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OIA-2023-4839

27 November 2023

[REDACTED]@stuff.co.nz

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 6 October 2023 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), *information held by NZ Defence Force with regards to the Queenstown Airport explosion investigation on October 6, 2023.*

The following information is a summary of events provided by the Team Leader of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team who responded to the emergency request.

On the morning of 6 October 2023, x-ray software at Queenstown Airport detected electrical components that indicated a possible improvised explosive device inside a suitcase that had been checked in as luggage. Aviation Security (AvSec) officers reviewed the x-ray and determined that the item required further inspection by EOD personnel.

A two-person EOD team was deployed from Christchurch by vehicle because adverse weather conditions prevented flying. The EOD team was briefed verbally on the situation as it developed while in transit. Once the weather cleared, the EOD team was met at Timaru Airport by an Otago based helicopter and flew to Queenstown Airport.

On arrival at the Queenstown Airport, the EOD team met with AvSec, Airport Management, and NZ Police responders who provided a brief on relevant details collected to that point about the suspect item, including a review of the x-ray imagery that was available. The EOD Team Leader spoke with the owner of the bag. After being provided with a description of the item from the x-ray image, the owner stated what they believed it to be: a commercial ski boot drying unit. On inspection of the item the EOD team determined that it was innocuous and posed no explosive threat.

The New Zealand Defence Force does not hold any briefing documents, photos, imagery, or recorded log of correspondence/conversations in relation to this incident. An improvised explosive device report that provides specific technical information on the actions of EOD personnel is withheld in full in accordance with sections 6(a) and 6(d) of the OIA.

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