



17 April 2026

Ref: OIA-2025/26-0595

Spencer Jones
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Tēnā koe Spencer,

Official Information Act request: Information about Cabinet documents relating to the Veterans' Advisory Board Advice

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, which was received by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) on 18 March 2026. You requested:

“Please provide the following:

1. Cabinet Committee Papers

A list (index) of Cabinet Committee papers from 1 January 2015 to present that:

- relate to veterans' policy, services, or entitlements; and/or*
- reference, incorporate, or are informed by advice from the Veterans' Advisory Board (VAB), whether explicitly or implicitly.*

For each item, please include:

- title*
- date*
- Cabinet Committee name (e.g. SWC, DEV, etc.)*
- reference number (if available)*
- originating agency*

2. Cabinet Minute Summaries

A list or summaries of Cabinet or Cabinet Committee minutes over the same period that:

- record discussion or decisions relating to veterans' matters; and/or*
- note advice, input, or recommendations originating from the VAB.*

Where full minutes cannot be released, metadata or summary-level descriptions are sufficient.

3. Drafting Agency Inputs

Information describing which agencies contributed to the drafting of Cabinet papers relating to veterans' matters, including:

- NZDF / Veterans' Affairs*
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)*
- Ministry of Health / Te Whatu Ora (if applicable)*
- any other contributing agencies*

If available, please provide:

- drafting responsibility allocations*
- consultation or clearance processes*
- inter-agency correspondence logs (metadata only is sufficient)*

4. Record-Keeping and Search Methodology

Please describe:

- *the systems used to store and retrieve Cabinet papers and associated records*
- *whether VAB advice is tagged, indexed, or otherwise identifiable within those systems*
- *the search terms or methodology used to respond to this request*

5. Transfers (if applicable)

If any part of this request is more appropriately held by another agency (e.g. NZDF or Veterans' Affairs), please transfer under section 14 of the OIA and advise accordingly.

Clarification:

For the purposes of this request, "reference to VAB advice" includes:

- *explicit mention of the Veterans' Advisory Board*
- *incorporation of recommendations originating from the VAB*
- *policy development informed by VAB advice, even where not explicitly cited*

This request is intended to understand how advisory input from the VAB is reflected within Cabinet-level decision-making processes, and how such information is recorded and traceable."

On 31 March 2026, we advised you that parts 1, 2 and 3 of your request had been transferred to the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF). This response covers the part of your request which relates to the storage and retrieval of Cabinet documents.

System used to store and retrieve Cabinet papers and associated records

Cabinet and Cabinet Committee papers from before 10 August 2015 are stored in hardcopy by the Cabinet Office or in the Archives New Zealand repositories. Archives New Zealand has a Government Loans process for requesting records lodged with them by the Cabinet Office.

Cabinet and Cabinet Committee papers that were produced from 10 August 2015 onward are stored on CabNet, a secure electronic platform for supporting Cabinet and Cabinet committee processes. It is used by government agencies and Ministers' offices and maintained by the Cabinet Office.

Whether VAB advice is tagged, indexed, or otherwise identifiable within those systems

Veterans' Advisory Board (VAB) advice is not specifically tagged or indexed within the Cabinet Office systems described above.

For Cabinet and Cabinet Committee papers produced prior to 10 August 2015, a paper that explicitly mentions the Veterans' Advisory Board in its title would be identifiable from a search of our registers. For Cabinet and Cabinet Committee papers produced since 10 August 2015, explicit references to "Veterans' Advisory Board" are searchable in CabNet.

These searches of Cabinet Office registers and CabNet would only identify Cabinet and Cabinet Committee papers that refer to the Veterans' Advisory Board. It would not necessarily be indicative of whether Veterans' Advisory Board advice was an input to these papers.

The search terms or methodology used to respond to this request

In relation to the final part of your request, concerning the search terms or methodology used, we have interpreted this as applying to parts 1, 2 and 3 of your request, which have

been transferred to NZDF. For completeness I note that the search term “Veterans’ Advisory Board” was used in a CabNet search in preparing this response.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on DPMC’s website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rg Hayward". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet