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OIA-2026-5662.2

27th March 2026

Spencer Jones

fyi-request-33895-d08cff45@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Spencer Jones

I refer to your further request of 28 February 2026 seeking, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information relating to veterans seeking assistance outside statutory entitlements:

1. *Internal Risk Assessment Records*

Please provide copies of any documents since 1 July 2014 (commencement of the Veterans' Support Act 2014) that:

- a) Identify or assess risks associated with veterans seeking assistance outside statutory entitlements;*
- b) Refer to potential disadvantage, service fragmentation, or navigation barriers between statutory and non-statutory support;*
- c) Consider reputational, operational, or policy risk arising from absence of structured referral or sector visibility mechanisms.*

This includes (but is not limited to):

- Risk registers;*
- Enterprise risk management entries;*
- Issue logs;*
- Governance dashboards;*
- Internal briefing notes referencing risk.*

As explained previously, the support that Veterans' Affairs (VA) can provide to veterans and their whānau is specific and targeted. This support is defined clearly within the Veteran's Support Act 2014, as well as relevant government or Chief of Defence Force direction. It is in addition to, not instead of, other support measures available to other New Zealanders.

As also explained previously, VA's mandate does not extend to providing generalised welfare support, or acting as a coordinating body for non-statutory charitable or community assistance. VA is not responsible for and does not consider, or assess, risk associated with matters for which it has no mandate or responsibility. This part of your request is therefore declined under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information requested does not exist.

To assist in your understanding, enclosure one provides a graphic that represents supporting organisations for military rehabilitation, and what their respective roles are. While an older document, it may be a useful illustration of the distinct areas of

responsibility. Where indicated, the name and contact details for a staff member are withheld in accordance with section 9(2)(a) of the OIA, to protect privacy.

2. *Prioritisation and Resource Allocation Decisions*

Please provide any internal documents (since 1 July 2014) that:

- a) Record decisions not to undertake sector mapping, charity ecosystem visibility work, or navigation framework development;*
- b) Record prioritisation decisions regarding allocation of resources to statutory entitlements versus broader navigation/coordination functions;*
- c) Document rationale for treating navigation outside statutory entitlements as outside scope.*

This includes:

- Senior leadership team papers;*
- Governance committee minutes;*
- Business planning documents;*
- Work programme prioritisation papers;*
- Annual planning discussions referencing scope boundaries.*

3. *Advice on Mandate Interpretation*

Please provide any documents that:

- a) Analyse or interpret the boundaries of Veterans' Affairs NZ's mandate in relation to referral, coordination, or navigation;*
- b) Record internal legal or policy advice on whether sector mapping or structured referral guidance falls within or outside mandate;*
- c) Refer to interaction between mandate interpretation and implementation of recommendations arising from the Paterson Report.*

These parts of your request are also declined in accordance with section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information requested does not exist.

With regard to recommendations arising from the Paterson report in particular, please refer to the information provided on the VA website¹. Recommendation 7 is most relevant to the subject of your request, which recommended the following:

Veterans' Affairs is mandated and resourced to be the single point of contact for veteran focussed services and supports for those veterans with the highest and most complex needs.

This recommendation has been closed, noting:

This would require significant changes in the roles and responsibilities of other agencies.

While VA has a high-level role of oversight of veterans' wellbeing it has never been mandated or resourced to be a single point of contact for services and support. Veterans with high and complex needs have always received services from a wide range of specialist agencies. The Te Arataki action plan once agreed will ensure the effective engagement of partner agencies.

In addition, Recommendation 48 was that:

¹ <https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/about-veterans-affairs/our-programmes/the-paterson-report/recommendations>

Veterans' Affairs investigates advocacy models and the infrastructure needed to build a professional well-trained advocacy workforce.

This recommendation has also been closed, noting:

VA values the work of veteran advocacy groups works closely with them at both strategic and operational levels and provides training and mentoring as requested.

4. *Search Transparency (if section 18(e) is relied upon)*

If any part of this request is refused under section 18(e), please confirm:

- *The record systems searched (e.g., EDMR, shared drives, email archives, risk registers);*
- *The governance bodies consulted (e.g., VAB secretariat, senior leadership, policy teams);*
- *The search terms applied;*
- *The date parameters used.*

Responses to you have resulted from consultation with relevant staff with specialist knowledge. This has included those within the VA policy development area, case management, rehabilitation, and veteran support centre, staff who have knowledge and/or experience across the organisation's management and activities over the period since the introduction of the Veterans' Support Act, and the Board Secretariat where appropriate.

Manual searches of file repositories have been undertaken. Examples include the Veteran, Family and Whānau Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Framework² (or *Te Arataki*), and consideration of the recommendations made by Professor Paterson.

