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New Zealand Defence Force  
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New Zealand

OIA-2023-4837

3 | October 2023

N. S. Hudson

[fyi-request-24315-0481256d@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-24315-0481256d@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear N. S. Hudson

I refer to your email of 3 October 2023 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), the following:

*Is there any documents held by the NZDF regarding:*

- i) The United States Navy Antarctic Developments Program aka Operation Highjump 1946–1947;*
- ii) Nazi German Military activity on or around Antarctica between 1935 to 1980;*
- ii) Air New Zealand Flight TE901 crash at Mt Erebus, Antarctica 28 November 1979*
- iii) Any UFO/UAP/USO activity on or around Antarctica.*

With respect to items 1, 2, and 4 of your request, the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) does not hold relevant information. As a result, these parts of your request are declined in accordance with section 18(g) of the OIA as the information you have requested is not held by the NZDF and there are no grounds to believe the information is either held by or more closely related to another department, Minister of the Crown or local authority.

With respect to the crash of Air New Zealand DC-10-30 ZK-NZP Flight TE901 on the north slope of Mount Erebus, Ross Island, Antarctica on 28 November 1979, the NZDF holds information in relation to the awarding of the New Zealand Special Service Medal Antarctica. This medal was instituted in November 2006 to recognise the service of those New Zealanders, and citizens of the United States of America and other countries, who were involved with the extremely difficult and very unpleasant, hazardous, and extreme circumstances associated with the body recovery, crash investigation and victim identification phases of the New Zealand Police Operation Overdue.

The recovery and investigation phase of Operation Overdue lasted in Antarctica from 29 November 1979 to 12 December 1979. The identification phase of the operation at the mortuary of the Auckland University School of Medicine lasted from 6 December 1979 to 12 February 1980.

If there is particular information you are seeking about the awarding of this medal, please state this and your request will be considered accordingly.

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

**AJ WOODS**

Air Commodore

Chief of Staff HQNZDF