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Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 15 December 2023 to Defence Public Affairs (DPA) regarding an interview with the Chief of Air Force, Air Vice Marshal Darren Webb. On 20 December 2023, DPA confirmed with you that the below questions would be considered in accordance with the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

What have been the average serviceability rate for each type of RNZAF airframe for each year since 2017 and the total budgeted/estimated?

Serviceability is measured retrospectively; it is not a measure that is budgeted or estimated. Readily retrievable serviceability data is only available from 12 April 2019. The below table shows the serviceability rates of aircraft as a percentage of each fleet type. The fleet size includes aircraft undergoing scheduled maintenance, but does not include aircraft withdrawn from service (i.e. staged withdrawal of the C-130H and P-3K2).

	C-130H	B757	P-3K2	SH-2G(I)	A109	NH90	P-8A
12 April 2019 - 31 December 2019	38%	52%	32%	38%	49%	60%	
1 January 2020 - 31 December 2020	36%	28%	26%	30%	49%	59%	
1 January 2021- 31 December 2021	30%	37%	33%	22%	52%	54%	
1 January 2022 - 31 December 2022	40%	41%	47%	17%	62%	68%	
1 January 2023- 31 December 2023	55%	47%	68%	19%	53%	51%	63%
1 January 2024 - 25 January 2024	51%	43%		11%	45%	34%	70%

What are the average flying hours per year for each RNZAF airframe since 2017 versus the total budgeted or estimated?

Enclosure one provides the average flying hours. Aircraft flying hours are allocated by fleet, not individual airframe. The 2024 actual flying hours cover the period 1 July 2023 to 24 January 2024.

The Hercules fleet was reduced to four aircraft from February 2023 and was reduced to three aircraft from November 2023, as part of the planned transition programme to the C-130J airframes.

What is the RNZAF budget for the years 2017 to now?

This information is publicly available in the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) Annual Report. The RNZAF budget forms part of the NZDF output class appropriations. For Air Force, the output class appropriation is 'Output 3: Air Force Capabilities Prepared for Joint Operations and Other Tasks'. The below table lists the Output 3 budget for financial years 2017 to 2023.

Financial Year	Budget (\$000)
2023	961,447
2022	934,441
2021	965,764
2020	934,869
2019	857,542
2018	810,216
2017	743,953

What is the RNZAF budget forward estimates for the next years in the cycle?

The departmental annual appropriations for Output 3 as approved in the NZDF's FY 2023/24 October Baseline Update are:

Financial Year	Budget (\$000)
2024	1,066,333
2025	1,158,892

What is the split in the RNZAF budget between personnel, procurement, operations and other, in terms of actual amounts for the year and in percentage share of the total service budget?

The NZDF does not record the information as requested. The following table provides information regarding actual spend. Note, procurement costs form part of 'Operating' costs and 'Other' costs include depreciation and capital charge.

FY	Actual			% of Total Budget		
	Personnel (\$000)	Operating (\$000)	Other (\$000)	Personnel	Operating	Other
2023	306,549	288,323	348,671	32%	31%	37%
2022	285,738	244,832	387,170	31%	27%	43%
2021	282,393	249,382	376,127	30%	29%	40%
2020	282,931	236,246	408,785	30%	26%	44%
2019	263,056	225,135	371,961	31%	25%	44%
2018	257,804	201,834	351,149	32%	24%	44%
2017	236,871	176,338	334,144	32%	23%	45%

What progress is there getting the NH90 qualified on RNZN ships? Aotearoa and ambitions for frigates?

Aircrew from 3 Squadron RNZAF have been qualified and certified for NH90 helicopter operations on board HMNZS Canterbury for a number of years. The intention is for HMNZS Aotearoa to be cleared for NH90 operations in late 2024. There is no intention for NH90s to be embarked on board the ANZAC frigates.

Has the force generation period for the Seasprite frigate integration started to reconstitute the RNZN Naval Combat Force? How will this progress towards a global security deployment in 2025?

