

THE BUGLE

ISSUE 337
FEBRUARY 2026

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The Deployment Newsletter is produced for families and service personnel associated with current overseas deployments



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Deadline

The deadline for Edition 339 (**MARCH**) is **23 February 2026**

Bugle contributions are welcome and should be sent to the Community Inbox: community.deployment@nzdf.mil.nz.

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Op Antarctica SNO with the C17 and Haggs

GUEST EDITORIAL

SECURITY—How Can We Help?

Security Manager

Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand

Reprinted from previous Bugles



As security manager for our operational headquarters, it is my job to advise on and monitor all aspects of security within the headquarters. In Defence we always have an eye on security because it is an integral part of our business, both at home and abroad. But sometimes we forget that those people in our wider Defence community may not always understand why we need to apply security measures, and this can pose a risk to deployed personnel and the Defence community at home.

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) community includes all our people, their families, friends and, of course, our retired Service personnel. Unfortunately the right messages about security do not always get out to those who need them. Also, in today's changing world, out of date knowledge can be a dangerous thing and our extended community are always eager for information and updates on what is going on with our deployments. Sometimes this can lead to annoyance if information is not provided by Defence, and people are asked not to talk about what they do know.

Operations Security, or OPSEC, is about keeping potential adversaries from discovering critical information about our military operations, related capabilities and intentions. OPSEC thereby helps to protect our operations; those planned and those in progress. Military success depends on security and surprise, so our deploying and deployed force elements (our sailors, soldiers and aviators) can accomplish the mission more effectively, and with less risk. Our adversaries want our information, and they will get it wherever they can.

Being a member of the Defence community you may know some information that, when combined with other information, could give away detail that can be used against us, or even you in some cases. So it's very important that we avoid:

- discussing NZDF-related information outside of your immediate family, especially not over the phone or via messages or email;
- divulging military or personal information on social media;
- discussing sensitive NZDF-related topics in public places, which can potentially result in information being overheard and made public; and
- speculating about deployed loved ones or their deployment (this can be misinterpreted as fact by those overhearing it, especially if they know you are part of the Defence community).

All members of our extended military community contribute to our success, and we couldn't do our job without your support. By protecting what you know about our day to day and deployed operations, you protect your deployed loved ones, along with family and friends at home. That's a very important contribution to OPSEC.

If at any time you feel in any doubt about matters concerning security, don't hesitate to contact Defence, and for our family members, the Deployment Services Officers are always able to assist you.



GROWING DEFENCE RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA

Commodore Andy Dowling, who is finishing up as Defence Adviser Australia, will head to India with his wife Claire later this month to take up the appointment at the New Zealand High Commission in New Delhi.

While New Zealand has had Defence Advisers accredited to India in the past, they have been resident elsewhere. Commodore Dowling will be New Zealand's first Defence Adviser to be based in New Delhi and the first to undertake the role full time.

His posting comes on the back of significant engagement last year between both countries, notably Prime Minister Christopher Luxon's visit to India in March to pursue bilateral agreements in a wide range of fields.

The visit involved the signing of the India-New Zealand Memorandum of Understanding for Defence Cooperation, aimed at strengthening bilateral defence cooperation and establishing regular bilateral defence engagement.

At the same time, frigate HMNZS Te Kaha, deployed to Command Task Force (CTF) 150 to pursue drug traffickers in the Western Indian Ocean, visited Mumbai.

New Zealand led CTF 150 in 2025, with India as second-in-command, and used Te Kaha, Indian Navy and other assets to seize seven tonnes of narcotics between April and June.

Commodore Dowling says a strong relationship with India needs to consider defence and security.

"These are their most important considerations. The neighbourhood they live in is quite a tough one."

Commodore Dowling is familiar with India. The New Zealand Defence Adviser to Australia has historically been "cross-accredited" to India and he's already visited India four times in the last year.

India is the third-largest economy in the world and has an enormous military,

including a 1.3 million-strong army and a naval fleet of 250 vessels

Until about 10 years ago they were more domestically than externally focused, Commodore Dowling said.

"Domestic security was their worry."

However, this changed when India's 1991 'Look East' policy evolved to 'Act East' in 2014. It was a push towards strategic partnerships in defence, connectivity and cultural exchanges with an aim to promote a free and stable Indo-Pacific region.

Last year, India participated for the first time in Exercise Talisman Sabre in Australia, alongside 19 nations.

"We're seeing the 'Act East' with the Indian Navy in particular," Commodore Dowling said.

"They're deploying out of the Indian Ocean, exercising with other countries and visiting New Zealand and Australia. They're getting out and about and that's only going to increase in the coming years.

"By having a Defence Adviser in India, it will allow us to understand their system better to identify and explore opportunities for our two nations to work together.

"The New Zealand Defence Force had a busy year last year with India – Te Kaha visiting, CTF 150, the first Ministry of Defence to Ministry of Defence talks – but we need our interactions with them to be sustainable.

"We're not going to turn up with a frigate every week. But I'll soon be in a place to have the dialogue and spot opportunities."

He said India had real respect for New Zealand.



"They regard us very highly and see us as the 'honest broker' in the world. Their Navy does a lot of things very similarly to us, like flying operations, refuelling at sea, and they are very professional, efficient and good to work with."

There would likely be opportunities to collaborate and share expertise, Commodore Dowling said.

"They have P-8 aircraft like us, they operate the MH-60 helicopter which we're getting, and they have the C-130J Hercules. Their hydrographer training is similar, they operate a sea training group very like our Maritime Training Group. So, they have structures and capabilities that we recognise."

The New Delhi appointment will be a three-year posting.

"I was asked midway through last year, is this something Claire and I would like to do? We saw it as a great opportunity and adventure. It's not often you get to set up something from scratch. It's a real privilege we're eager to grasp with both hands."

LIFE IN SINAI PENINSULA

Force Training Team (FTT)

NZCON Rotation 25/02 has settled in well to the MFO way of life, approaching our two-month mark. We have certainly eaten our way into the record books with celebrations of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. Now that the festive events are behind us, there is an eagerness to achieve those New Year's fitness resolutions.

The month of December saw the NZ Physical Training Instructor instigate a contingent challenge: the most kilometres completed in a calendar month. These could be conducted either by running, walking, cycling, rowing, ski-erg, or anything that could count distance. The team travelled a total combined distance of 5,257.51km, with the winning individual completing 1630.29km. Overall, it was an excellent effort by all members, with personnel working hard to rack up kilometres. January sees a new contest: a series of physical exercise challenges.

A large part of New Zealand's contribution on Op FARAD sits within the Force Training Team (FTT). Along with members from Canada, Fiji, and Colombia, the Kiwis in FTT are responsible for delivering training to new arrivals from all contingents on policy and procedures. As well as this, FTT conducts ongoing courses and driver training to ensure the members of the force have the required skills and knowledge to accomplish the mission. Recently, training for our Colombian comrades was delivered in both parts of our operating area, and in the future we have two rotations coming in from Australia and Canada.

