



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

OIA-2023-4860

// December 2023



Dear 

I refer to your email to the Ministry of Defence (the Ministry) of 13 November 2023 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) the following:

For the years 1980 and 2022 (or nearest to) for comparative purposes.

- *Total number of defence personnel employed in each*
- *Major assets in those years- Navy – number of each type of substantial vessels; Air force- number of aircrafts by type. Army- significant equipment, if any.*

Your request was transferred to the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) in accordance with section 14(b)(ii) of the OIA.

The information you have requested is not readily retrievable from NZDF documents. Recent research work has generated the below table that provides the total number of enlisted Regular Force personnel, and a break down by Service, from 1998 to 2023.

Year	Regular Forces	Royal New Zealand Navy	New Zealand Army	Royal New Zealand Air Force
1998	9,526	2,104	4,431	2,991
1999	9,301	2,038	4,378	2,885
2000	9,343	1,967	4,590	2,786
2001	9,097	1,893	4,580	2,624
2002	8,739	1,918	4,597	2,224
2003	8,660	1,978	4,456	2,226
2004	8,681	1,953	4,479	2,249
2005	8,614	1,910	4,438	2,266
2006	8,949	1,998	4,563	2,388
2007	9,051	2,034	4,580	2,437
2008	9,282	2,020	4,758	2,504
2009	9,709	2,108	5,006	2,595
2010	9,673	2,161	4,905	2,607
2011	9,539	2,122	4,844	2,573
2012	8,522	1,902	4,284	2,336
2013	8,504	1,911	4,254	2,339
2014	8,841	2,047	4,405	2,389

2015	8,951	2,067	4,472	2,412
2016	9,070	2,116	4,521	2,433
2017	9,209	2,116	4,596	2,497
2018	9,354	2,127	4,673	2,554
2019	9,328	2,184	4,655	2,489
2020	9,447	2,268	4,637	2,542
2021	9,723	2,334	4,848	2,541
2022	9,215	2,219	4,519	2,477
2023	8,669	2,047	4,234	2,388

Details on current NZDF major equipment is available on the NZDF website¹. Records concerning major equipment dating back to the period of your request is publicly available via the three Service museums. You may wish to contact their respective research staff via the contact details provided on their websites². Readily retrievable information is available from digital copies of NZDF Annual Reports. The earliest of these is for the 2007/08 financial year and is publicly available on the NZDF website³.

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, with your personal information removed.

Yours sincerely

AJ WOODS

Air Commodore

Chief of Staff HQNZDF

¹ <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/our-equipment/>

² <https://navymuseum.co.nz> <https://www.armymuseum.co.nz> <https://www.airforcemuseum.co.nz>

³ <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/media-centre/search-our-libraries/documents/?search=annual+report&sort=date>