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

OIA-2026-6067

17th November 2026

[redacted]

Dear [redacted]

I refer to your email of 6 November 2026 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information regarding *the historical naval encounter involving the Leander-class frigate HMNZS Southland (F104) during Exercise FAST FORWARD II in February 1987.*

Operational records relating to HMNZS Southland have been transferred to Archives New Zealand. The most relevant file references are: R15980982; R15980983; and R15980773. These files are open access. Copies of the requested information cannot be provided, as doing so would impair the efficient administration of the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), pursuant to section 16(2)(a) of the OIA.

The NZDF and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) are separate organisations with distinct functions under the Defence Act 1990. The MoD provides advice to the Government on defence policy and manages major defence capability procurement. Following consultation with the MoD, it has been confirmed that it does not hold any operational information relating to HMNZS Southland.

With regard to your request for contact information of the naval personnel involved in this matter, the NZDF is unable to share this information for privacy reasons, in line with section 9(2)(a) of the OIA.

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