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

OIA-2026-6057

11th November 2026

[redacted]

Dear [redacted]

I refer to your email of 29 October 2026 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information regarding *the Waiouru Fire that was ignited by military gunfire on 25th October 2026*.

The circumstances surrounding the fire, including the factors contributing to its ignition, spread, management, and any lessons identified, have not yet been fully investigated or assessed.

Many of the matters raised in your request seek explanations regarding decision-making, responsibility, compliance with procedures, potential oversight, future changes to protocols, and any remediation activities that may arise from the event. The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) does not currently hold official information that answers these questions, as the relevant investigations and assessments have not yet commenced or been completed. Accordingly, your request is declined under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information requested does not exist.

Once the response operations have concluded, the appropriate investigations and assessments will be conducted. Information generated through those processes will be considered in accordance with the Official Information Act should it subsequently be requested.

The NZDF can confirm that live-fire training is an essential activity required to maintain military capability and that fire safety procedures form part of the planning and conduct of such activities.

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

JHR Sellwood
Captain, RNZN
Chief of Staff HQNZDF