

## **HON RON MARK, MINISTER OF DEFENCE**

### **Proposal to Extend the Current Iraq Deployment Mandate**

December 2018

This publication provides the documents supporting Cabinet's decision in September 2018 to extend the New Zealand Defence Force deployment to Iraq and the region from 30 November 2018 to 30 June 2019 at a reduced number of up to 121 personnel.

The pack comprises the following documents:

- September 2018 Cabinet minute entitled *Proposal to Extend the Current Iraq Deployment Mandate* [CAB-18-MIN-0455]
- Cabinet paper entitled *Proposal to Extend the Current Iraq Deployment Mandate* [CAB-18-SUB-0455].

This pack has been released on the Ministry of Defence website, available at: [www.defence.govt.nz/publications](http://www.defence.govt.nz/publications).

It has been necessary to withhold certain information in accordance with the following provisions of the Official Information Act 1982. Where information is withheld, the relevant sections of the Act are indicated in the body of the document. Where information has been withheld in accordance with section 9(2) of the Act, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Information is withheld where making it available would be likely to prejudice:

- the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand [section 6(a)]
- the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on the basis of confidence by the Government of any other country [section 6(b)(i)].

Information is also withheld in order to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials [section 9(2)(f)(iv)].



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

### Proposal to Extend the Current Iraq Deployment Mandate

**Portfolios** Foreign Affairs / Defence

On 17 September 2018, following reference from the Cabinet External Relations and Security Committee (ERS), Cabinet:

- 1 **noted** New Zealand's deployment in Iraq meets our objectives to:
  - 1.1 advance and protect our national security interests by playing our part in international efforts to counter the threat posed by ISIS to New Zealand and New Zealand's interests;
  - 1.2 support international efforts to combat global terrorism, in line with the values New Zealand seeks to promote internationally; and,
  - 1.3 support the maintenance of the international rules-based (and regional) order, institutions and arrangements that reinforce global security.
- 2 **noted** the challenging security situation in Iraq and the importance of a continued, explicit commitment by the international community to support the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi Security Forces;
- 3 **noted** that the current training cycle for the Building Partner Capacity mission in Taji runs until 30 June 2019;
- 4 **agreed** that given the changing needs, the size of the NZDF contingent can be reduced from November to a total of 121 personnel – comprising 95 in Taji, 17 in coalition headquarters and support locations in the region, and an operational contingency of 9 personnel applied to the entirety of the mission;
- 5 **noted** that the Chief of Defence Force will inform the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs whenever operational contingency personnel are deployed;
- 6 **agreed** to extend the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) deployment to Iraq and the region from 30 November 2018 to 30 June 2019 at a reduced number of up to 121 personnel;
- 7 **invited** the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs to report back to Cabinet on possible options for New Zealand contributions to Iraq, from July 2019, before the end of April 2019;

- 8 **noted** the legal basis for New Zealand’s military presence in Iraq rests on the invitation and consent of the Government of Iraq [redacted] s6(a). All New Zealand Defence Force operations in Iraq are carried out in accordance with domestic and international law, including the law of armed conflict;
- 9 **noted** that the unmitigated threat level for New Zealand Defence Force personnel in Iraq [redacted] s6(a)
- 10 **agreed** that the New Zealand Defence Force may temporarily exceed the Cabinet-mandated personnel numbers for this deployment for the purposes of command reconnaissance, rotation, and extraction of forces from theatre;
- 11 **noted** that the Chief of Defence Force will inform the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in advance whenever Cabinet-mandated personnel numbers are exceeded for the reasons set out in paragraph 10;
- 12 **noted** that the total estimated cost of the approved deployment for seven months to 30 June 2019 is assessed as \$20.012 million;
- 13 **noted** that there is a shortfall of \$18.913 million in 2018/19 that is not able to be met within existing baselines;
- 14 **noted** funding of \$1.099 million in 2019/20 can be met from current appropriations;
- 15 **approved** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision in paragraph 6 above, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance:

