

2022 **ANNUAL** REPORT

For the year ended 30 June 2022



Supporting Organisations who employ Defence Personnel



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bevan Killick". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Bevan Killick
Honorary Captain (Navy)

From the Chair

Reflecting on the past year conjures up phrases like “being nimble”, “adapting to change” and “pivoting”. As we adjusted to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were inevitable delays and rescheduling. More memorable, has been the change and evolution of ways of working which have seen us bring activities online. While there is no substitute for person to person contact, these changes often allow more people to attend events in a virtual format and reduce our carbon footprint. Content can be used for future reference and sharing on digital platforms. Another important theme has been a reset of our brand and awards to use Te Reo Māori.

Our Reserve Force service personnel continued to contribute to the national COVID-19 response. It is times like this where our Reserve capacity is essential to augment Regular Force capabilities. This is only possible through employers and families all supporting Reservist volunteers to serve.

Recruitment and retention came into sharper focus during the year. An important recruitment path for the New Zealand Defence Force is through the Cadet Forces. Cadet Forces only operate through the exceptional dedication of Cadet Force Officers. Behind them stand their equally supportive employers and families who are all essential to ensure success is achieved both in Cadet Force units and downstream in eventual recruitment into the New Zealand Defence Force.

COVID-19 has made the delivery of the world class training for Youth at Risk and young people Not in Employment, Education or Training (“NEETs”) very challenging. These programmes provide life changing pathways for our rangatahi which deliver significant societal benefits. Recent media headlines underline the societal need for programmes such as the Limited Service Volunteer (“LSV”) courses to instil discipline, good routines and aspirational opportunities to youth. Many graduates of the LSV courses find that it is precisely the circuit breaker they need to reset their lives onto an aspirational trajectory from what might have otherwise been a downward spiral.

Most DESC Members have been patrons of LSV courses, if not, deeply involved. We are all passionate about the changes this programme makes to the lives of the trainees, their whanau and society. The total benefit is vast, multi-faceted and in reality, immeasurable. We continue to look for metrics to prove the worth of some of the more easily measurable aspects of the programme.

In summary, the challenges of the past year have only increased the importance of the work of the DESC. While there have been challenges, we must “carry on regardless!”, as they say.

Introduction

Te Arawhiti ki te Hapori / The Defence Employer Support Council (“DESC”) has had another busy year and continues to support those who employ those who serve in the New Zealand Defence Force (“NZDF”). The year to 30 June 2022 has been one of strategy development, relationship building, profile-raising, celebrating success and gaining forward propulsion on a number of key work streams. This is the third year on the DESC for most of the DESC Members with the exception of Tui Te Hau who has served for longer and Warner Cowin who was appointed during the year.

The Council

All DESC Council and Secretariat Members are engaged and enthusiastic about the work of the DESC. Tui Te Hau completed ten years as a DESC member and was suitably farewelled. At time of writing we are currently seeking applications for her replacement and will seek Ministerial and Cabinet approval for that appointment. As in the past we expect an exceptionally high quality of applicants.

As is now standard practice, the DESC vacancy was advertised on the Institute of Directors "Director Vacancies" website, Appoint Better Boards (a similar privately run platform), through other government agencies and through personal contacts of existing Council members and Reserve Units. The aim of this was to both cast the net wider for applicants and also to raise our profile within the business and governance communities. The sweet spot for applicants to be suitable for appointment was an ability to demonstrate connections and knowledge of large central or local government based Reserve employers.

Last year's appointee, Warner Cowin, has been an exceptional appointment and has quickly hit the ground running and added tremendous value to the team.

The DESC welcomed Captain Quentin Randall RNZN as Assistant Chief Defence Reserves Youth and Sport. He has been a great addition to the team and has quickly built on the work of his excellent predecessors.



