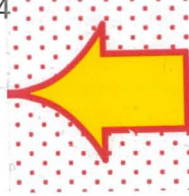




Headquarters
New Zealand Defence Force
Defence House
Private Bag 39997
Wellington Mail Centre
Lower Hutt 5045
New Zealand

OIA-2026-5794

5th June 2026



Spencer Jones
fyi-request-34613-e4b7685a@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Spencer Jones

I refer to your email of 5 May 2026, requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information relating to *the governance, delivery, accountability, and operational structure of the New Zealand veterans support system, including the interface between Veterans' Affairs New Zealand (VANZ) and the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association (RSA).*

Explanations about the role of Veterans' Affairs (VA), its case management system, and its responsibilities with regards to external referral, have been provided a number of times in previous responses. This includes a link to a copy of the MoU between VA and the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association (RNZRSA) made available online, and a link to the page on the VA website which includes information about the funding provided to the RNZRSA and the work this support¹. Neither the New Zealand Defence Force nor VA have any responsibility for, or involvement with, the management of complaints concerning RNZRSA delivery of support.

Veteran records are currently maintained on an individual basis in an electronic client management system (the Veterans Support System, or VSS). Prior to this, records were likewise maintained on an individual basis in an earlier electronic client management system, and paper files which are now held offsite by a third party archive manager.

VA operates in accordance with the Public Records Act 2005 as required. When the matter of retention policy was raised in the past, VA determined that a dedicated retention / disposal policy was not required, as there is no intent to dispose of records relating to veteran support.

Outcome reports prepared by the RNZRSA are published on the VA website regularly, as and when these become available². Enclosed is a copy of advice provided to the Minister for Veterans regarding the most recent report. Where indicated, personal information is withheld to protect privacy in accordance with section 9(2)(a) of the OIA, and a signature is withheld in accordance with section 9(2)(k) of the OIA to avoid the malicious or inappropriate use of staff information.

¹ OIA-2026-5663 and OIA-2026-5662.1

² <https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/about-veterans-affairs/our-work/what-we-fund/>

In accordance with section 28(3) of the OIA, you may ask an Ombudsman to review this response to your request. Information regarding the process 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

Enclosures:



1. Report of the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association on use of a Conditional Government Grant 2024-25



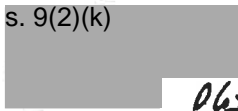
NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE /
VETERANS' AFFAIRS



SUBMISSION TO MINISTER
COVER SHEET

Title	REPORT OF THE ROYAL NEW ZEALAND RETURNED AND SERVICES' ASSOCIATION ON USE OF A CONDITIONAL GOVERNMENT GRANT 2024-25				
Tracking No	NZDF Tracking # 2026-005		Minister's Tracking #		
Importance of the Issue	High		Moderate		Routine ✓
Urgency for Attention/Sign-off	NOT URGENT		Request ministerial response by:		
Contacts	Jo Elworthy	s. 9(2)(a)		A/H:	
	Alex Brunt			A/H:	
Purpose	This paper briefs you on a report from the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association (RNZRSA) on the Association's use of the grant it received from the Government in the 2024-25 Financial Year. A copy of the report is enclosed.				
Recommendations	<p>I recommend that you:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Note that a report has been received from the RNZRSA, relating to how it used the \$275,000 conditional grant made to it by the Government in the 2024-25 financial year. Note that a copy of the report is attached to this Note. Note that the report met the requirements that were specified by Veterans' Affairs on behalf of the Minister for Veterans. Note that Veterans' Affairs will now pay the RNZRSA a conditional grant of \$275,000 for the 2025-26 Financial Year. 				
NZDF/VA Consultation	Not required.				
Minister's comments					
Minister's Action	Signed/Noted/Agreed/Approved/Declined/Discussion required				
	Referred to:				
Minister's Signature				Date: 	

s. 9(2)(k)



En T DAVIES
Air Marshal
Chief of Defence Force

22 January 2026



Headquarters NZDF
Defence House
Private Bag 39997
Wellington Mail Centre
Wellington 5045
NEW ZEALAND



BRI-027 2025-26
NTM 2026-005

22 January 2026

Minister for Veterans

REPORT OF THE ROYAL NEW ZEALAND RETURNED AND SERVICES' ASSOCIATION ON USE OF A CONDITIONAL GOVERNMENT GRANT 2024-25

Purpose

1. This paper briefs you on a report from the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association (RNZRSA) on the Association's use of the grant it received from the Government in the 2024-25 Financial Year. A copy of the report is enclosed.