Vote Defence Force	NZ \$m – increase / (decrease)				
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 & out-years
<b>Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure</b> Operations Contributing to New Zealand’s Security, Stability and Interests MCA					
<b>Departmental Output Expense:</b> Military Operations in Support of a Rules-Based International Order (funded by revenue Crown)	18.913	-	-	-	-

- 16 **agreed** that the additional expenses required in 2018/19 under paragraph 15 above be a charge against the tagged Operating contingency established as part of Budget 17 for Military Operations in Support of a Rules-Based International Order;
- 17 **agreed** that the change to appropriations for 2018/19 above be included in the 2018/19 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increase be met from Imprest Supply.

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet

**Hard-copy distribution:**  
Prime Minister  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Minister of Defence

Chair, External Relations and Security Committee

## PROPOSAL TO EXTEND THE CURRENT IRAQ DEPLOYMENT MANDATE

### Proposal

1. This paper seeks Cabinet's agreement to extend New Zealand's current contribution to the joint Australia/New Zealand Building Partner Capacity training mission in Iraq until 30 June 2019, to coincide with the end of the current training cycle, while reducing the size of the deployment. By April 2019 more information will be provided to Cabinet about possible options for any future contributions to Iraq should the Government wish to continue a contribution in Iraq from July 2019.

### Executive summary

2. The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) is currently deployed to Iraq in support of the Iraqi Government's and the international Defeat-ISIS Coalition's<sup>1</sup> (the Coalition) objective to rid Iraq of the global terrorist threat posed by ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria). Our deployment focuses on training the Iraqi Security Forces and complements the other contributions made by the broader international community.

3. This NZDF deployment makes an important and credible contribution to the fight against ISIS, a terrorist organisation that has posed an unprecedented threat to international peace and security. The deployment is consistent with the following key strategic objectives:

- i.* to advance and protect New Zealand's national security interests. The threat that ISIS presents to New Zealand and New Zealand's interests remains a real one and ISIS has demonstrated its capability and intent to conduct and inspire terrorist attacks beyond Iraq's borders;
- ii.* to support international efforts to combat the threat posed by global terrorism, in line with the values New Zealand seeks to promote internationally; and
- iii.* to support the maintenance of the international rules-based order, institutions and arrangements that reinforce global security. The emergence of ISIS threatened the region's territorial sovereignty and continues to represent a significant challenge to peace and stability in the Middle East, a region of global strategic importance.

4. There is a firm legal basis for New Zealand's deployment in Iraq, based on the invitation and consent of the Government of Iraq, [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] The legal basis is also supported by United Nations Security Council

1 The Coalition has previously been called the Counter-ISIL Coalition and the Global Coalition against Da'esh. ISIS is also known as Da'esh, ISIL, Islamic State, or IS.

Resolution 2249, which calls on all states to combat by all means the threat posed by ISIS.

5. Despite significant successes by the Iraqi Government and the Coalition since 2015, including reclaiming 98% of the territory lost to ISIS, the group remains an extant insurgent threat [REDACTED] s6(a)

It is clear that the Iraqi Security Forces still requires international assistance to build its capability to contain the ISIS threat within Iraq, and the underlying social and political drivers behind ISIS's emergence remain.

6. ISIS' recent transition to an insurgency, has necessitated a change to counter-insurgency operations rather than conventional warfare by the Iraqi security forces. This also requires the international community to adapt its operations and continued training and mentoring. Iraq also faces significant challenges as it transitions from post-conflict stabilisation to a rebuilding phase. International estimates place the total reconstruction bill at USD\$88 billion (USD\$30 billion was pledged at the Kuwait Conference in February), while 1.9 million Iraqis remain internally displaced.

7. New Zealand currently has up to 108<sup>2</sup> NZDF personnel in a joint Australia-New Zealand Building Partner Capacity (BPC) mission at Taji Military Complex just north of Baghdad, and up to 37 personnel deployed to headquarters and support roles in Iraq and the region. The Australian Defence Force contributes approximately 300 personnel to the BPC mission.

