

OIA-2019-3698

16 February 2020

Kim Masters

fyi-request-11762-95219e48@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Kim

I refer to your request of 30 November 2019, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), regarding the integration of women into the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF):

In 2000, the removal of any remaining restrictions on women serving in combat was ordered across the NZDF by Defence Force Order (DFO) 05/2000. A copy of this DFO is enclosed for your information. The **Human Rights (Women in Armed Forces) Amendment Act 2007** then removed the provision that had allowed for the restriction of women's involvement in front line and combat roles, establishing a basis in law for the full participation of women in the activities of the NZDF as ordered in DFO 05/2000, and as was already occurring in practice.

More information regarding the history of women serving in the NZDF is available from the Service Museum websites.¹

Regarding the New Zealand Special Air Service (NZSAS) in particular, there is no *Commando* regiment. *Commando* is a trade within 1 NZSAS Regiment.² Since 2003, two women have applied and been accepted for NZSAS selection on three occasions (one of them made two separate attempts). One applicant sought selection for the *Commando* trade. These selection attempts were unsuccessful.

You have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to ask an Ombudsman to review this response to your request.

Yours sincerely



A.J. WOODS
Air Commodore
Chief of Staff HQNZDF

Enclosure:

1. DFO 05/2000 – Employment of Women in the Armed Forces

¹ <http://navymuseum.co.nz/women-in-the-rnzn/>
<http://navymuseum.co.nz/timeline-of-women-in-the-rnzn/>
<http://navymuseum.co.nz/changes-to-defence-policy-regarding-employment-of-women/>
<https://www.airforcemuseum.co.nz/whats-on/wahine-toa-women-in-defence/>

² www.nzdf.mil.nz/about-us/nzsof/dsqn.htm