Background

2. The Government agreed in 2018 to make a financial contribution of \$250,000 to the RNZRSA each year for four years. The final instalment of this conditional grant was paid to the RNZRSA for the 2021-22 Financial Year.
3. In 2022, the then Minister for Veterans agreed that the grant should be paid again for the 2022-23 Financial Year, and increased the amount by \$25,000. The latter sum had previously been paid to another veteran support and advocacy group (the No Duff Charitable Trust) which was no longer able to arrange for its administration. The 2022-23 grant was conditional on agreement by the RNZRSA that it be used to improve access to support for veterans. The same sum was again paid to the RNZRSA in 2023-24 and 2024-25.
4. The RNZRSA is required to report back to Veterans' Affairs (VA) at the conclusion of each financial year, detailing how the funding had been used and what outcomes were achieved.
5. The 2024-25 grant was in two parts. The sum of \$250,000 was paid to assist the RNZRSA to "support veteran wellbeing – to improve access to support for veterans and, in particular, to support the RNZRSA in its frontline work to develop support for veterans with PTSD and mental injury, and to help them lead a healthy and productive life". Part 2 of the grant comprised \$25,000 which was to be used for a specific project, agreed with VA. The project for 2024-25 was work to improve the quality of completed applications submitted to VA.

Outcomes

6. The RNZRSA was asked to focus in its report on results and outcomes that make a positive change to veterans and their whānau.
7. Examples of the sorts of measures it was asked to cover included the number of veterans supported; information about the type of help the RNZRSA is asked for, and the percentage of each type requested; where referrals come from; the number of clients

connected to VA, and to other Government agencies; the number of training courses offered; and the number of volunteers who successfully completed mental health training.

8. The RNZRSA was also asked to report feedback from veterans, their whānau, and from other stakeholders; response times; attendance rates at RSA regional clinics; and detail of how funds were used to build capability and more skills to support veterans, or to increase the numbers of veterans who can be supported.

9. The RNZRSA was asked to confirm its Social Sector Accreditation status. We have sighted confirmation from Te Kāhuikāhu, the accreditation unit within the Ministry of Social Development, which confirms that the RNZRSA meets the Level 4 Social Sector Accreditation Standards as of 7 August 2024, with the next review due in May 2026.

Part 1 of the grant

10. The report by the RNZRSA met the specified requirements.

11. The report noted that the grant had funded:

- a. two case management clinics in reasonably remote areas (Gisborne and Hokianga), attended by 25 veterans. This was a significant decrease on the previous year, when the RNZRSA had undertaken a major push and 26 veteran clinics were delivered, attended by 403 veterans;
- b. eleven formal training sessions across New Zealand, including three Mental Health First Aid courses; and seven support adviser induction courses;
- c. thirty-eight people trained as support advisers (total volunteer workforce is approximately 200 people);
- d. an increased focus on the younger veteran demographic, including more engagement with the ACC and other Government agencies;
- e. assistance to 1,720 individuals; and
- f. attendance at veteran/service events organised by third parties with a view to raising the Association's profile and connecting with local communities.

12. We note that a substantial part of Part 1 of the grant (\$132,500) was used to subsidise the salaries paid to two National Office staff (a total of 50 percent of their wages) with an additional \$4,000 being used for the staff members' Kiwi Saver contributions and around \$9,000 for a project contractor.

Part 2 of the grant

13. It was agreed that the \$25,000 made available as Part 2 of the conditional grant would be used improve the quality of completed applications submitted to VA. The project aimed to:

- a. improve understanding of RNZRSA Support Advisers;
- b. improve the understanding of veterans and whānau about what is required and how the necessary information needs to be obtained and presented for decisions on entitlements to be made; and
- c. reduce avoidable delays caused by inadequate or incomplete applications.

14. Over the 2024-25 period, seven training courses were presented to incoming support advisers, with content relating to the criteria for successful completion and submission of claim forms. The RNZRSA also emphasised the importance of veterans seeking assistance

from those who have been trained and can offer this specialised assistance. Training material has also been amended.

15. VA will monitor the quality of applications that have been prepared for veterans with the assistance of the RNZRSA, and will revert to the Association if it appears more work in this area is required.

Comment

16. The RNZRSA delivered its report on how it has used the 2023-24 Government grant promptly and provided additional information to supplement the original report when requested to do so.

17. The RNZRSA describes its overall focus as a “nationally directed locally delivered support capability”. While supporting the National Office can therefore be seen as being in line with the requirement of the grant to support the RNZRSA in its frontline work to develop support for veterans and access to that support, it is clear that, as the report notes, the Government’s financial support is a critical enabler for the Association. The Association notes that funding “remains extremely challenging at present” and this raises a query as to how the Association could manage should the grant cease at any time in the future.

18. We note that 2025-26 is the final year for which there is ministerial confirmation that this grant will be paid in full to the RNZRSA.

19. The 2024-25 grant report will be published on the VA website.

20. The agreed conditional grant for 2025-26 will now be paid to the RNZRSA. It comprises a total of \$275,000 plus GST.

Recommendations

21. I recommend that you:

- a. **Note** that a report has been received from the RNZRSA, relating to how it used the \$275,000 conditional grant made to it by the Government in the 2024-25 financial year.
- b. **Note** that a copy of the report is attached to this Note.
- c. **Note** that the report met the requirements that were specified by Veterans’ Affairs on behalf of the Minister for Veterans.
- d. **Note** that Veterans’ Affairs will now pay the RNZRSA a conditional grant of \$275,000 for the 2025-26 Financial Year.

NOTED
 NOTED
 NOTED
 NOTED

s. 9(2)(k) [Redacted]

for T DAVIES *DGS*
 Air Marshal
 Chief of Defence Force

[Signature]
 HON CHRIS PENK
 Minister for Veterans

26.1.2026
CB

Enclosures

- 1. RNZRSA Government Grant expenditure report 2024-25
- 2. Financial Information

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

RNZRSA as a registered charity are required to publish financial information in the format provided on the [Charities Services website](#). Registered charities reports are published online and available to the public. Community organisations that are [registered as charities](#) must format their financial information according to their [reporting standards](#).

VA will access this financial information in addition to the financial information required for this Grant below.

Operational costs are all the ongoing costs which support the Grant.

Project costs are costs related to a specific, one-off project which has a clear start and end date. Project costs do not include business-as-usual activities.

How did you use the grant?

Provide a breakdown of Grant Expenditure (add other rows as required)

ACTIVITY	REMARKS	EXPENDITURE
Operational Costs -		\$250,000.00
National Office Staff and District Support Manager (DSM) Operating		
Senior Strategic Advisor: 50% of wage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities • Public and private sector engagement • NZDF engagement • Volunteer training and development • National planning and coordination • Complex case management, including reviews and appeals • Complaints to the Health & Disability Commissioner • Advocacy • Administration 	\$132,500.00
Senior Support Advisor: 50% of Wage		\$8,892.68
Support Information Executive: 50% of wage		
Project Contractor – over project allocation		\$3,947.75
Kiwi Saver Contribution		
Support Network Operating		
Mileage	DSM, DSA and LSA BAU travel	\$48,268.95

Phone	DSM Phones	\$3,875.23
Stationary	Information material and photocopying copying	\$1,844.61
Case Management Clinics 2x Clinics Hokianga and Gisborne.	Includes; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mileage • Accommodation • Meals • Stationary • Venue expenses (Catering, IT, etc) 	\$5,616.94
Training and Development - 7x LSA Induction Courses, 3x MHFA Courses		
Support Services Travel	Instructors and Students	\$3,752.46
Support Services Accommodation	Instructors and Students	\$1,438.63
Training costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals • Stationary • Venue expenses (Catering, IT, etc) • PracticeSafe MHFA course costs 	\$39,862.75
Project Costs – Completeness of Applications		\$25,000.00
	DSM Meeting – Planning and preparation to meet project goal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gap Analysis • Training principles, planning and updating course content workshop. • Travel • Accommodation • Stationary • Meals 	\$5,423.64
	HQ RNZRSA Training Courses review – Contractor	\$19,576.36

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel • Accommodation • Meals • Review material • Needs analysis • Frame work 	
Total expenditure		\$275,000.00

Required documents:

1. Financial statement document - *Required*.

You are required to include a financial document that shows:

- receipt of the grant
- how the grant was spent within the approved timeframe on approved outcomes or items
- any additional income that was received during the period of the grant.

Examples of documentation that may be provided include:

- a statement of income and expenditure
- up-to-date annual financial accounts
- a bank statement (as proof of the grant being received).

CONFIRMATION

Andrew Brown

General Manager Support Services

RNZRSA

I confirm this report is true and correct for this grant:

A. J. R. Brown.
Signature

14 November 2025
Date