8. The purpose of the Building Partner Capacity mission in Iraq is to provide training to the Iraqi Security Forces to support their operations to degrade ISIS, and also to build capability so that Iraqi forces may eventually assume full responsibility for the delivery of its training programme. This deployment broadly reflects Iraqi security forces' needs during the military campaign against ISIS. As the current training cycle is scheduled to run to June 2019, and the Iraqi forces training requirements are changing, it is timely for New Zealand to re-examine the nature of its contribution to Iraq. Accordingly, we recommend extending the current mandate until 30 June 2019. It has also been assessed that the training workload will decrease in the coming months and therefore we recommend that the number of personnel required at the BPC be reduced. If an extension is approved, New Zealand will reduce personnel numbers at Taji from 108 to 95 from November 2018, with an overall mission decrease from 143 to 121. s9(2)(f)(v)

9. This aligns with [REDACTED] s6(b)(i) the end of the current training cycle at the BPC, and would allow time for the formation of a new Iraqi Government (following elections in May 2018) before Cabinet considers any future contributions to Iraq and the Coalition. This will also allow consideration of any further developments in Coalition strategy.

## Background

### *New Zealand's current commitment*

2 The original 106, plus two additional personnel approved by Ministers in July 2018.

10. In February 2015, the Government at the time decided to deploy a training mission to Iraq with staff officer support in the Middle East (the Iraq deployment mandate – CAB Min (15) 5-8). This 143 person mission had two main components. First most personnel participate in a joint Australia-New Zealand Building Partner Capacity (BPC) mission at Taji Military Complex in Iraq, otherwise known as Task Group Taji, and second, a small number of personnel are deployed to Coalition headquarters and support roles throughout the region. The Building Partner Capacity mission in Taji is made up of Australian and New Zealand Defence Force personnel with a split of approximately three quarters to one quarter respectively.

11. The primary focus of the BPC is training Iraqi Infantry Brigades (800-1,200 personnel). This training usually takes approximately eight weeks and provides the basic skills needed for the Brigade. There are also different Iraqi training schools within the Taji Military Complex to which the BPC also provides support. The combined New Zealand/Australian Task Group also provides force protection, medical support, and logistical support for the deployment.

12. In addition to the primary deployment to Taji, New Zealand fills positions at Coalition headquarters in Baghdad and Qatar [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED]. Depending on their roles, staff in these positions are required to travel in and around Coalition bases in Iraq. These headquarters positions provide valuable operational insight into Coalition planning. The exact roles and locations of these additional personnel are contingent on operational need and may vary during the mandated period.

#### *New Zealand's humanitarian and diplomatic contributions*

13. New Zealand has provided NZD\$3.5 million in humanitarian assistance to Iraq, and contributed a further NZD\$3 million to the UN Development Programme's Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilisation (FFIS). We have also provided technical demining support to assist the work of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in Iraq and funding to demining specialists Hazardous Area Life-Support Organisation (USD\$200,000) and Quality Solutions International (NZD\$1.25 million) as well as a specialist secondment from MFAT to the German development agency (GIZ) office in Baghdad, which ended in June. The New Zealand Embassy in Baghdad was opened in 2015 to provide the diplomatic interface between the NZDF deployment at Taji and the Government of Iraq. [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED]

#### *How the mission has changed since 2015*

14. During the three years of the Iraq deployment there have been minor changes to the scope of the deployment. The previous government authorised the NZDF to provide training at other secure locations in response to requests from Coalition headquarters. At the request of the Iraqi Government, they also approved the broadening of the training audience beyond the Iraqi Army to include Iraqi police, emergency response and border guards and approved the NZDF joining the ADF in mentoring the North Baghdad Operational Command<sup>3</sup>.

3 The North Baghdad Operational Command is located within the Taji military complex and is responsible for the security of the area surrounding Taji. This mentoring does not involve leaving Taji and is strictly non-combatant.

