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New Zealand Defence Force
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Lower Hutt 5045
New Zealand

OIA-2026-5986

12th October 2026

A. Mosley

fyi-request-35480-b23aa968@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear A. Mosley,

I refer to your email of 16 September 2026 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), a response to the question:

Did the NZSAS respond to the Christchurch Mosque terrorist attacks on 15 March 2019 in any capacity, either during the immediate response or in the subsequent security operation?

At the time of the Christchurch Mosque terrorist attacks on 15 March 2019, six New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel were attending an international sniper course in the region. When the scale and complexity of the incident became known, the NZ Police requested these six personnel provide immediate tactical level support to the NZ Police operation. They supported the safe clearance of the Linwood Mosque and the rendering of first aid to victims. Their involvement ceased once it was established that the offender had been apprehended. NZDF Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel cleared a suspicious device at the Deans Avenue mosque, cleared the offender, his belongings, and the vehicle that was used by the offender.

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