



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

OIA-2024-5180

3rd
December 2024

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 17 October 2024 to the Ministry of Defence requesting information regarding HMNZS Lachlan. Your request was transferred to the New Zealand defence Force (NZDF) for response in accordance with the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

I am seeking information re HMNZS Lachlans mission to intercept radio activity on Mururoa 1973 prior to Canterbury and Otago sailing. I believe it was a secret mission called by Norman Kirk and query why the log was kept under lock and key for so many years. From what info I have acquired there are conflicting reports as to this log can you enlighten me on this point please.

HMNZS Lachlan did not go to Mururoa Atoll in 1973. The ship undertook activities in Samoa, Tokelau and the Cook Islands in June 1973, returning to dock at Devonport Naval Base on 7 July 1973. There is no reference in files to HMNZS Lachlan being deployed to 'intercept radio activity on Mururoa 1973'. Other historical files related to HMNZS Lachlan are held by Archives New Zealand in Wellington and Auckland. These files are publically available and the reference numbers for each file are enclosed.

It would appear that many of the seamen on this voyage have passed on due to aggressive cancers and considering they were exposed to radiation in the area they showered, washed, drank the water and eat food cooked in it. I am curios to know if any links have been made due to these conditions.

Has the Ministry of Defence opened up to any claims via Veterans Affairs and if so can you outline the structure for claims.

Information and research regarding New Zealand's military veterans who may have been exposed to nuclear radiation is publicly available on the Veterans' Affairs New Zealand (VA) website¹. The website also has information about how veterans' service has been recognised and what additional support or considerations have been made available. This

¹ www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/about-veterans-affairs/our-documents-and-publications/research/research-about-new-zealands-nuclear-veterans/

information concerns Jayforce, Operation Grapple and Mururoa veterans specifically. No evidence has been produced concerning potential exposure for those aboard HMNZS Lachlan.

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

GA Motley

Brigadier

Chief of Staff HQNZDF

Enclosure:

1 Archives NZ files

Archives New Zealand files HMNZS Lachlan

Reference	Reports of Proceedings - HMNZS Lachlan
File Number	R12457649
Dates	1972 – 1975
Box number	165
Part number	5
Record number	72/3/3
Repository	Wellington

Reference	Ships - HMNZS Lachlan movements and programmes
File Number	R20195128
Dates	1970 – 1974
Box number	81
Part number	6
Position number	a
Record number	140/70/6
Repository	Auckland

Reference	Ships – HMNZS Lachlan movements and programmes
File Number	R20195126
Dates	1970 – 1974
Box number	79
Part number	1
Position number	D
Record number	140/70/6
Repository	Auckland

Reference	Operations: Movements of HMNZS Lachlan
File Number	R12456066
Dates	1969 - 1973
Box number	19
Part number	5
Record number	62/1/4
Repository	Wellington

Reference	Operations: Movements of HMNZS Lachlan
File Number	R12456067
Dates	1973- 1977
Box number	19
Part number	6
Record number	62/1/4
Repository	Wellington