SGT J – Driver Instructor-1

The past month saw FTT travel north to assist partner nations in Range Safety Officer, Patrol Command, and Vehicle Self Recovery training and vehicle licencing. A few additional networks

were built with Kiwis embracing both Norwegian and Colombian cultural events, as well as our NZ Physical Training Instructor showing partner nations there are other training options that aren't a ski-erg, rower, or assault bike. Back in the South, CAPT H and CPL O placed well in the 'Fittest in the Sinai' competition with an excellent on-the-day performance.

FTT has also been busy training the NZ contingent. We enhanced the contingent with a healthy amount of range awareness, networking, and continuation training to keep our skills current. Onwards to January, the FTT remained busy, committed to the Force priority of work. Alongside this, the FTT initiated the planning and execution of multiple activities to test the force for operational readiness and assessment of standards.

The upcoming months will see FTT cover thousands of kilometres across the peninsula with Kiwis travelling by way of sea, land and air.



Fittest in the Sinai Participants

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ANZAC RIVALRY

SGT J—UNCMAC

While NZ and Australia settles into the warmth and sunshine of the new years summer, the OP Monitor team are treated to a cold and snowy winter with members of the team on duty throughout Christmas and new years.

The new year brings a unique sense of camaraderie, as instead of being home with family our team has been celebrating the holidays with our commonwealth family instead, serving alongside Australians, British, and Canadians. For well over a

decade NZ has been a constant force on Korean Peninsula.

While NZ is normally known for its small teams on international missions, New Zealand holds a unique status in its part of the United Nations Command, as the third largest contributing nation. While there remains a large gap between Korea, USA, and then NZ, it does bring some useful banter to the ANZAC rivalry.

It is always a good time working alongside Australians, it's been nice

having someone from so close to home in the team as we both navigate being away from family and the challenges of being immersed in a different culture.

While this job is very different from our usual roles back home the ANZAC link between us is great for when we have to navigate the complexities of an organisation such as the United Nations Command Military Armistice Commission. The best part so far has been getting to watch the Aussie experience the snow for the first time.



ANZAC BOND



SPECIAL QUOTES:

“Love is missing someone whenever you’re apart, but somehow feeling warm inside because you’re close in heart.” (*Kay Knudsen*)

“The strength of a family, like the strength of an army, is in its loyalty to each other.” (*Mario Puzo*)



FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE

*News from
Bahrain*

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not necessarily those of the NZDF

MARHABA FROM BAHRAIN AND THE COMBINED MARITIME FORCES (CMF)

As I rapidly approach the halfway point of my deployment, it feels like only last week that I was flapping at Auckland Airport, losing my physical boarding pass and hurriedly installing the Emirates app just to make the flight.

After landing in Bahrain, enjoying a few days of respite, and then being thoroughly chewed up and spat out by the US onboarding process, the journey truly began. I have never been so grateful for New Zealand's systems. While we often complain about them, you quickly realise how good we have it once you experience the scale and intensity of the US military machine.

Arriving in late November, I was fortunate enough to experience a Bahraini "winter," which meant temperatures surprisingly similar to home, albeit with an alarming lack of rain. It has only rained once during my



Odd looking fake cat in one of the displays the Bahrain National Museum



Lionfish at Marassi Aquarium and Underwater Zoo

time here, but the brief downpour left puddles sitting for over a week, resulting in widespread street flooding both on and around the base.

Weather aside, one of the highlights of arriving later in the year was experiencing American holidays firsthand. These people truly do nothing by halves. Thanksgiving fell just a week after my arrival, and the lead-up was packed with daily events including fun runs, quizzes, giveaways, and sporting competitions. On the day itself, we descended upon the US galley to gorge.

While Christmas reigns supreme back home, in the United States it is clearly "Turkey Day" that holds court. Senior officers served food, cleared tables, washed dishes, and insisted on adding cake and ice cream to the plates of anyone who looked capable of handling more. After eventually waddling out of the galley, we all promptly went home to nap.

Of course, it has not all been cake and ice cream. The work here has been constant but incredibly rewarding. Arriving to help establish a

new position, I initially felt unsure of how best to approach the role. Once settled, it quickly became clear that this deployment would demand adaptability, professionalism, and an ability to be personable and relatable while working with people from a wide range of nations and cultures.

Before arriving in Bahrain, I had never heard of the Combined Maritime Forces, so a brief explanation is probably warranted. CMF is a multinational maritime partnership comprising 47 nations working together to counter illicit non-state actors at sea and promote security, stability, and prosperity across approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters. These waters encompass some of the world's most critical shipping lanes.

Coming from New Zealand, there was certainly a strong 'small fish in a big pond' feeling, and rank aside, I was initially apprehensive about my place within such a large organisation. However, the people here have been incredibly welcoming and inclusive, inviting me to collaborate on projects within the office and to attend functions beyond working hours.

When it comes to the sights of Bahrain,

News from Bahrain

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I am yet to visit the famous Tree of Life, although it is firmly on my list before I depart, despite warnings that it may be slightly underwhelming. So far, however, I have visited the Bahrain National Museum, learning about the country's history from the ancient Dilmun civilisation through to Bahraini independence.

We also explored the Pearling Path during the Muharraq Nights Festival, seeing firsthand where Bahrain's primary source of income once came from prior to the discovery of oil in 1932. Beyond the various malls and the occasional souq (market), I am also an aquarium enthusiast, so visiting the Marassi Aquarium and seeing the diverse marine life on display was a particular highlight.



Before the discovery of oil, Bahrain's economy was driven by pearling. Done with divers from ships like these.

Now halfway through the deployment, the craving for a decent New Zealand pie is well and truly setting in. That said, being able to live vicariously through loved ones back home has been a luxury rarely found when deployed at sea, so there will be no complaints from me.

Looking ahead, I am excited for the second half of my deployment, from the professional challenges that lie ahead at CMF to exploring more of the incredible sights Bahrain has to offer. This deployment, and the opportunity to work alongside coalition partners, has been immensely rewarding and will undoubtedly stand me in good stead as I progress in my naval career. Until next time, I hope everyone back home is doing well and enjoying the New Zealand summer. I will be returning in winter, which will no doubt be a shock after the Middle Eastern heat, but even then, I wouldn't change a thing.



A classic Bahrani tower, overlooking the Pearling Path.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE

*News from
Antarctica*

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I'M JUST THE CARGO GUY!

WO1 A

That's how I introduce myself to new people around here. Some of the old hands raise their eyebrows or have a chuckle but hey – the job description says 'Scott Base Cargo Handler' so close enough.

A typical day starts around half five. Up for a coffee with the regular early risers, and then into daily checks of the fresh water system. The storage tanks are a little low, so we'll make water today. Check the sea intake, flush the filters, start the reverse osmosis pump. Sample the water pH and quality and, at around 1000l an hour, it can run for the rest of the day.

Down to the office and log in. C-17 flying south today, bringing passengers and freshies (fresh fruit and veges), cargo as well as a mail bag according to the manifest – people will be happy about that. We've got some passengers heading north too – some scientists with samples that need documenting to fly. Finish up the paperwork and take it over to McMurdo for them to build onto a pallet.



