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New Zealand

OIA-2025-5672

  
March 2026

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[@nzme.co.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@nzme.co.nz)

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 20 February 2026, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

1. *The amount spent per recruit, for each force, for each year between 2020 to 2025.*
2. *The amount spent on advertising per recruit, for each force, for each year between 2020 to 2025.*

The New Zealand Defence Force does not record cost information in the way you have requested it, nor does it create reports that hold the requested information. Your request is therefore declined in accordance with section 18(e) of the OIA as the requested information does not exist.

For your information, a *recruit* refers to those individuals who join one of the single Services and who completes a defined period of *ab-initio*, military and service-related training from attestation to graduation. This is different to the application/recruiting process that members of the public (candidates) undertake and apply to join one of the single Services.

Any cost analysis that takes the operating expenditure for recruitment and divides it by the number of recruits over a Financial Year period is a significant oversimplification. The recruitment system is a 'multiple hurdle' process, with candidates declined at various stages throughout the process as they fail to meet required standards across a range of criteria. Given that these standards are based on the broader onboarding system, determining a cost-per-unit outcome that doesn't give consideration to the remainder of the onboarding system and related costs of that system makes the correlation somewhat arbitrary.

In accordance with section 28(3) of the OIA, you may ask an Ombudsman to review the withholding of information. Information regarding the process 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