CAPT Corina Bruce RNZNR,
Deputy Chair



David Morgan



Bevan Killick
Honorary Captain (Navy),
Chair



MAJGEN John Boswell,
Chief of Army and CDF Rep



Brenda Steele



Felicity Evans



Warner Cowin



Jules Fulton



Tui Te Hau
Farewelled



Kirk Hope



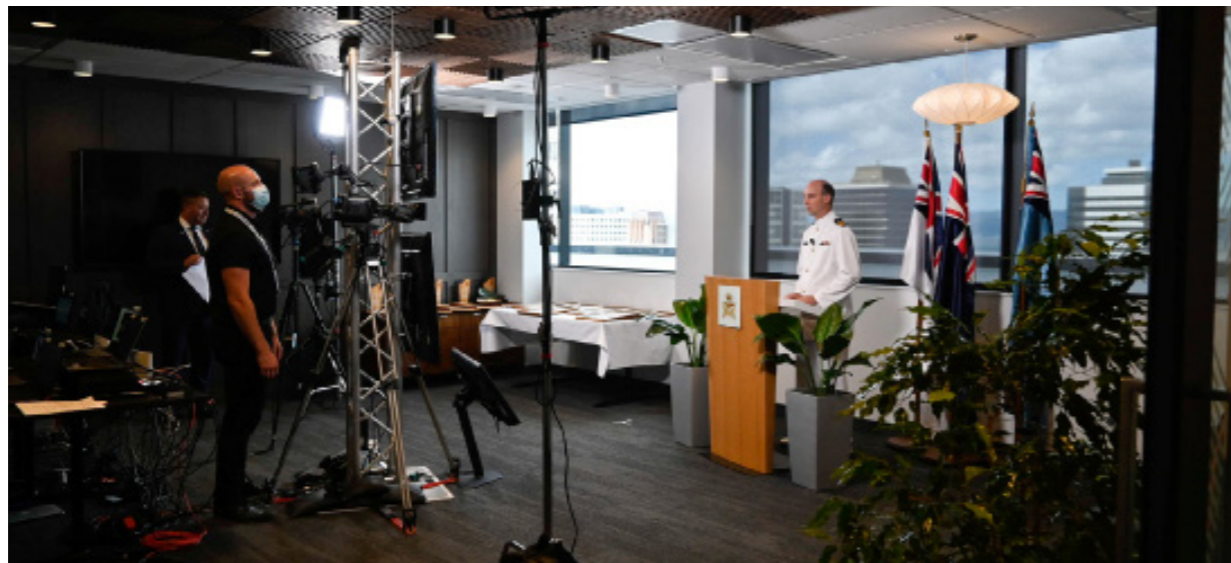
CAPT Quentin Randall RNZN
AC DRYS Welcomed

Minister of Defence Awards of Excellence – Tohu Awards

The 2021 Minister of Defence Awards of Excellence for Employers was held online in February 2022. Excellent technical expertise was employed to deliver a professional online delivery of the awards. The Minister of Defence was gracious with his involvement with both pre-recorded and live appearances.

Significant preparation work had been completed to deliver the Awards at a dinner at the Wigram Airforce Museum. This involves engagement with local iwi Ngāi Tahu, the Airforce Museum, the New Zealand Army Band and caterers. This work will assist the delivery of the 2022 Awards, in person, at the Airforce Museum on Wednesday 2 November 2022.

After significant consultation with the Minister of Defence, cultural advisors and iwi, the Awards have been renamed the Tohu Awards.

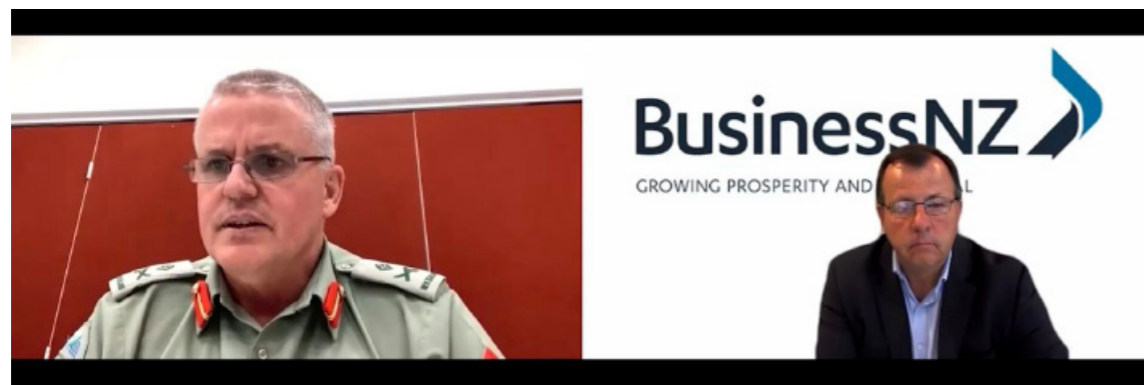


Business New Zealand – Major Companies Group (MCG) Chief Executives’ Forum

On 25 June 2021, DESC Member and Chief of Army, Major General John Boswell DSD was planning to present to the Chief Executives Forum of Business New Zealand’s Major Companies Group. This opportunity was made possible through DESC Member and Chief Executive of Business New Zealand Kirk Hope. We are grateful to Kirk for this opportunity. Unfortunately, this was delayed and moved to an on-line forum. Major General Boswell presented to the Business NZ CEO Forum online on Friday 25 March 2022.

In his address Major General Boswell’s discussed the benefits between the Defence Force and business employers on the shared volunteer workforce and why businesses should be interested.

The presentation included two videos produced by our Design and Communications Manager, PTE Shiloh Dobie, herself a Reservist with specialist skills.



Design and Communications

During the year we continued work on a range of Design and Communications workstreams. We undertook a minor brand refresh. Our main aim was to include more prominent and appropriate use of Te Reo Māori. We have also finalised the new branding for the Tohu Awards ready to showcase at this year’s ceremony.

The DESC has begun a re-design of our website, including a site restructure, content revisions, and development work to modernise the site. Our aim is to position our site as a repository of resources for employers, reservists, and stakeholders. This will include significantly more promotional content and information available which showcase our people. Establishment of Tone of Voice Guidelines and Branding Guidelines as well as further infrastructure continues to be developed behind the scenes to support these workstreams.



Design and Communications

In 2020, we introduced video production for our finalists to entertain and engage our community at the Awards ceremony. With each Awards ceremony we improve this process as we consider how video production might serve us in ways that inspire and connect people across different time zones and locations. In 2021 alone we managed to interview finalists who were both in lockdown in Auckland and on deployment.

One of the best ways to engage with employers and the business community is via the LinkedIn social media platform. When the DESC re-established in mid-2019 there were fewer than 20 LinkedIn followers. An informal target of 1000 LinkedIn followers was set. This has been a focus for the DESC and at 30 June 2022 there were approaching 1000 LinkedIn followers. In 2021 we reported that posts on LinkedIn could receive over 3000 views and 60 reactions (“likes”). This year one post, received 8,259 views, 172 reactions and 21 comments. The post concerned the appointment of Colonel Amanda Jane Brosnan as Assistant Chief of Army (Reserves).

Channel	JULY 2022	JULY 2021
LinkedIn	989 Followers	382 Followers
	70 - 170 Likes per post	
	Highest performing post this year had 8,265 Post Impressions	
Facebook	555 Followers	195 Followers
	10-20 Likes per post	0-10 Likes per post
Website	308 Visits	38 Visits

International connections and a search for best practice



COVID-19 has hampered our international engagement. The DESC Chair Bevan Killick and Assistant Chief Defence Reserves Youth and Sport CAPT Quentin Randall attended the NATO organised International Conference on Support for Reserves. The conference was held physically in Copenhagen and the New Zealand attendees were two of the three virtual attendees. While technology and time differences made this challenging, good contacts were made and useful information exchanged. While internationally, Reserves have significant differences between nations, many of the challenges are consistent. We will continue with these useful engagements.

Legislative changes

We continue to monitor and receive briefings from NZDF personnel regarding their work on the Volunteer Employment Protection Act (“VEPA”) and any potential amendments.

Other initiatives

The DESC contributes to NZDF by providing connections to industry and employers. This is particularly helpful for thought leadership and strategic advice on areas such as cyber, digital, Information Technology, future workforce architecture, health, e-sports and gender equity.

When greater certainty around holding events is established, the DESC will progress the Minister hosting an event for LSV Course Patrons. These individuals are key influencers in the community and with employers.

DESC member Felicity Evans was Patron of a LSV Course at Trentham during the year. One outcome of her involvement was the provision of period products to trainees, something that had not previously occurred. This ensured trainees were included in a similar NZDF initiative.

Material and resources for Employers continues to be developed and this will all become more visible with a future refresh of the website.

Survey work continues as we gather evidence to support our initiatives and to be able to measure our effectiveness. Our international counterparts also appear to be data poor in their endeavours.



DESC Council Members

The individual DESC members all have exceptional careers in their respective fields. The DESC Members have all gone above and beyond during the year in their contribution to DESC matters. The DESC Members and their meeting attendance is as follows:

Council Member	Meeting attendance			
	13 August 2021	3 November 2021	22 February 2022	15 June 2022
Hon CAPT (Navy) Bevan Killick, Chair	Present	Present	Present	Present
CAPT Corina Bruce RNZNR, Deputy Chair	Present	via Zoom	Present	Present
MAJGEN John Boswell DSD (CDF Rep)	Present	Apology	Present	Present
Felicity Evans	Present	Present	via Zoom	Present
Jules Fulton	Apology	via Zoom	via Zoom	Present
Kirk Hope	Apology	via Zoom	via Zoom	Apology
David Morgan	Apology	Apology	via Zoom	Present
Brenda Steele	Present	Apology	via Zoom	Apology
Tui Te Hau	Present	Apology	via Zoom	Present
Warner Cowin	Present	via Zoom	via Zoom	Present

DESC Financial Report 2022

ALL VALUES '000	FY 21/22	FY 20/21
Council members' fees	20.6	21.7
Travel	19.5	17.5
Comms / Media	10.5	12.1
Tohu Awards	34.3	17.2
	84.9	68.5

Tohu Awards/Comms/Media:
Increased investment in media/digital products in part driven by Covid and in part by deliberate strategy to increase the online presence of the DESC and offer further resources and support to our community.

The results of this increased investment has seen an increase in followers to LinkedIn and Facebook, visitors to the DESC website clicks and Social Media, as illustrated in the earlier Design and Communications section of this report.

This table illustrates where DESC spending has increased.

Council members' fees have not increased significantly.

Meeting costs have not increased significantly.

Thanks

We have been superbly supported by the DESC Secretariat team, including Mrs Marika Trotter, Mr John Harvey and PTE Shiloh Dobie. The DESC Members record their gratitude for the team's hard work, dedication and outstanding achievements during the year.

Conclusion

Despite various COVID related challenges, great results have been achieved, including greater profile for our work. NZDF recruitment, retention, increased workload, importance of youth programmes have all contributed to our work becoming vital for the effective operation of NZDF and better societal outcomes for Aotearoa New Zealand.



desc.govt.nz