Hauling fuel by sled

Back to Scott Base in time for a quick breakfast before our morning meeting. The weather is looking good for the helicopter to fly today – I'm heading out to a weather station that needs maintenance. Some batteries to go on that flight, so write up the dangerous goods documents for them and then jump into the pre-flight safety meeting. An hour later and we've landed in the Dry Valleys, standing on the Antarctic Continent. It doesn't take too long to fit the camera to the weather station and I set the time lapse running – hopefully someone from University of Canterbury will send me the pictures when they download them next year!

Back to Scott Base for a quick lunch. A nod to the chefs, very few people leave here having lost weight! The juice machine is making a strange noise though, so grab a couple of screwdrivers and whip the covers off that – the gearbox needs some grease and then it's running silent again. Passenger transport time, down to the locker room to give the departure brief and then load them into the Hägglund for the drive out to Phoenix – our ice runway.

Watching the C-17 come in is always a treat. Goodbye to the outgoing passengers, and hello to another group coming in. It's an absolute cracker day today, with Erebus chuffing away in the distance, so it's worth giving them a few extra minutes to take it all in – especially those taking their first steps on the Ice. Back to Scott Base, giving the dime tour along the way – Erebus,



Installing camera at Wright Ridge weather station

Terra, White and Black Islands, Willy's Field where the ski-hercs operate from, Observation and Crater Hill, Castle Rock. Drop the passengers back to the locker room to be greeted by the Base Leader, park the Hägg back on the hitching rail.

Back in the office, there's a note on my desk from one of the German scientists – his dive camera has stopped working, and can I have a look at it? Turns out it has a broken wire, so in to the telecom office and solder that together for him. There's still time for some PT before having to uplift today's incoming cargo from McMurdo and Square Frame, our little home away from home hut, needs some fuel for the heater. Seems like a perfect reason to get out the sled and do some hauling – pulling 80kg for 5km on ice definitely gets the heart rate up. The return trip with the empty jerry cans is always faster!

A quick shower and a bite to eat for dinner with the rest of the base, most of whom have finished for the day, then turn the fresh water plant off as the tanks are nearly full again. Warm up Suzi, Cargo's trusty Isuzu truck, and head over to McMurdo again to uplift the freshies, passenger bags, and mail. Back to Scott Base, radio ahead on the way to get a welcoming party to human chain the bags inside before heading back to the office to process

the freshies and check them for any critters who may have hitched a ride down from NZ. Nothing suspicious, so jump in the forklift and whip them around to the kitchen – Chef JC supervising, and there’s always a few people keen to leave the warmth of the bar and come help unload in return for a fresh apple or an orange. Put the

forklift away in the workshop and open the mail bag – time to play postman and make some people’s day. One of the domestics mentions that a dryer is playing up in the laundry. Should be an easy enough fix, grab some tools and head up – sure enough, the water pump is full of fluff and is blocking the drain. Running good as

new now.

It’s getting close to 2130 by the time the paperwork is all done, walking out of the office door for the day under the sign that says, “C Grant and Associates – Antarctic Cargo and other Odd Jobs”.

I’m just the cargo guy.

LIFE ON THE MOST ISOLATED CONTINENT ON THE PLANET

LCPL D

Even getting down to Antarctica can be a mission. Due to leave on the 9th of October, we were delayed by two weeks after a Condition 1 storm hit Ross Island, closing both runways and making it impossible to land on the continent. We were finally able to reach our home away from home in late October. Stepping off the plane was breathtaking—standing on a runway made entirely of ice is something I never thought I would be able to say I’d done.

It took a few days to get used to the cold. On just our second day the temperature dropped to -25°C , and that was before windchill. In January 1967, winds here reached a top speed of 54 knots (around 100 km/h), and even that isn’t the most extreme wind ever recorded in Antarctica.

After being assigned to our departments and settling into station life, time started to move very quickly. In the early days, we spent a lot of time out in the lumber yard, moving large loads of plywood and timber onto what’s called racking. Each bunk of lumber is about a metre high, with up to three bunks stacked on top of one another. Another important task was freezer consolidation—our supply department spent a week in the food freezer clearing out boxes to be broken down and sent back to the States.

More recently, we’ve been cleaning up our respective work areas in preparation for the vessel cargo. Due to Antarctica’s isolated location, a large amount of station cargo has to be delivered by ship. This includes everything from food for the next 12 months to the nuts and bolts used

around the station.

Once the vessel arrives, the supply team moves to a 12-hours-on, 12-hours-off schedule, seven days a week. Currently, we work six days a week from 07:30 to 17:30, which took a few days to get used to—especially coming into work on a Saturday.

Despite the workload, we’re still able to get out and about. On the 22nd of January 2026, we were fortunate enough to take seven snowmobiles out to the base of Mt Erebus. There are also some great walking tracks around the station, which are a good way to exercise and explore the area.

This has been an incredible experience, and one we’re extremely grateful to be able to take part in. I’ll leave you with a photo from our adventure to Mt Erebus.



LAC M, LCPL G, LCPL D, SGT K

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE

*News from
Sinai*

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CHRISTMAS IN THE MIDDLE

CPL W

Christmas in the Middle East wasn't something I ever pictured for myself. Yet there I was—thousands of miles from home, waking up on the morning of December 25th to a Christmas day which felt nothing like the ones I grew up with.

There's a particular feeling that comes with spending the holidays far from home. It's not loud or dramatic. It's a quiet pull- felt in the early mornings when the world is still, or in the evenings when you'd normally be wrapped in the familiar chaos of family. Being deployed in the Middle East during the holidays brings that feeling into sharper focus. The season looks different here, sounds different, moves at a different rhythm. And yet, somehow, it still finds a way to reach you.



Steve the trauma manikin dressed as Santa outside the medical centre



Moral was high on Christmas Day!

What truly fills the space left by distance, is the people you share it with. My colleagues, who were just as far from home as I was. Together, you create a kind of "adopted family"—not because you're trying to replace the one you miss, but because you're all navigating the same emotional terrain—shared meals become new traditions and inside jokes are formed out of the shared circumstances. There's something profoundly Kiwi about gathering with people who were strangers not long ago, sharing a kai and choosing to make the

day meaningful, together.

I only deployed in November, making me what the SNO calls a "Noob", while others on the team have been here for six months or even longer. As they look toward returning home, I'm mindful of the mix of anticipation and fatigue they must be feeling. Their resilience sets the tone for the rest of us, and it's something I've come to admire.

As the holiday season fades behind us, the operational tempo has picked up once more. Our days are again filled

News from Sinai

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with the familiar rhythm of essential tasks, each contributing to the broader mission.

As the medic, my role is simple in description but broad in responsibility: look after the health of our contingent and our partner forces. In practice, that means everything from running sick parades and treating patients, to carrying out environmental health checks, maintaining medical stores and kits within camp, as well as being on call to respond to any medical emergency on base.

