directive.
 - b. **LCC** is to:
 - (1) integrate the MIB into the Land Component and validate its ability to generate specified outputs in accordance with Land Component force generation cycles.
 - (2) support AGS development of a TOEE for the MIB.
 - (3) establish a project team s. 6(a)
 - (4) review and implement necessary combat coursing changes in coordination with ACA(T) to ensure they remain fit for purpose to meet MIBG force generation requirements.
 - (5) conduct a review of HSS operational outputs, with a focus on Role 1 and evacuation capabilities to support land outputs, noting that the Role 2 must be optimised to plug into a coalition construct.
 - (6) plan and execute an appropriate ceremonial event to mark the establishment of the MIB.

s. 6(b)(i)

- (7) be prepared to support the implementation of changes to the Combat Support and the CSS units, as well as schools, pending the outcome of their respective reviews.
- c. **ACA(D)** is to:
- (1) lead staff planning for the amalgamation of 1 RNZIR and QAMR, to establish the MIB from Dec 25 as per ref C.
 - (2) deliver an updated TOEE for the MIB as a priority to support the amalgamation, and then refresh the MIBG, Land Support and SOTG TOEEs.
 - (3) lead the Combat Support garrison force structure reviews to ensure those units are optimised to support land outputs.
 - (4) support LC(L) in the planning and execution of the CSS garrison force structure rebalance.
 - (5) establish a Logistics Migration Team to support the establishment of the MIB CSS Coy and the transition of unit logistic accounts and support responsibilities and assign it TECHCON to LC(L).
 - (6) coordinate a review of the RNZE trades to ensure they remain optimised to support land outputs.
 - (7) coordinate a review s. 6(a) [REDACTED]
 - (8) support Comd JSG in a review of the HSS operational outputs, s. 6(a) [REDACTED].
 - (9) deliver a FRAGO to ref A to provide updated direction on posting priorities and recruiting targets in order to support the force generation of the MIBG and the Land Support capabilities.
 - (10) deliver and implement a strategic communications plan to support CA in communicating transformation progress.
 - (11) identify an appropriate Officer to support Comd 1 (NZ) Bde and CO MIB in completing transition activities for the period s. 6(a) [REDACTED].
- d. **ACA(S)** is to:
- (1) review the approved MIBG and the Land Support force structures to ensure they remain fit for purpose and inform further changes to garrison force structures.
 - (2) review and confirm how a two-manoeuvre unit structure s. 6(a) [REDACTED] nests within NZDF Strategy planning.
 - (3) as the Future Fighting Concept Force Design work solidifies over the next 12 months, reconfirm that 'Fight Tonight' work remains approximately aligned.
- e. **ACA(T)** is to:
- (1) lead the remediation programme to ensure the Army Training System remains fit for purpose and optimised to deliver land outputs.

- (2) s. 6(a)
- (3)
- (4) support the Land Component to review individual and collective training sub-systems, training governance and assurance, to ensure that they are safe and effective, and can meet force generation requirements.

- (5) s. 6(a)
- (6) assist in providing third-line safety and training assurance during and following the amalgamation and capability transitions.

f. **ACA(R)** is to:

- (1) investigate the impact of the amalgamation of 1RNZIR/QAMR on the Reserve Force (ResF) elements (eg Waikato Mounted Rifles) and how that may influence the concurrent ResF Trade review s. 9(2)(g)(i)

g. **IG(A)** is to:

- (1) adjust OPRES/TORCH reporting to reflect the approved MIBG and Land Support force structures and force generation requirements.
- (2) support ACA(D) and CO MIB to provide assurance on controlled environment compliance once the MIB is established.
- (3) support ACA(D) in the development of appropriate measures of success to assess the establishment of the MIB in accordance with the timelines detailed in this Directive.

h. **Regimental Colonels** are to:

- (1) provide input and advice to AGS during the conduct of unit force structure, trade and training reviews – utilising the STAB and CRB processes where appropriate.
- (2) provide advice to AGS on managing identified personnel impacts resulting from the establishment of the MIB and other garrison force structure reviews.
- (3) provide advice to CA and LCC on the management of unit culture and unit taonga (including dress embellishment) considerations resulting from the creation of the MIB.

