



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

OIA-2024-4991

16 May 2024

[stuff.co.nz](#)

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 16 April 2024 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA),
How many requests for leave to Hong Kong has the NZDF received since July 2020? How many of them were declined? Did the policy change after the city introduced new security laws in July 2020 and April 2024? Does the policy also apply to reserves? What is the phone policy for staff visiting Hong Kong? Are they allowed to take their phones and if not, why not?

Outside of deployments, New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel of the Regular Force, and commissioned officers of the Reserve Force intending to travel internationally are required to seek approval through their chain of command. Approval for such travel is based on various factors, including but not limited to: the reason for travel, travel advisories and the security situation at the destination. Enlisted personnel of the Reserve Force are only subject to this requirement while on duty; any NZDF policy does not apply to them when conducting personal travel.

NZDF travel policy has not changed as a result of changes to security laws enacted by Hong Kong.

Although not mandatory, all NZDF personnel intending to travel internationally are advised not to take NZDF devices, and to delete all non-essential data from personal devices.

Information about who has disclosed any travel to Hong Kong is not centrally recorded by the NZDF. A substantial search of thousands of individual service personnel records would be required to locate it. This part of your request is therefore declined in accordance with section 18(f) 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 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