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*7th*  
April 2026

OIA-2026-5701

Spencer Jones

[fyi-request-33989-ff80408b@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-33989-ff80408b@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Spencer Jones

I refer to your request of 7 March 2026, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), seeking the following information relating to the existence of a national register of those who meet the definition of 'veteran' under the Veterans' Support Act 2014:

1. *Confirmation of whether Veterans' Affairs New Zealand maintains, administers, or has access to any national register, database, or dataset identifying individuals who meet the definition of "veteran" under the Veterans' Support Act 2014.*
2. *If such a register or dataset exists, please provide:*
  - a. *The name of the system or dataset.*
  - b. *The agency responsible for maintaining it.*
  - c. *A description of the data fields recorded (for example: service history, deployment status, operational service classification, entitlement status, or exposure indicators).*
  - d. *The approximate number of individuals recorded in the dataset.*
  - e. *Whether the dataset is linked to any other government systems, including but not limited to the National Health Index, Integrated Data Infrastructure, or other cross-agency administrative datasets.*

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), and Veterans' Affairs (VA) as a business unit of the NZDF, hold records on serving and former personnel, and veterans and other claimants who have registered with VA or have received support. There have been recent efforts to improve the quality of data in this area with regard to qualifying operational service (QOS) specifically. Currently, for example, when a service person leaves the NZDF and they have attained QOS, this information is passed on to VA.

However, there is no single register or other dataset that authoritatively or comprehensively identifies all individuals who meet the definition of veteran under the Veterans' Support Act 2014 (that is those who have qualifying service<sup>1</sup>).

3. *Any policy papers, briefings, internal reviews, or advice to Ministers that discuss the creation, maintenance, or absence of a national veteran population register.*
4. *Any reports, briefings, or analyses estimating the total number of individuals who meet the definition of "veteran" under the Veterans' Support Act 2014.*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/eligibility/qualifying-service/>

The limitations on the data available about the veteran population is not a recent issue – this was recognised both within the recommendations of the Paterson report, and is reflected within Te Arataki, which I have referred you to previously. Because of this, much of the advice and information prepared over VA's history regarding this population as a whole has reflected both the absence of a more complete set of data, and consequently includes an estimated population.

While there are no *policy papers, briefings, internal reviews, or advice* specific to a *national veteran population register*, recent briefing information on related topics is being considered for release to you. Consultations remain ongoing and a decision will be provided to you no later than 6 May 2026.

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](http://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.

Yours sincerely

**GA Motley**  
Brigadier  
Chief of Staff HQNZDF