It's a varied role, and no two days look the same, but every task carries the same purpose: keeping our deployed personnel safe, healthy, and mission-ready. As the workload ramps up again, the focus remains firmly on supporting the mission and the people who make it possible. One of the roles I've enjoyed most is running medical training for our multinational medical

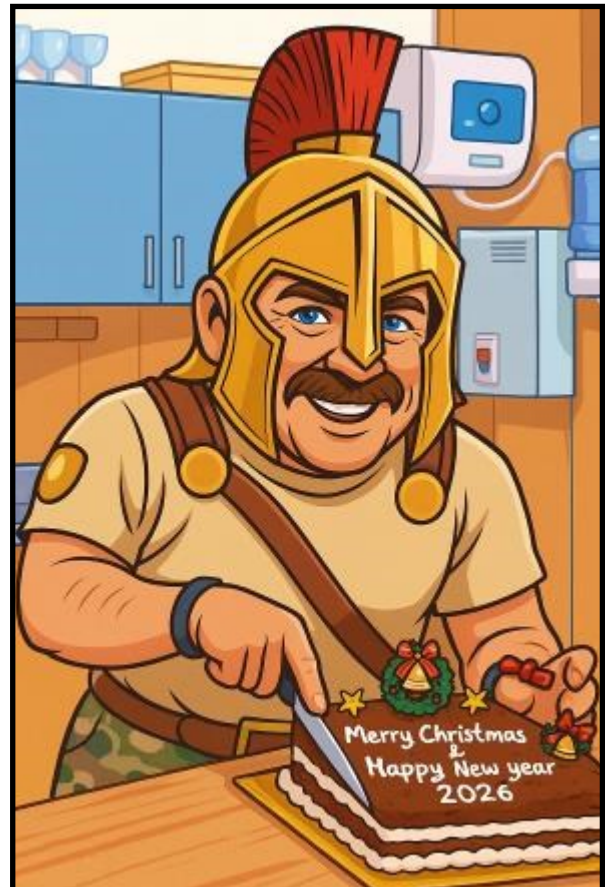


team. We've had some

Coalition Medical Team conducting a training scenario on Christmas Eve



OP Troy family photo with Santa in his Grotto



SNO OP Troy Christmas Card

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE

*News from
Sinai*

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memorable training scenarios, but a recent favourite on Christmas Eve involved the team responding to a “casualty” — a bearded man named Nicholas who had tripped over a string of fairy lights and taken an unfortunate tumble off a roof. It was equal parts festive chaos and medical practice, and the team handled it with the perfect mix of professionalism and laughter.

In the end, Christmas in the Middle East became less about where I was and more about who I was there with. The distance from home was real, but so was the camaraderie that filled its place — the shared work, the shared humour, and the shared understanding that comes from serving far from familiar shores.

As the New Year unfolds and the tempo continues to rise, I carry forward the reminder that even in the most unexpected places, meaning can be found in the people beside you and the purpose you serve together.



Santa's Grotto, built in the mess

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN:



So Special was “created as a resource to support whanau of New Zealand Defence Force personnel who deploy on operational service. It is dedicated to all those children who sacrifice time with their Mum or Dad.”

The Maori Language Commission has translated *So Special* into *He Tino Taonga*.

Copies are available for loan in the Linton and Burnham Camp Libraries or from your Deployment Services Officers.

10 Tips for Military Mums During Deployments

- **Have a positive attitude.** It will help you, your kids, and everyone who is fortunate enough to be around you!
- **Talk to your kids about their Daddy.** Preschoolers have short memories, so it is important to talk to them about Daddy and look at pictures often to make his transition back home easier and avoid “stranger anxiety.”
- **Take care of you.** Take a bubble bath, rent a movie, and talk to your children about your need for “Mummy Time.”
- **Start a project.** Make a video diary and/or a scrapbook, or start a home improvement project to surprise Dad when he gets home.
- **Extend your family.** Get involved in your community, even if you haven’t lived there very long. By reaching out to others in need, you can keep your own situation in perspective.
- **Take the initiative.** Your non-military friends may not know how to help or what to say. Take the first step to reach out and let them know how to help, whether it’s asking for help around the house or a “girls’ night out.”
- **Leave your spouse’s “stuff” alone** – even if he hasn’t used it in years, he may not appreciate it being cleaned up in his absence!
- **Accept help!** Let people take you out to lunch, come over and bring dinner, or baby-sit your kids.
- **Limit news shows,** especially if your spouse is involved in a conflict or if your child is in the room.
- **Get out of the house** – especially if you have little ones. Join a group in your area!



Source: www.mops.org

DSO'S CORNER



Nicky Ruki

Deployment Services Officer

Budget some Time for yourself

Taking care of your emotional needs is a legitimate endeavour. Like any other worthwhile pursuit, it may sometimes require some cash. There's a time and place to explore your budget to see how you can pay for additional childcare.



Set aside some time to take a hard look at your monthly spending. Have that discussion with your partner (ideally before they deploy) can we fit some me time into our budget? What might you sacrifice in order to hire a sitter for some time out to yourself or with friends? It may be a stretch to go without certain luxuries, but in the end, getting a break may do more for your mental health than other areas of spending.

Try a Babysitting Exchange

If hiring a sitter isn't on the cards, consider a regular babysitting exchange with a fellow parent. Make the opportunity to attend our deployment dinners and meet other parents in the same situation—maybe you could arrange to watch their kids one day, they'll take yours at another time. When your kids all get along and can entertain each other, even the days when you have extra kids may feel like a break. This way, everyone wins!



As I sit in my office again thinking what to write for this Bugle article I get a phone call from my 13 year old daughter, who has gone away for a couple of weeks to stay with family, who tells me she is missing me only after eight hours. I start thinking how nice it is to have some me time after what feels like months having the kids at home for the holidays.

Do I feel guilty about this? YES and NO. The older I get, I think that having distance from your children just means you are human. In fact, breaks are necessary. If you don't get the rest you need, you are less likely to be engaged, be responsive, or the playful parent you want to be and that your child needs. It's not making you a bad Mum or Dad. In fact, many of us require alone time in order to be the best parents we can be. Having time and space to recharge without kids allows us to remember our own identity and nurture our own spirit.

Speaking to a number of partners who have loved ones away, some tell me they feel guilty taking some time away from the kids; they feel that with one parent away it's not fair for the other one to take some time. But as a parent at home with the children all the time you need to find time for yourself.

Sometimes, as a parent, it feels like you just can't get any time to yourself. Especially when you have multiple small children, they just seem to be everywhere, all the time. There's always something that needs attending to, whether breaking up an argument, answering a hundred questions of "why?" or wiping someone's nose or bottom.

So, what's a frazzled Mum or Dad to do when in need of some time away? Here are a few strategies to get some much-needed personal time and space when kids are everywhere.

