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OIA-2022-4366

 May 2022

Valerie Morse
fyi-request-19083-67dd2e0b@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Valerie Morse

I refer to your request of 7 April 2022, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), for the following:

Please provide all information relating to NZDF participation in RIMPAC 2022.

Planning towards New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) participation in RIMPAC (the Rim of the Pacific Exercise) has been underway for at least 12 months, and involved many areas of the NZDF. As such it is not possible to identify, gather and review all material relevant to your request within a reasonable timeframe, or without an unreasonable impact to the regular operations of the NZDF. As it stands, your request is therefore declined in accordance with section 18(f) of the OIA. In the past you have submitted requests for particular information regarding the RIMPAC exercises. If you are able to refine your request in a way that will allow for a more targeted search, it will be reconsidered in that light.

The following information may assist:

RIMPAC is a biennial multi-national combined exercise, hosted by the United States Indo-Pacific Command, focused on all aspects of maritime based warfare disciplines. RIMPAC is tailored to meet the requirements of each participating country, resulting in a diverse and changing programme to achieve individual nation, force element and/or unit aims and objectives.

The exercise design for RIMPAC 22 is to conduct high-end joint warfighting operations in a predominantly maritime coalition environment, including amphibious operations. Outcomes will be achieved by deploying a combination of maritime assets and headquarters elements, targeting training and coalition interoperability opportunities. RIMPAC 22 will be conducted predominantly out of Joint Base Pearl Harbour – Hickam, Honolulu, Hawaii, with a maritime component based out of San Diego, California, and will involve in excess of 32,000 participants.

The NZDF participates in all of the multi-national planning conferences in the preparation of the RIMPAC exercises in order to ensure that force elements and personnel are placed in positions of greatest operational and strategic benefit to New Zealand, and derive the appropriate training from such a large scale exercise. There are two major conferences that senior leadership participate in prior to Exercise RIMPAC execution. These are the Commanders Conference and STAFFEX, both of which have already been completed in

advance of RIMPAC 22. These conferences ensure that senior leaders from different nations understand concepts, processes and scenarios, and that safety is adhered to at all times. The NZDF was represented by 3 staff members at the Commanders Conference, and 6 at the STAFFEX.

Further details are available at:

- www.defensenews.com
- www.navy.mil
- www.timesofsandiego.com

There are 30 Nations participating in RIMPAC 22 with personnel and platforms. Exercise RIMPAC 22 is being conducted from 29 June to 4 August 2022 in two phases:

- 29 June – 10 July 2022, Harbour phase – Safety and Scenario briefings.
- 10 July - 4 August 2022, Sea phase – Exercise execution.

New Zealand's participation is of regional strategic importance and provides many opportunities for developing NZDF operational readiness.

New Zealand's contribution to RIMPAC 22 will come from all three Services and will include the replenishment ship HMNZS Aotearoa, personnel from the Littoral Warfare Force at HMNZS Matataua, personnel from 16 Field Regiment, and other personnel from different elements of the NZDF.

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

Yours sincerely



AJ WOODS
Air Commodore
Chief of Staff HQNZDF