

26 March 2026

Ref: OIA 26006

Stephen Jones

fyi-request-33541-0f4ed67a@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Stephen

I refer to your request for official information received on 18 January 2026 for information held by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) relating to environmental monitoring, chemical oversight, or regulatory interactions involving Defence-related facilities or contractors.

On 10 February 2026, you refined your request to:

“I am willing to refine the request in order to assist the EPA to respond, while preserving the underlying purpose of the inquiry, which is to understand what environmental monitoring, chemical oversight, or regulatory interaction (if any) the EPA has had in relation to Defence facilities or Defence-contracted activities.

To assist, I propose the following clarification and refinement.

Scope refinement (by function rather than incident):

Rather than seeking all potentially relevant material across the organisation, the request can be treated as limited to information held by the EPA in connection with its statutory functions, including but not limited to:

- HSNO approvals, reassessments, compliance, enforcement, or monitoring;
- hazardous substance or chemical regulation relevant to Defence estates or Defence contractors;
- incident notifications, complaints, or regulatory interactions where Defence facilities or Defence-contracted activities were the subject.

Timeframe refinement (segmented rather than truncated):

If helpful for manageability, the request can be processed in stages, for example:

- 2010–2025 as a primary period; and
- earlier material (2000–2009) limited to any high-level records, incident notifications, or approvals of ongoing relevance”.

On 12 February 2026 we extended the timeframe for deciding on your request until 27 March 2026 because your request is for a large quantity of information.

Under section 3(2) of the [Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996](#) (HSNO Act) the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) is not directly subject to the HSNO Act. That is, it does not apply to any hazardous substance controlled by the Minister of Defence.

While there are some caveats to this under sections 3(3) to 3(8) of the HSNO Act, the EPA does not have a regulatory role in the NZDF’s compliance with the HSNO legislation.

However, the EPA does hold some information in scope of your request. The following information is being provided to you in summary form under [section 16\(1\)\(e\)](#) of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

1. HSNO Act

Under the HSNO Act any transshipment of goods that either does not have an approval or cannot comply with the relevant approval while transshipping in New Zealand, must get a transshipment approval. Under this approval, the material must be exported out of New Zealand within 20 working days of importing it.

As with most ships, while it is in New Zealand, some goods are removed. The NZDF has noted in seven applications since 2018, as having goods on board a ship that is transshipping goods that require a transshipment approval within New Zealand.

2. IERA (Imports and Exports (Restrictions) Act 1988)

New Zealand is Party to the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, implemented domestically through the Imports and Exports (Restrictions) Prohibition Order No2 2004 (IERPO). These agreements were put in place to manage shipments of hazardous waste to prevent harm to human health and the environment across the world. To export some types of waste out of New Zealand, you need a permit.

In 2017/18, Ace Ship Recycling Private Limited applied to export the ex-HMNZS Endeavour to India, having bought the ship from the NZDF, for ship-breaking and recycling under IERPO due to the hazardous nature of certain ship components and contents. The NZDF signed the application as contacts.

3. OLPA (Ozone Layer Protection Act 1996)

New Zealand is Party to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, implemented domestically through Ozone Layer Protection Act 1996 (OLPA).

The NZDF regularly applies for import exemptions under OLPA to import bromotrifluoromethane (halon 1301) and bromochlorodifluoromethane (halon 1211) in fire extinguishers necessary for human health or safety.

Since 2011, we have received 17 of these applications (references beginning with OLPAI) and the information provided below can also be found in the OLPA Parliamentary reports, on the Parliament website.

The NZDF has also applied for one export application (OLPAE-0000079), in 2018, to export bulk halon 1301 contained within the ex-HMNZS Endeavour (see the application under IERA above).

Information on these applications is provided in Appendix A

Our records show there have been two instances of unintentional Halon release by the NZDF, which they alerted the EPA to. This happened in Canada in 2019 and 2021 during maintenance activities being undertaken by a NZDF navy ship. In both cases, the EPA determined no non-compliance had occurred and the cases were closed.

4. PFAS (per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances)

You may also be interested in this information from the Ministry for the Environment's website, which provides updates on per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS):

<https://environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/areas-of-work/land/per-and-poly-fluoroalkyl-substances-pfas/latest-updates-on-pfas/>

The All of Government PFAS Programme was convened after PFAS contamination was found at some Defence facilities around the country. NZDF were responsible for the environmental investigations, and all the reports are available on the Ministry's website as they led the All of Government group.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision under section 28(3) of the OIA. You can contact the Ombudsman on 0800 802 602, or by email at info@ombudsman.parliament.nz

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us via ministerials@epa.govt.nz

We may publish your request and our response on our website, www.epa.govt.nz. We make OIA responses available so others can read more about the work we do and the questions we are asked. Any information that might identify you will be removed to protect your privacy.

Nāku noa nā



Dr Lauren Fleury

Manager Hazardous Substances Applications

Appendix A: NZDF applications under OLPA (Ozone Layer Protection Act 1996)

Reference number	Year	Substance	Quantity (MT)	Notes
OLPAE-0000079	2018	Bromotrifluoromethane	1.1125	Export on the ex-HMNZS Endeavour
OLPAI-0000002	2011	Bromotrifluoromethane	1.64	First one since the EPA took over OLPA Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.2830	
OLPAI-0000005	2012	Likely to be the same as OLPAI-2 but the records are not retrievable.		Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
OLPAI-0000038	2013	Bromotrifluoromethane	1.64	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.2830	
OLPAI-0000071	2014	Bromotrifluoromethane	1.645	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.2830	
OLPAI-0000095	2014	Bromotrifluoromethane	4.5610	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.3270	
OLPAI-0000124	2016	Bromotrifluoromethane	0.05	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.05	
OLPAI-0000148	2017	Bromotrifluoromethane	0.05	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.05	
OLPAI-0000150	2017	Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.0950	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
OLPAI-0000174	2018	Bromotrifluoromethane	0.05	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.05	
OLPAI-0000206	2019	Bromotrifluoromethane	0.05	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.05	
OLPAI-0000245	2020	Bromotrifluoromethane	0.05	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.05	
OLPAI-0000281	2021	Bromotrifluoromethane	0.05	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.05	

OLPAI-0000311	2022	Bromotrifluoromethane	0.05	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.05	
OLPAI-0000331	2023	Bromotrifluoromethane	0.05	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.05	
OLPAI-0000358	2024	Bromotrifluoromethane	0.05	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.05	
OLPAI-0000377	2024	Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.3250	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
OLPAI-0000393	2025	Bromotrifluoromethane	0.05	Necessary Aerosol/Extinguisher
		Bromochlorodifluoromethane	0.05	