Get out into the Fresh Air

Kids making you crazy at home? Get out of the house! Find a kid-friendly public place where you can keep an eye on the little ones from a safe distance, like a park. There are some great coffee places that provide play rooms. While the kids are playing allow yourself a few mind-clearing minutes, flick through a magazine, listen to some music through headphones or just simply breathe.



DSO'S CORNER Continued

Designate some Space for yourself

You've probably heard that, for your mental health, it's wise to set emotional boundaries. But with young kids who



don't understand these nuances, there may be times when setting actual physical boundaries is advisable. Try establishing a space in your home that everyone knows is just yours. If you don't have an extra room, a closet or even a corner of a room can suffice. (Closets are preferable since they have doors!) Call your designated space "the Mum Zone" and let your kids know that, when you're there, you are off limits.

It may sound silly, but going an extra step by personalizing this space can emphasize that this area is adults-only. The more you do so, the more your family will begin to respect this space as yours. Choose a comfortable chair or favourite candle to set the scene.

Quiet Time for everyone

Ah, the blessing of the afternoon nap! When kids are very young, this mid-day reprieve is the saving grace of many an overloaded parent. Eventually, of



Quiet Time

course, every child will outgrow the need for a nap—but that doesn't mean your family can't maintain a daily afternoon quiet time.

Provide your child a safe space with plenty of toys or other activities, to let them play by themselves for half an hour or so. Then, instead of cleaning the kitchen or catching up on email, allow yourself to use the downtime doing something you enjoy.

Keep (and Schedule) Your Own Hobbies

As parents, it's all too easy to be consumed by our day-in, day-out domestic roles, letting our own interests fall by the wayside, especially when your partner has deployed. But making time to keep up with a hobby can go a long way toward filling your own emotional cup.

You're much more likely to make time for a personal interest by sticking to a pre-set commitment. Play an instrument? Play some sport, always



wanted to make your own clothes? Sign up for a sewing class at a community centre or craft store.

Just knowing you have somewhere to go at a specific time can give you something to look forward to.

Get Up Before the Kids

Depending on your sleep situation, getting up extra early may be the absolute last thing you want to do (and



may not even be advisable for your health). But for those Mums and Dads who are past the sleep-deprivation stages of early childhood parenting, getting up before the kids can be a way to savour some peace and quiet.

Try doing a workout in the lounge or just having a quiet coffee by yourself.

Needing time away from your kids doesn't make you a bad Mum or Dad. In fact, many (if not most) of us require alone time in order to be the best parents we can be. Having time and space to recharge without kids allows us to remember our own identity and nurture our own spirit. There's no need to feel guilty about taking care of yourself in this way.

So go ahead! Schedule that babysitting exchange or rope off that closet for yourself. You may just be a better parent for taking the time.

We are here for you!

Need advice, support or information to manage the deployment journey?

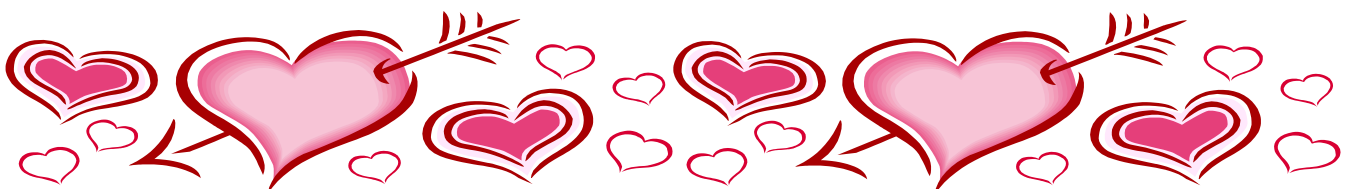
Nicky Ruki, DSO Burnham **0800 337 569** or **027 449 7565**

VALENTINE'S DAY

Fact or Fiction?



- * Legend has it that Valentine was a priest who served during third century Rome. There was an Emperor at that time by the name of Claudius II. Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those who were married. With this thought in mind he outlawed marriage for young men in the hope of building a stronger military base. Supposedly, Valentine decided this decree just wasn't fair and chose to marry young couples secretly. When Emperor Claudius II found out about Valentine's actions he had him put to death.
- * Another legend has it that Valentine was an imprisoned man who fell in love with his jailor's daughter. Before he was put to death he sent the first 'valentine' himself when he wrote her a letter and signed it 'Your Valentine', words still used on cards today.
- * Perhaps we will never know the true identity and story behind the man named St Valentine, but this much is for sure ... February has been the month to celebrate love for a long time, dating back to the Middle Ages. In fact, Valentine's Day ranks second only to Christmas in the number of greeting cards sent.
- * Another Valentine gentleman you may be wondering about is Cupid (Latin cupido, "desire"). In Roman mythology Cupid is the son of Venus, goddess of love. His counterpart in Greek mythology is Eros, God of Love. Cupid is often said to be a mischievous boy who goes about shooting people with his bow and arrows.
- * A young girl was supposed to marry, eventually, the first eligible male she met on this day. If a girl was curious and brave enough she could conjure up the appearance of her future spouse by going to the graveyard on St Valentine's Eve at midnight. She would then sing a prescribed chant and run around the church twelve times.
- * In England little children went about singing of St Valentine and collecting small gifts. It was also customary to place valentines on their friends' doorsteps.
- * It was thought that birds chose their mate for the year on 14 February. Doves and pigeons mate for life and therefore were used as a symbol of 'fidelity'.



Free Wills for NZDF - RF, TF/Reserve and Civilian NZDF members + Spouses/Partners - LINK CORRECTED

27 Jan 2026

As a RF, TF/Reserve and Civilian Member of NZDF, you can get a free will for yourself and your spouse*
Register here NZDF members (ITD Link):

Register here for spouses/partners of NZDF members (ITD Link): <https://partners.myfootprint.co.nz/nzdf>

You can elect to choose Perpetual Guardian as the executor of your estate administration which is chargeable.

If you have any questions, please contact Footprint - the providers of the Will.
Phone: 0800 366 877, email: info@myfootprint.co.nz
When contacting Footprint please mention that you are an NZDF member or that your partner/spouse is trying to obtain the free Will via the NZDF offering.

*Please note AON is covering the cost of this will package. The retail name is the 'Will It' package. Your partner/spouse has access for the first 12 months for no charge.

If you have any further comments and queries about Wills, Estate Administration or Trusts please email the benefits team @ NZDF at: benefits@nzdf.mil.nz

Deployment Support Services

Need information?
Need support?
Need a listening ear?
Need to send an urgent message to a deployment location?

Deployment Support Services are here for you

All personnel on deployment and their families have the support of the Deployment Services Officers (DSOs). In addition there is support from Unit Points of Contact (UPOC) and local Welfare Support Services. The nominated Primary Next of Kin (PNOK) of families of deployed NZDF personnel should, in the first instance, contact their DSO who can assist or facilitate the best pathway for welfare issues.

Deployment Services Officers:

Burnham—Nicky Ruki
Ph: 0800 337 569 or 027 449 7565

Linton—VACANT
Ph: 0800 683 77 327 or 021 649 903

Added to this, there are other very valuable support networks available in your local region.