- (4) s. 6(a)
- i. **COMLOG** is requested to:
- (1) provide support from CLP to the TOEE review IOT maximise alignment to the 'Equip and Support the Force' principles.
 - (2) provide support from the Supply Chain Management Group to implement SAP logistic changes to establish the MIB.
 - (3) provide support from DEMO to inform the implementation of equipment management processes in the MIB.
- j. **LC(L)** is requested to:
- (1) lead and implement the garrison CSS force structure review.
 - (2) develop and issue a technical directive detailing logistic requirements and tasks to support the amalgamation of 1 RNZIR and QAMR.
 - (3) provide DLC(L) resources to support the establishment of the MIB and provide assurance on logistic compliance.
 - (4) s. 6(a)
- k. **CPO** is requested to:
- (1) provide support from DHR Workforce Planning to amend establishments on SAP HR and update workforce modelling to reflect new unit and trade structures.
 - (2) provide advice and support regarding the management of defence civilians who are impacted as a result of the amalgamation of 1 RNZIR and QAMR.
- l. **AC CAP** (through Director Land Domain) is requested to:
- (1) note the approved MIBG and Land Support force structures, and to ensure that current capability projects remain aligned to their requirements.
 - (2) identify and support the closure of MIBG capability gaps to enable the Army to 'Fight Tonight'.
 - (3) s. 6(a)
 - (4)
- m. **CFO** (through the Finance Business Partner (Army)) is requested to:
- (1) support the financial management of the amalgamation of 1 RNZIR and QAMR, including adjustments to unit budgets and cost centres in FY 25/26 as required.
 - (2) support the establishment of new financial delegations for the MIB.

Coordinating Arrangements

15. **Timing:** The MIB is formally established 05 Dec 25.
16. **MIB and Sub Unit Names.** The MIB will adopt the title of 1st Battalion, RNZIR (1 RNZIR), with a new unit structure as detailed in Annex A. The five sub-units will be named as follows:
 - a. Whiskey Company (W Coy), mounted in PV-M.
 - b. Victor Company (V Coy), which includes an NZLAV Troop for mobility support.
 - c. Queen Alexandra's Company (QA Coy), which includes an NZLAV Troop for mobility support.⁵
 - d. Support Company.
 - e. Combat Service Support Company.
17. **Measures of Success.** Measures to assess the successful establishment of the MIB are to be developed by IG(A), in order to ensure the outcomes detailed within this Directive have been achieved within the specified timeframes.
18. **Posting of Personnel to the MIB.**
 - a. Priority for posting personnel into the MIB is HQ 1 RNZIR, as the point of integration within a coalition and/or joint force environment.
 - b. Support Coy structures will be appropriately scaled to match the requirements of the staffed manoeuvre sub-units.
 - c. Where appropriate, the balance in ANYCBT roles will be achieved between RNZAC and RNZIR personnel, with AGS confirming individual postings based on Regt COL input and broader organisational imperatives.
19. **Communications.** A communications plan will be developed in order to communicate key decisions and progress on the work streams within this Directive.
 - a. Key messages for Commanders and Staff are:
 - (1) The Army's priority is to ensure it is best placed to be a combat capable, operationally focused force able to deliver a range of military response options to the Government.
 - (2) Amalgamating QAMR and 1RNZIR allows us to best prepare our forces to 'Fight Tonight', whilst also laying the foundations for our future fighting force.
 - (3) Amalgamation presents an opportunity to generate the mass required to most effectively meet our mandated outputs.
 - (4) Restructuring our garrison-based units will allow our soldiers to be better prepared, better protected, and more lethal when deployed.

⁵ The use of the Queen Alexandra's Company title will support the preservation of the history and lineage of QAMR. S. 6(a)

- (5) Reorienting our force ensures we lay the best foundations in order to capitalise on significant incoming investments.
- (6) s. 9(2)(g)(i)

- (7) As an organization, we have continuously evolved and changed our structures and practices over time in order to best suit the operating environment of the day - this is routine and best practice amongst militaries around the world.
- (8) We remain committed to safeguarding and honouring the deep and rich legacies and traditions of our service, which continues to evolve over time.

Command and Control

20. Key Points of Contact.

- a. Project Director: ACA(D), COL IJ Brandon.
- b. Project Manager: SO1 Change Execution, LTCOL s. 9(2)(a).
- c. Director Force Management: LTCOL s. 9(2)(a)
- d. Military Secretary: LTCOL s. 9(2)(a).

21. **Amendment Authority.** Authority for minor amendments and FRAGO release to this Directive is DCA.

22. **Directive Management.** DCA is responsible for overseeing the actions contained within this Directive.

23. **Directive Cancellation.** This Directive is to be cancelled when the instructions contained herein have been incorporated, NLT 01 Feb 27.

s. 9(2)(k)


RT KING
Major General
Chief of Army

Annex

A. NZ Motorised Infantry Battalion Structure

Distribution:

For Action:

DCA
LCC
AC CAP

COMLOG
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File

s. 6(a)



NEW ZEALAND ARMY
Army General Staff
ACA-D MINUTE 19/2025

02 Jul 25

ACA-D 19/25

CA

For information

SMA

TITLE OF THE MOTORISED INFANTRY BATTALION (MIB)

Purpose

1. The purpose of this Minute is to provide CA with options and objective factors for consideration regarding the title of the MIB.

Background

2. The selection of a title for the MIB requires consideration of objective as well as subjective factors – including less tangible aspects such as impacts on organisational culture, connection to shared history/whakapapa and attendant effects on the Moral component of fighting power. This Minute seeks to assist CA with making a decision, by focusing on outlining the objective considerations and broad naming options available. This will in turn assist CA with her continued consultations on the more subjective or intangible aspects of this decision.

