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OIA-2024-5182

22<sup>nd</sup>  
November 2024

RC

[fyi-request-28941-52556449@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-28941-52556449@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear RC

I refer to your email of 27 October 2024 to the Ministry of Defence requesting information on the hydrophones on Great Barrier Island used by the Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN). Your request was transferred to the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) in accordance with section 14(b)(i) of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). This response addresses information held by the NZDF.

1) *How extensive is New Zealand's hydrophone monitoring system?*

The current noise range configuration on Great Barrier Island was installed in 1988. The range consists of three hydrophones located in a small area on the east coast. The area is gazetted on Chart NZ 522 and RNZN FC01, with monitoring equipment located in a facility overlooking the range area. The noise range facility is operated by the RNZN for vessel analysis.

2) *Is the data recorded, especially historical data stretching back to the implementation of these systems?*

The NZDF holds some historical noise ranging data, and data for existing commissioned ships. Data that is not required is destroyed.

3) *Has the Navy or the MOD conducted any assessments as to the feasibility of publishing this data or making it available to vetted researchers within New Zealand?*

4) *What is the MOD's position on making this data public or accessible to researchers?*

Noise ranging data collected by the RNZN has been considered for release and is withheld in full in accordance with section 6(a) of the OIA to avoid prejudice to the security and defence of 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](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

**GA Motley**  
Brigadier  
Chief of Staff HQNZDF