For additional support and services:

Navy Family Support Services:

0800 NAVY HELP (0800 628 94 357) to connect with:

- Social Workers
- Navy Family Events
- Naval Welfare Liaison Manager.

Army:

Defence Community Facilitators:

Linton:
Lesley Clutterbuck—Ph: 021 649 901

Trentham :

Dee O'Connor—Ph: 021 905 157

Burnham:

Ph: 021 245 5099

Waiouru:

Sharlene Turua—021 226 9057

Papakura:

Helena O'Neill—021 934 635

Toni Piggott—021 229 8039

Air Force:

Defence Community Facilitators:

Air Staff Wellington:

Linley Williams—Ph: 021 243 4108

Base Auckland:

Vanessa Rowan —Ph: 027 450 2001

Base Woodbourne:

Donna Wilson—Ph: 027 246 4910

Base Ohakea:

Rebecca Smith—Ph: 021 351 542

Local Chaplaincy Services

Unit Point of Contact (UPOC)

HOW DOES KIWISAVER ACTUALLY

Your complete guide to the inner workings of KiwiSaver

KiwiSaver often seems like one of those household appliances everyone owns but nobody has read the manual for. Most New Zealanders understand money goes out of their pay, some money magically appears from their employer, and eventually, a decade or three later, they might be able to afford a house or a retirement where they can afford slightly better wine than the supermarket bottom shelf. However, the mechanics of the KiwiSaver system remain a mystery to many.

Here at Become Wealth, we know that understanding the internal gears of your financial life is the first step toward true financial freedom. This guide aims to dismantle the KiwiSaver machine, piece by piece, to show you exactly how it functions. Understanding this system is about recognising the levers you can pull to dictate your own future, and which you might not want to pull!



The Foundation: How KiwiSaver Scheme Contributions Work

KiwiSaver is a voluntary, work-based savings initiative. While the word "voluntary" is used, the system is designed with a "nudge" philosophy. If you start a new job, you are generally enrolled automatically unless you take active steps to opt out. This clever piece of behavioural economics ensures the default path leads toward wealth creation rather than consumption.

The money entering your KiwiSaver account comes from three primary sources:

1. Your own pocket,
2. Your employer, and
3. The government (taxpayer-funded).

1. How Your KiwiSaver Contributions Work

When you are employed, you choose a contribution rate of 3%, 4%, 6%, 8%, or 10% of your gross salary. This money is deducted before you even see it, which is the most effective way to save. If you never see the money, you never have the chance to spend it, maybe on another subscription service you

will forget to cancel! In this way, KiwiSaver is the ultimate "set and forget" mechanism. For those who are self-employed or not currently working, contributions can be made via voluntary lump sums or regular bank transfers.

2. How KiwiSaver Scheme Employer Contributions Work

If you are contributing from your salary, your employer is generally required to chip in at least 3% of your gross salary on top of your pay. This is often referred to as "free money," though it is technically part of your total remuneration package. It is worth noting employers must pay Employer Superannuation Contribution Tax (ESCT) on these contributions, so the net amount hitting your account will be slightly less than the 3% figure. Failing to join KiwiSaver when you have an employer willing to match your contribution is essentially telling your boss you would prefer they keep the extra money for themselves.

When your pay is processed, your personal contributions and the employer match are sent directly to the IRD. The tax office holds these funds for a brief period, usually two

months for new members, to ensure everything balances. Once verified, the IRD passes the capital to your chosen KiwiSaver provider. Your money does not take a scenic tour through your personal bank account; it bypasses your spending urges entirely. This direct pipeline ensures your future self is paid first, leaving you to manage whatever remains for your present-day lifestyle choices.



3. How The KiwiSaver Government Contribution Works

Every year, from 1 July to 30 June, the government provides a Member Tax Credit, which has been officially renamed as the Government Contribution. If you contribute at least \$1,042.86 during this period, the government will deposit \$260.72 into

your KiwiSaver account. This represents a 25% return on this specific portion of your investment. Even if you cannot afford the full amount, the government will still match your contributions at a rate of 25 cents for every dollar, up to the maximum cap. This is one of the few instances where the Inland Revenue Department sends money back your way without a fight.

But, if you earn over \$180,000 per year, you are no longer eligible for this taxpayer-funded "top-up." This is among many changes which have been made to KiwiSaver, which has reduced the appeal of it as an investment vehicle for some New Zealanders.



The Investment Engine Room: How Your KiwiSaver Scheme Money Grows

Once the money is in your account, it does not just sit in a digital vault gathering dust. It is handed over to a KiwiSaver Scheme provider who invests it on your behalf. This is where the real magic happens, or where the confusion deepens, depending on your perspective.

KiwiSaver funds are Portfolio Investment Entities (PIEs). This structure is tax-efficient, especially for those in higher income brackets. Your

provider pools your money with thousands of other members to buy assets. These assets generally fall into two categories: income assets and growth assets.

- **Income assets include cash and fixed interest (bonds).** These are the "safe" options. They do not fluctuate wildly in value, but they also do not offer high long-term returns.
- **Growth assets include shares (equities) and property.** These are more volatile; their value can go up and down like a yo-yo in a windstorm over short periods of time, but historically, they provide much higher returns over long periods.

The mix of these assets determines your fund type. A "Conservative" fund will have more cash and bonds, while an "Aggressive" or "Growth" fund will be heavily weighted toward shares.

Choosing the right fund is one of the few things you can control in this process.

You cannot control the global economy, you cannot control where or when the next war will start, and you certainly cannot control the weather.

You can, however, control where your money is allocated. Being in a conservative fund when you are 30 years old is like trying to win a Formula One race in a golf cart; you will eventually get to the finish line, but everyone else will have been there for hours.

How Secure Are Your KiwiSaver Scheme

Investments?

Your KiwiSaver provider is the entity responsible for managing your investments. However, they do not hold or own your money directly. To ensure the safety of your funds,



KiwiSaver uses a "bare trust" structure. Your money is held in this trust by an independent supervisor or custodian. In the unlikely event a provider goes bust, their creditors cannot touch your retirement savings because those assets aren't on the provider's balance sheet. In this scenario, the supervisor would step in to take full control of the scheme. They would then coordinate with the Financial Markets Authority (FMA) to either appoint a new investment manager to take over or facilitate the transfer of all members' balances to a different, stable KiwiSaver scheme. Your balance might experience a brief "freeze" during the administrative hand-off, but the underlying value remains yours.

The FMA is the regulator of all KiwiSaver Scheme providers. They rightly impose strong regulatory hurdles for providers to meet and maintain, which is part of the reason no provider has gone bust, yet!

The Role of the KiwiSaver Scheme Provider

The provider's job is to make investment decisions, handle the administration, and provide you with regular reporting. In exchange for this, they charge fees. These fees usually consist of:

- A percentage-based fee based on the size of your balance, and
- Sometimes a fixed annual management fee (a dollar amount) regardless of the size of your balance.

