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New Zealand Defence Force
Defence House
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Lower Hutt 5045
New Zealand

OIA-2026-5716

9th April 2026

Spencer Jones

fyi-request-34117-0f0712b1@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Spencer Jones

I refer to your request of 17 March 2026, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), seeking the following:

I request email metadata relating to communications concerning the Veterans' Advisory Board (VAB).

Specifically, I request the following information for emails sent or received by Veterans' Affairs New Zealand staff, the Secretariat of Veterans' Boards, or relevant NZDF policy teams:

- 1. Email subject lines.*
- 2. Sender and recipient fields (To/From only).*
- 3. Date and time of the email.*
- 4. The mailbox or organisational unit associated with the email.*

This request relates only to emails referencing:

- "Veterans' Advisory Board"*
- "VAB"*
- "VAB advice"*
- "Veterans Advisory Board recommendation"*

Timeframe: 1 January 2014 to present.

For clarity, I am not requesting the content of emails at this stage—only the metadata fields listed above.

Providing metadata only should significantly reduce the scope of collation.

If the information is held in an email archive or records management system, a simple export of the relevant metadata fields would satisfy this request.

If any part of this request is considered likely to be refused under section 18(f), I am willing to discuss refining the scope.

A search of all New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) emails from 1 January 2014 to April 2024, that included specified references, resulted in over 12,000 emails. A further search in a separate system for emails after 2024 was not conducted because of the number of results.

There is no capability to digitally extract the *metadata fields* requested. It requires a manual extraction of this information from each email to a new document. This requires substantial collation and your request is therefore declined in accordance with section 18(f) of the OIA.

You have submitted a number of requests seeking advice from the Veterans' Advisory Board (VAB) and information relating to the VAB. Responses to these requests may provide helpful information; however, if you were to refine your request as it relates to emails to significantly reduce the possible results, it will be considered accordingly.

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