Broad Options

3. Two broad options exist for the title of the MIB:
 - a. Selecting either 1 RNZIR or QAMR.
 - b. Establishing a new unit name.
4. Each of these options will be considered in further detail.

Option 1: Retaining 1 RNZIR or QAMR for the MIB

5. This option would see the title of either 1 RNZIR or QAMR used for the MIB. Factors for consideration are:

- a. Either unit name could be selected for the MIB, and it is not possible to objectively determine which unit is more ‘deserving’ of having their title retained. However:
 - (1) RNZIR has two battalions, enabling broader RNZIR regimental lineage to remain ‘active’ through 2/1 RNZIR were QAMR to be selected as the title for the MIB. Conversely, QAMR represents the only unit where RNZAC regimental lineage remains ‘active’ at the present time. Selection of one or the other unit title will therefore carry perception issues regarding the

preservation of RNZIR or RNZAC lineage which should be considered from an Army culture perspective.

- (2) Perceptions of one unit 'losing out' over the other could be created when either 1 RNZIR or QAMR is selected as the title of the MIB. An option to partially mitigate this, and to assist with preserving regimental lineage, could be considered at sub-unit level. For example:
 - (a) If 1 RNZIR were selected as the unit title, then one of the manoeuvre sub-units could be designated as QAMR, Scots, WEC or WMR Squadron.
 - (b) If QAMR were selected as the unit title, then one of the manoeuvre sub-units could be designated as A, V or W Coy.
 - (c) Options exist to carry over some of the QAMR designations across to the two LAV Troops within the MIB force structure; for example, Scots or WEC Troop.

(3) s. 9(2)(g)(i)

- b. 1 RNZIR currently holds Colours (King's and Regimental), while QAMR currently holds a Guidon. The management of these taonga will need to be considered, depending on the title selected for the new unit:
 - (1) Either the Colours or the Guidon could be carried over to the new unit, with the other taonga being appropriately de-consecrated and displayed or laid-up in accordance with military traditions and customs.
 - (2) Both the Colours and the Guidon could be retained by the new unit, and paraded together.
- c. Both units hold their own distinctive dress embellishments. 1 RNZIR chose to retain their blackened RNZIR badge with a red/green diamond backing, following the dissolution of the amalgamated Cavalry unit circa 2013 – whereas QAMR have their own unique unit (not Corps) badge. Were 1 RNZIR or QAMR to be selected as the title of the MIB, then:
 - (1) One of the existing embellishments could be selected and carried forward.
 - (2) A completely new or amended badge could be designed in order to recognise the amalgamation of the two units; for example, placing the blackened RNZIR badge onto a yellow/black background (to acknowledge QAMR), or placing the QAMR badge onto a green/red background (to acknowledge 1 RNZIR).

Option 2: Establishing a New Unit Name

6. Creation of a new unit name is also an option, and it carries advantages and disadvantages:

- a. A new unit name could be seen as a ‘fresh start’ and could assist with mitigating any perceptions that either unit or Corps is ‘winning out’ over the other. However, a complete break from the history/whakapapa of both units could have unintended adverse impacts on the morale and cohesion of former 1 RNZIR and/or QAMR personnel.
- b. Selection of a new unit title will signal more strongly that this amalgamation is not intended to be temporary in nature – i.e. it would be more challenging to re-establish both 1 RNZIR and QAMR again if neither title were retained for the MIB. This point is further explored in general considerations below.
- c. Creation of a new unit may require creation of new Colours or Guidons, with attendant cost.

7. While it is beyond the scope of this Minute to present options for a new unit title, consideration could be considered which acknowledge both its 1 RNZIR and QAMR lineage. For example (indicative only):

- a. 1st New Zealand Mounted Rifles Battalion (or Regiment).
- b. 1st New Zealand Motorised Infantry Battalion.
- c. Queen Alexandra’s Motorised Infantry Battalion.

General Considerations

8. Other general considerations are as follows:

- a. The Army, NZDF and our international partners have a general understanding of what an infantry battalion is, so retaining infantry within the title/designation of the MIB could assist with broader messaging about the capability (noting that this will also align with the MIBG output).
- b. s. 9(2)(g)(i) 
- c. The Army Experiment in 2024 identified the value of being consistent across our manoeuvre unit structures to facilitate force generation, SOP/TTP development and career pathways. We will be particularly mindful of this when we begin to look at how we optimise the 2/1 RNZIR force structure.

d. s. 6(a), s. 9(2)(g)(i)

. The decision to amalgamate should not be viewed as 'temporary' in a reasonable sense. It should therefore be less of a factor in determining the title of the MIB.

s. 9(2)(k)

IJ BRANDON
Colonel
ACA-D