While it is easy to get bogged down in fee comparisons, the focus should always be on the value provided after fees. A cheap fund that performs poorly is far more expensive in the long run than a slightly higher-priced fund that delivers superior net returns (that is, returns after all fees and taxes).

How KiwiSaver is Taxed

Taxation is the silent thief in every investment. In KiwiSaver, you are taxed twice:

1. **You pay tax on your investment contributions, including your employer contributions.** Your personal contributions originate from "take-home" pay. This means income tax at your usual marginal tax rate has already been sliced away by the IRD before you decide your contribution percentage. Conversely, employer contributions are subject to Employer Superannuation Contribution Tax (ESCT). This is not tiered like salary tax; instead, a single rate applies based on total earnings. As of 2026, those earning up to \$18,720 pay 10.5%, rising to 17.5% up to \$64,200, 30% up to \$93,720, and 33% up to \$216,000. Above \$216,001, the rate is 39%. Your employer handles these calculations, ensuring the government gets a seat at the table before your money even arrives.
2. **Then, you pay tax on your investment earnings.** This is done via your Prescribed Investor Rate (PIR). Your PIR is based on your income over the last two years and will be either 10.5%, 17.5%, or 28%. Ensuring you are on the correct PIR is vital. If your rate is too high, you are paying the government more than necessary.

If it is too low, you might end up with a bill from Inland Revenue at the end of the year. Unlike a bad haircut, a wrong PIR is a mistake that is easily fixed with a quick login to your provider's portal.

Fortunately, when you withdraw your KiwiSaver Scheme investment, the withdrawal is untaxed, regardless of the type of withdrawal.



The Exit Strategy: When You Can Get Your KiwiSaver Scheme Money?

KiwiSaver is designed to be a "locked-in" investment. This lack of liquidity is its greatest strength, and perhaps greatest weakness! By preventing you from raiding the account every time a new iPhone is released, the system forces you to maintain a long-term perspective. Though of course, this also means you can't access your own money to seize opportunities such as buy or start your own business, investment property, bach, and so on.

There are two primary reasons most people access their funds: buying a first home and retirement.

KiwiSaver First Home Withdrawal

If you have been a member of KiwiSaver for at least three years, you can generally withdraw almost all your balance to put toward a deposit on your first home. You must leave a minimum of \$1,000 in your account. This has become a cornerstone of the New Zealand property market, helping thousands of people bridge the gap between renting and owning.

Practically, the first home withdrawal requires coordination with your solicitor. Once you sign a sale and purchase agreement to buy a home, you must request a withdrawal pack from your KiwiSaver Scheme provider. Your lawyer handles the formal application, certifying the funds will go toward the home purchase. The money is then paid directly into your law firm's trust account rather than your personal bank account. This ensures the proceeds reaches the vendor (person selling the house) instead of being diverted toward a spontaneous trip to Croatia or Bali! To avoid unnecessary stress, you should initiate this process at least ten working days before settlement.

There is also a First Home Grant available through Kainga Ora for those who meet certain income and house-price criteria. This is separate from your KiwiSaver withdrawal but often goes hand-in-hand with it. Using KiwiSaver for a home deposit is a significant decision, as it resets your retirement savings to nearly zero. However, for many, the security of home ownership is a vital part of their overall financial well-being.



KiwiSaver Retirement Withdrawal

The primary purpose of KiwiSaver is to provide retirement savings for New Zealanders. Once you reach the age of 65, the funds are "unlocked." You can choose to withdraw the entire amount as a lump sum, set up a regular withdrawal (like a private pension) such as a monthly sum, or leave it exactly where it is to keep growing.

Accessing your funds at 65 is a straightforward administrative exercise. Upon reaching the qualifying age, you must contact your provider to complete an initial retirement withdrawal form. This process involves providing certified identification and a statutory declaration witnessed by a Justice of the Peace or solicitor. Unlike the first home process, the money lands directly in your personal bank account. This allows for a seamless transition into your golden years.



There are also significant hardship provisions and serious illness clauses that allow for early withdrawal, but these are intentionally difficult to access. The bar is high because the system is designed to protect you from your future self.

How Switches Between KiwiSaver Schemes Work

You can only be a member of one KiwiSaver at a time, and with over 30 scheme providers, there's plenty to choose from.

Moving your money between providers is remarkably simple because the new provider does the heavy lifting. Once you select a new scheme, you apply directly with them. Usually this can occur online. That's all you need to do. The KiwiSaver Scheme provider you have applied to then contact your old provider and the IRD to coordinate the transfer of your entire balance. You do not need to "break up" with your old provider or even speak to them; your new partner handles the paperwork, and the assets move behind the scenes within about ten working days. It is one of the few areas of life where ghosting is not only acceptable but standard professional practice.

The Bottom Line: How KiwiSaver Really Works

KiwiSaver works by automating the discipline that most humans lack. It creates a partnership between you, your employer, and the government to ensure time and compounding interest can do the heavy lifting. It is a robust, safe, and tax-efficient way to build a future that is not entirely dependent on a state pension ("NZ Superannuation"). The government has provided the framework. Your employer provides the fuel. The markets provide the opportunity. The only missing piece of the puzzle is your own proactive management.

By understanding the contributions, the investment engine, the tax obligations, and the rules of access, you move from being a spectator to being the captain of your own ship. Financial literacy is not about knowing every complex jargon-filled term in the industry; it is about understanding the fundamental principles that move the needle. If you are ready to take a more active role in managing your KiwiSaver or if you want to ensure your current trajectory is aligned with where you want to go, the team at Become Wealth is here to help. We provide the expertise and the objective oversight necessary to turn a generic savings scheme into a personalised wealth engine.

Reach out today to book a complimentary consult to explore how you can optimise your KiwiSaver to take you to the next financial level.

The information contained in this publication is general in nature and is not intended to be financial advice that is specific to your personal circumstances. Before making any financial decisions, you should consult a professional financial adviser.

Nothing in this publication is, or should be taken as, an offer, invitation or recommendation to buy, sell or retain a regulated financial product. No responsibility is accepted for any loss caused as a result of any person relying on any information in this publication. This publication is for the use of persons in New Zealand only.

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How to get hold of us

Please get in contact with us with any questions about your financial needs. Feel free to call us on **0508 BECOME (0508 232 663)** or email hello@become.nz. There are no costs involved until an adviser has established your specific needs.

VETERANS' AFFAIRS NEW ZEALAND

Veterans' Affairs represent and serve those who have fought in our country's best interests and who make sacrifices, even today, to ensure New Zealand remains a free and safe country. There are over 31,000 New Zealand veterans, with diverse backgrounds that range in age from 19 to more than a hundred years old. Their veterans include current NZ Defence Force personnel, those who have left the Defence Force and work in civilian roles, and retired ex-service personnel.

Veterans' Affairs are focused on providing excellent personal support for veterans and their families. They also partner with the broader NZ Defence Force and with other government and non-government agencies to facilitate their support.

Veterans' Affairs support those with Qualifying Service to be well at home, at work, and in their communities. The Veterans' Support Act 2014 defines what support can be provided to those with Qualifying Service and their families and whānau.