### *Previous relevant Cabinet decisions*

15. In August 2018, Cabinet agreed in principle to extend the NZDF deployment to Iraq and the region to 30 June 2019, and agreed that this in-principle decision be conveyed now to Australia and other Coalition partners as necessary, including the intention to consider alternative options for the nature of any New Zealand's contributions to Iraq from July 2019, including a wind down of the current training programme and the intention to make public announcements of New Zealand's decision in September 2018.

### **Comment**

#### *Why are we there and what has been the impact of the BPC?*

16. New Zealand deployed, following a request from the Government of Iraq, to help counter the threat that ISIS posed to the people of Iraq and to the international rules-based order. ISIS emerged in 2014 as an existential threat to Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity as it prosecuted its mission of establishing a caliphate (or 'Islamic state') across Syria and Iraq. ISIS captured and held large swathes of territory in the period 2014-2017, including Iraq's second-largest city Mosul and the caliphate's self-declared capital Raqqa in Syria. ISIS's brutality and efforts to hold off the Iraqi Security Forces have led to the loss of approximately 70,000 civilian lives in Iraq alone and displaced millions. ISIS' ability to radicalise local Sunni populations, to recruit foreign terrorist fighters to its ranks, and to inspire local terrorist movements (like in the southern Philippines), small cells of extremists (like in Europe and South East Asia) or lone individuals make it a threat not only to the stability of the Middle East but also across the globe, including to New Zealand and other countries within our immediate region.

17. Since 2015 the Iraqi Security Forces have made significant gains, principally the liberation of almost all Iraqi territory (including major population centres such as Mosul in July 2017) from ISIS control with Coalition support. Our BPC training has directly contributed to the ability of the Iraqi Security Forces to take the fight to ISIS. The utility of training is evident not only through the military success in Iraq, [REDACTED] s6(a)

18. The broadening of our training audience to include Iraqi police, emergency response and border guards has also provided benefit to the wider Iraqi Security Forces in order to meet the challenges of the changing security environment in Iraq. The BPC has trained over 37,000 Iraqi Security Force personnel including 4,300 Federal Police. We have received recognition and praise from Iraqi officials, [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i) and senior Coalition leaders for the BPC's enhancement of the Iraqi Security Forces' ability to counter ISIS.

#### *Principles underpinning the deployment*

19. New Zealand's deployment to Iraq meets a range of principles (many of which are articulated in the Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018) which Ministers can apply when considering advice on deployments. These include:

Is there a clear, legitimate and compelling case for New Zealand involvement?

20. While ISIS has lost control of territory in Iraq and Syria, it still maintains a substantial base [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] Many of the destabilising precursors that existed prior to ISIS's emergence in 2014 [REDACTED] s6(a) could again be exploited by ISIS absent a sustained commitment from the international coalition to further stabilisation and capability building. Further, ISIS' reach continues to be global in nature, with its supporters and affiliates carrying out attacks throughout the world, including across the Middle East, Europe, North America, North Africa and South and Southeast Asia.

21. These factors demonstrate the continued threat of ISIS and its affiliate groups to peace and stability in Iraq, the Middle East region and globally – including to New Zealanders living and travelling abroad. While New Zealand has been fortunate to avoid any ISIS-instigated or inspired attacks, as a good global citizen we have a responsibility to contribute. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] Accordingly, the 77 members of the Coalition intend to continue their efforts to eliminate the threat posed by ISIS, including through ongoing support to Iraq into 2019 and beyond.

22. New Zealand is a strong supporter of the international rules-based order through our support for institutions and arrangements that reinforce global security, in alignment with our values. ISIS [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] undermines regional and international security and has demonstrated the intent and capability to conduct terror attacks on targets beyond Iraq's borders. Therefore, the BPC training undertaken by the NZDF at Taji remains beneficial towards the international community's efforts to support peace and security in a major conflict zone.

#### The legal basis for the deployment and consistency with international law

23. New Zealand's deployment to Iraq was at the invitation of the Iraqi Government. The international legitimacy of the fight against ISIS was further strengthened in November 2015 when the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution (UNSCR 2249) calling on all states to combat by all means the unprecedented threat posed by ISIS.