Given your repeated requests on topics where you have been informed of the relevancy to the New Zealand Defence force/VA, it is important to reiterate that the work VA undertakes is well defined within the relevant legislation and specific government / Chief of Defence Force direction, and it does not include the navigational assistance you have described in recent requests. I refer you to the response of 10 February 2026, as this describes how enquiries that fall outside VA's areas of responsibility (or the support which is available under legislation) are managed by frontline staff members.

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.

Yours sincerely

GA Motley

Brigadier

Chief of Staff HQNZDF

Enclosure:

1. Supporting Organisations for Military Rehabilitation

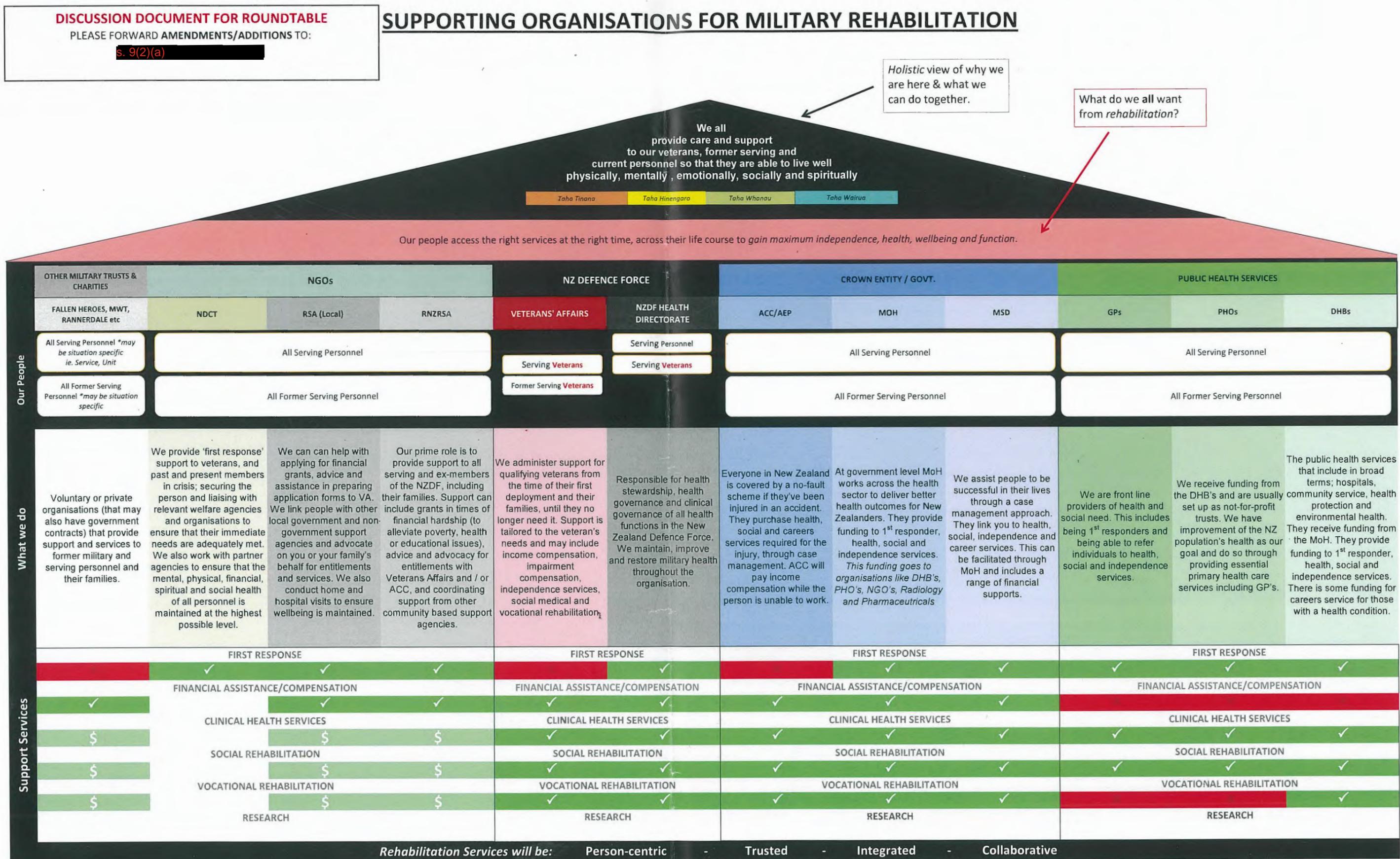
² <https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/about-veterans-affairs/our-programmes/mental-health-framework/>

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT FOR ROUNDTABLE

PLEASE FORWARD AMENDMENTS/ADDITIONS TO:

s. 9(2)(a)

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS FOR MILITARY REHABILITATION



KEY:

- Yes, we provide these Rehabilitation support services
- No, we do not provide these Rehabilitation support services
- Funding for Rehabilitation support services may be provided