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OIA-2026-5735

22nd April 2026

Mr Richards

fyi-request-34315-b72305ef@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Richards

I refer to your email of 31 March 2026 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), ...*the following information:*

- *All documents, minutes, briefings, emails, risk assessments, decision records, or other material created or considered as part of this further review, including any assessment of how the 11 March 2026 Immunisation Handbook changes (particularly the risk-stratified approach and reduced routine recommendation for additional doses in healthy adults aged 30–64) apply to NZDF serving members and recruits.*
- *The current exact text of Defence Health Rule 31 (post-4 February 2026) and the full Vaccination Treatment Protocols version 5.00 (re-issued 4 February 2026).*
- *The timeline for the further review, including any expected completion date, interim findings, or next steps.*
- *Any NZDF-specific analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 baseline requirement on recruitment, retention, or operational readiness, undertaken in light of the 11 March 2026 Handbook update.*
- *Any documents relating to consideration of reinstatement or re-enlistment pathways for the personnel previously discharged for non-compliance with the COVID-19 vaccination requirement (~164 as previously referenced), in the context of the further review.*

The outcome of the annual review of the Vaccination Treatment Protocols (VTP) was issued on 4 February 2026, as per the Medicines (Standing Orders) Regulations (v5.00). The VTP were reissued on 25 March 2026 as Version 5.01 (enclosed). The reissued protocols included an update to the new Comirnaty vaccine (page 14). The COVID vaccination requirement has been retained on Baseline and Enhanced programmes.

VTP Version 5.01 states:

- (1) A primary course of an MoH/NZDF-recognised COVID-19 vaccine is to be completed for all relevant personnel.

- (2) Booster doses are available to relevant personnel and are included in the Enhanced Programme at recommended intervals as reflected in the current VTP. Booster doses may also be a requirement for particular activities.

Minutes of the meeting of the Treatment Protocol Portfolio Management Group held on 17 March 2026 have not yet been created and cannot be provided at this time. With respect to a further review, no documentation or timeline are available.

The NZDF has not undertaken any analysis of *the impact of the COVID-19 baseline requirement on recruitment, retention, or operational readiness* in light of the 11 March 2026 Handbook update. This part of your request is therefore refused in accordance with section 18(e) of the OIA.

As advised previously, the NZDF does not have a current or planned pathway for reinstatement or re-enlistment of previous military personnel that is separate to the normal re-enlistment process through NZDF Defence Recruiting. Any applications for enlistment or re-enlistment to the NZDF are considered on an individual basis and assessed on the information provided by the candidate during the application process.

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 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

Enclosure:

1. Vaccination Treatment Protocols Version 5.01