



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

OIA-2026-5892

31st July 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 17 July 2026 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

1. *THE 1939 SEPTIC TANK*

Internal NZDF documents show a 2006 infrastructure report warned the stormwater network at Base Ōhakea was in a poor state of repair. Documents also show the diversion tank used to capture foam discharge from hangar deluge systems was an original base septic tank installed circa 1939, found to have significant leaks in its western wall.

What action did NZDF take following the 2006 infrastructure warning? What does NZDF say about the use of this infrastructure to manage PFAS-contaminated firefighting foam discharge?

The deluge systems within hangars one, two, and three were fully decommissioned and removed from service in October 2022. The associated holding tank (old septic tank), previously used to contain discharge in the event of a system activation, remains physically in place; however, it is no longer operational or in use.

The diversion (sluice) valve is located in a locked plant room, has been electrically isolated, with the power supply disconnected and locked out to prevent any inadvertent operation.

The three deluge systems removed from service were not replaced.

2. *WELL GW67*

Well GW67 was a key monitoring point for the north-eastern plume edge. NZDF has advised it does not hold records of its decommissioning and claims it was a private well.

Can NZDF confirm when GW67 was decommissioned, by whom, and what monitoring replaced it?

New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) consultants reported in April 2024 that they had been informed by the owner of the well that it had been “decommissioned”. As noted in the response to you of 24 June 2026, GW 67 is a privately owned domestic well, and the NZDF is not responsible for its operation, or decommissioning.

The NZDF did not pursue replacement because the well was consistently showing insignificant levels of PFAS that were not increasing. Any replacement of off-base wells is a decision for the Horizons Regional Council (HRC).

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