Check your eligibility now



You may be eligible for support from Veterans' Affairs.

The easiest way to check is online at

www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/eligibility

It only takes a few minutes to check.

We don't collect any information
or check any HR records.

Or contact us at:

0800 483 8372 (Freephone NZ)

veteransaffairs.mil.nz/contact-us

veterans@nzdf.mil.nz

And stay in touch with us at:

veteransaffairs.mil.nz/newsletter

facebook.com/NZVeteransAffairs

veteransaffairs.mil.nz/eligibility



LOOKING BACK

Over the years, and over many deployment rotations, we have collected some amazing photographs. Rather than just storing them in our archives, we enjoy sharing some of these incredible images with our readers.

These images are from the Operation Antarctica 2021



World Cancer Day

Wednesday 4 February 2025

United in our goals, unique in our needs. That is the World Cancer Day credo that will be heard around the world in the lead up to and on 4 February 2025. Its meaning is simple: **everyone has unique needs, unique perspectives, and a unique story to tell**, yet people touched by cancer **are united in a shared ambition** to lower the cancer burden, to see cancer treated successfully, and to lead better lives with cancer.

Every experience with cancer is **unique** and it will take all of us, **united**, to create a world where we look beyond the disease and see the person before the patient. A world where the needs of people and communities are at the centre of health systems.

People-centred care accepts everyone for who they are, and it aims to deepen the connection not only between healthcare providers and patients but with whole communities. That's why World Cancer Day counts on everyone – patients, loved ones, caregivers, friends, neighbours, practitioners, researchers, advocates, allies – to play an important role in the campaign.

The campaign will explore different dimensions of people-centred cancer care and **new ways of making a difference**. It will offer a three-year journey from raising awareness to taking action.

Source: uicc.org

Random Acts of Kindness Day

Tuesday 17 February 2026

Random Acts of Kindness Day is a day to celebrate and encourage random acts of kindness. The general "Kindness Week" it is attached to takes place from 14–20 February.

Random Acts of Kindness Day is a yearly event dedicated to promoting a kinder world, serving as a great reminder that even small but intentional acts of goodness can have a profound impact not only on individuals but even communities. The concept revolves around the idea of spontaneous gestures, meaning people go out of their way to do thoughtful deeds for others without expecting anything in return.

On this day, people are encouraged to embrace the spirit of generosity, compassion, and empathy. The random acts of kindness celebrated, encouraged, and performed on this day can range from simple, everyday gestures like holding the door open for someone or complimenting a stranger to more elaborate efforts such as volunteering, helping neighbors, or contributing to charitable causes. Nowadays, social media often plays a significant role in spreading awareness and inspiring a ripple effect of kindness (where people "pay it forward") with people sharing their experiences and encouraging others to participate. The day then serves as a catalyst for fostering positive connections, building a sense of community, and creating a world where kindness becomes a norm.

Source: www.twinkl.co.nz



Forces In the Park Concert 2026

Great day out with family & friends.

**Date: 14 February 2026 | Davis Field
(Opposite Trentham Camp)**

Time: 4 – 8 pm (gates open at 3 pm)

**Great Music | Fun for the kids |
Food Trucks | WASC Bar**

**Wristband collection: DSSG Trentham
Trentham Camp Library
Linley Williams – Air Staff, Lvl 3, Wgtn**

Koha on the day will gladly be accepted at the gates.



Email: EVENTS.TRENTHAM@NZDF.MIL.NZ

**A FORCE FOR
NEW ZEALAND**

PERSONAL MESSAGES

The deadline for contributions and personal messages for The Bugle is the last Friday of each month.

The next edition deadline is **23 February 2026 at 4.00pm.**

Please email your DSOs: community.deployment@nzdf.mil.nz.



From In-Theatre

Dear Ip,

All my love on Valentine's Day.
Thanks for thoughtful 📺📺 gift.

Looking forward to see you and the kids soon.

From Home

Happy Valentine's Day Mauni and Happy 9th wedding anniversary! I love and miss you very much, and though we are apart for our special day you're always on my mind 📺📺 I can't wait to see you soon!

Your girls are here forever supporting and loving you. We are all so proud of you and everything you do. Keep your head up and that smile on your face!

Love from all your monkey butts!

"Happy Valentine's Day, Lee.
Love you always and miss you every day. See you soon! LM."

Happy Valentines Day to beautiful wife and daughters. I will make it up to you when I get home.
Love to you all J

Hi Mum

It was so amazing to see you again over Christmas after 5 months away.
You made Christmas feel special because our family was complete again. We all miss you so much and wish you the best in your deployment and travel.
Love you –Maddy

Happy Valentines Day Big Ted

I am missing you very much, seems like all our special days are apart since you have been gone. Looking forward to you getting home so we can celebrate them all .

Love you to the moon and back



Love is something eternal; the aspect may change, but not the essence.
Vincent Van Gogh

Love doesn't make the world go 'round. Love is what makes the ride worthwhile.
Franklin P Jones

Wishing you all a Happy Valentines Day!

Join us for Dinner in Burnham

No cooking or doing dishes—just good food and great company!

Bring your Family and/or a Friend

Sunday 1 March 2026

BURNHAM:

TIME:

5.00pm

VENUE:

Burnham Community Centre

RSVPs TO:

Nicky Ruki: 0800 337 569 or 027 449 7565
Email: nicola.ruki2@nzdf.mil.nz

Please RSVP to Nicky (Burnham) by **Monday 23 February**
so catering numbers can be confirmed with our respective Messes.

Families within Burnham/Christchurch areas should also have received an email.

A Miraculous Valentine's Story

By Beverly McNeff

It was Valentine's Day, and Joey was busy making Valentines for everyone in his class. His mother was happy to see her little boy so joyful, but she was worried that the other children would not remember to give a Valentine to Joey. You see, Joey was a little slower than the rest of the kids. He was often forgotten and not given much value by them, but that did not seem to stop him from getting into the spirit of Valentine's Day. Joey was determined not to forget even one child.

Valentine's Day arrived, and his mother waited worriedly as the time neared when Joey would be coming home. To lessen his disappointment, if no one had given him a Valentine, she had baked his favourite cookies.

Looking out the window with her cookies in hand, she saw Joey turn the corner. He was saying something to himself, but she could not make it out. As he got closer, she could see that he had a smile on his face. As he walked into the kitchen, she heard him say with glee, "I didn't miss a one, Mom, I didn't miss a one!"

She then realized that he didn't have any Valentines in his hands. None had been given him. His joy was not in *receiving* a Valentine, it was in *giving them away*. Joey had made sure that every child was remembered. He didn't "miss a one." That was what brought him joy.



FUN IN THE SUN

Calling all artists, young and young-at-heart!

Colour in the picture below, add your name at the bottom, and take a photo once it's finished. Send it through to me by email and I'll include it in the next edition of the *Bugle* — a small way to bring some colour and smiles to our deployed personnel.

