



Headquarters  
New Zealand Defence Force  
Defence House  
Private Bag 39997  
Wellington Mail Centre  
Lower Hutt 5045  
New Zealand

OIA-2023-4836

27 October 2023

[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

I refer to your email of 28 September 2023 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), the following:

- What explosive ordnance disposal capabilities were provided by NZDF to assist with the 2022 parliament protests?
- How many members of NZSAS E Squadron attended and what role did they play in the protests?
- When did E Squadron first attend, and when did they leave the protests?
- Were any explosives detected, made safe or otherwise disposed of? If so, what objects were discovered and how?
- Were any NZDF intelligence elements used in support of E Squadron's deployment to the protests?
- What other units of the NZDF, if any, are trained in EOD?
- Has any capability from E-Squadron (or other NZDF elements for that matter) been deployed to assist with protests planned for September 27 2023 at Parliament grounds?
- Was there any specific intelligence which spurred the deployment of E Squadron? If so, please provide a summary of it and indicate though what method it was gained / verified (i.e., OSINT, HUMINT, intercepted signals etc)

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) maintains an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) capability across New Zealand. E squadron was established to provide a chemical, biological, radiological and explosive capability as part of the whole-of-government response to domestic explosive disposal incidents, and has been fully operational since 2005. EOD capability is based in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. The New Zealand Army, the Royal New Zealand Air Force and the Royal New Zealand Navy also maintain EOD capability for conventional munition disposal, clearance of unexploded ordnance and specialist Maritime EOD.

E Squadron personnel were onsite during the clearance of Parliament grounds from 1-3 March to provide liaison functions and emergency response to any items presenting a hazard to New Zealand Police or protesters. They remained onsite until the Parliament grounds had been tidied up to ensure an immediate response could be provided. Three improvised incendiary devices were disposed of on 2 March. Information regarding the

construction, viability, and detection of these devices is withheld in accordance with sections 6(a) and 6(d) of the OIA. This is to avoid prejudice to the security and defence of New Zealand and the safety of any person respectively.

The NZDF did not deploy EOD personnel in support of the NZ Police for the Parliament protest in September 2023.

*Please provide copies of the following documents:*

*-An organisational chart for NZSAS showing where E Squadron fits in.*

*-Copies of any written reports filed by E Squadron or their commanding elements in relation to their deployment at the parliament protest.*

An organisational chart for the 1<sup>st</sup> New Zealand Special Air Service Regiment is not publicly available and is withheld in accordance with section 6(a) of the OIA.

Copies of post activity reports produced as a result of the support provided to the NZ Police are withheld in full as they provide details and learnings concerning the deployment, and the tactics and capability of E Squadron. This is in accordance with sections 6(a) and 6(d) of the OIA as explained above.

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, with your personal information removed.

Yours sincerely

**AJ WOODS**

Air Commodore

Chief of Staff HQNZDF