After the Frigate System Upgrade project, a First-of-Class Flight Trial was conducted in October/November 2022 to release full ANZAC Frigate/Seasprite capability. HMNZS Te Mana, with an embarked Seasprite, was deployed in 2023. The Navy Combat Force (ANZAC Frigate with embarked Seasprite) is able to deploy for any future operational deployment with full Seasprite aviation capability.

What work is being done to look at the replacement of the SeaSprite helicopters? Has the DCP delay put pressure on the fleet?

An indicative business case identifying a shortlist of possible replacement capability options was approved by Cabinet in April 2023. A request for information was issued to industry via the Government Electronic Tender Service (GETS) in April 2023 and responses were received in July 2023. This will inform future government decisions.

The timeline pursued by the maritime helicopter replacement project is unaffected by that of the NZDF Defence Capability Plan.

What work is being done to look at the replacement of the 757 fleet?

In early 2023, the Future Air Mobility Capability – Strategic Integrated Project Team was established to consider options for replacing the NZDF's strategic air transport capability, currently delivered by the Boeing 757 aircraft.

What planning is being done to study and begin to align the RNZAF towards what it will look like in 20 years?

The RNZAF is contributing to the NZDF Defence Capability Plan to assist with shaping future aerospace domain capabilities against future strategic challenges facing New Zealand.

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

Enclosure:

1. Average flying hours per year for RNZAF airframes since 2017

AVERAGE FLYING HOURS PER YEAR FOR RNZAF AIRFRAMES SINCE 2017

Fleet	Financial Year	Allocated Flying Hours	Actual Flying Hours	Tail Count
Boeing 757	2017	1,200	1,131	2
Boeing 757	2018	1,050	962	2
Boeing 757	2019	1,027	1,007	2
Boeing 757	2020	637	811	2
Boeing 757	2021	630	619	2
Boeing 757	2022	700	625	2
Boeing 757	2023	985	865	2
Boeing 757	2024	900	349	2
A109 LUH	2017	1,400	849	5
A109 LUH	2018	1,270	1,088	5
A109 LUH	2019	1,350	1,123	5
A109 LUH	2020	2,874	1,147	5
A109 LUH	2021	1,400	1,117	5
A109 LUH	2022	933	810	5
A109 LUH	2023	1,071	922	5
A109 LUH	2024	1,150	506	5
Hercules	2017	2,000	1,979	5
Hercules	2018	1,875	1,910	5
Hercules	2019	1,853	2,001	5
Hercules	2020	1,342	1,841	5
Hercules	2021	1,400	1,217	5
Hercules	2022	1,400	1,437	5
Hercules	2023	1,760	1,512	5
Hercules	2024	1,550	987	3
NH90 MUH	2017	1,850	1,239	8
NH90 MUH	2018	1,850	1,540	8
NH90 MUH	2019	2,300	1,662	8
NH90 MUH	2020	1,236	1,780	8
NH90 MUH	2021	2,100	1,697	8
NH90 MUH	2022	2,045	1,695	8
NH90 MUH	2023	2,015	1,761	8
NH90 MUH	2024	2,000	804	8
P3-K Orion	2017	2,000	1,991	6
P3-K Orion	2018	1,950	1,929	6
P3-K Orion	2019	1,850	1,946	6
P3-K Orion	2020	1,075	1,681	6
P3-K Orion	2021	1,200	1,399	6
P3-K Orion	2022	1,203	1,189	6
P3-K Orion	2023	800	614	3
Boeing P-8A Poseidon	2023	389	354	4

Fleet	Financial Year	Allocated Flying Hours	Actual Flying Hours	Tail Count
Boeing P-8A Poseidon	2024	1,170	551	4
Super Seasprite	2017	1,400	1,031	8
Super Seasprite	2018	1,250	1,103	8
Super Seasprite	2019	1,071	1,114	8
Super Seasprite	2020	696	1,011	8
Super Seasprite	2021	1,165	897	8
Super Seasprite	2022	1,069	809	8
Super Seasprite	2023	969	673	8
Super Seasprite	2024	850	429	8