24. The legal basis for New Zealand's military presence in Iraq is based on the invitation and consent of the Government of Iraq [REDACTED] s6(a). All New Zealand Defence Force operations in Iraq are carried out in accordance with domestic and international law, including the law of armed conflict. Rules of Engagement (ROE) for New Zealand Defence Force operations in Iraq, which comply with all relevant international and domestic legal obligations, have been previously issued by the New Zealand Government and remain fit for purpose.

#### Risks to the safety and security of New Zealand personnel

25. The current deployment involves having New Zealand Defence Force personnel in Taji, Baghdad and regional headquarters and support locations. Each location has a different threat profile. The unmitigated operational threat to New Zealand Defence Force personnel deployed to Taji Military Complex [REDACTED] s6(a). The unmitigated operational threat to New Zealand Defence Force personnel deployed to Baghdad [REDACTED] s6(a). The

unmitigated operational threat to New Zealand Defence Force personnel deployed to [REDACTED] s6(a)

26. Potential threats to New Zealand and other international personnel in Iraq include indirect fire, direct attacks on coalition bases, and possible insider attacks. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] As a result of the mitigations put in place, the risk is assessed as acceptable. This is constantly monitored to ensure this remains the case.

Implications for New Zealand's ability to still deploy to our immediate region should an emergency arise

27. The extension of this deployment would not prevent New Zealand from deploying to the Pacific should an emergency arise. [REDACTED] s6(a)

*The Strategic Defence Policy Statement supports the Iraq deployment*

28. The Strategic Defence Policy Statement articulates many of the principles underlying peace support deployments. It also highlights that New Zealand's deployment to Iraq contributes to the maintenance of the international rules-based order. By supporting the Iraqi Government to counter the ongoing threat that ISIS poses to the people of Iraq, New Zealand is helping to uphold the principle that armed non-state actors must not forcibly take power within a state.

*This deployment reinforces New Zealand's value as a credible and trusted partner*

29. Given the wide range of contributions made by Coalition members and New Zealand's size and capacity, our contribution of up to 143 personnel constitutes a credible and substantive national commitment in an area where New Zealand has a proven ability to deliver tangible results. With 77 members in the Coalition (around 23 troop contributing countries) we are in good company, and our contribution, while small compared to the world's largest militaries, is respected as high quality and making a real impact for the Iraqi Security Forces. Our deployment to the Building Partner Capacity mission and Coalition headquarters emphasises our status as a trusted and credible partner.

*Political update – post election*

30. Following the Iraqi elections in June, negotiations to form a government have been ongoing. [REDACTED] s6(b)(i)

[REDACTED] s6(a)

*The focus of Coalition efforts and military campaign update*

31. As its traditional combat role in Iraq reduces following ISIS' territorial defeat, the Coalition's focus is moving to stabilisation, supporting counter-insurgency operations and enhancing the Iraqi Security Forces' capacity to hold and maintain security in reclaimed territory. There remains a need for ongoing capacity building to ensure the Iraqi Security Forces have the capability to stand on their own with reduced, or indeed without, Coalition support. [redacted] s6(a) a new Coalition strategy based on these changing requirements geared towards assisting the Iraqi Security Forces to assume full responsibility for Iraq's security.

*Future trajectory of the BPC and post-June 2019 options*

32. The current training schedule for the joint Australia/New Zealand BPC mission at Taji runs until June 2019. [redacted] s6(a)

[redacted] It has been assessed that the training workload will decrease in the coming months and therefore the number of personnel required at the BPC will also be reduced. If an extension is approved, New Zealand will reduce overall personnel numbers from 143 to 121. Personnel at Taji will reduce from 108 to 95 from November 2018. Up to 17 personnel will continue to be deployed to Coalition headquarters and support roles throughout the region, which are currently located in Iraq (Baghdad), Qatar [redacted] s6(a). A contingency of up to 9 personnel may be authorised to deploy by the Chief of Defence Force to locations as required in response to operational requirements: advice would be provided to Ministers on these occasions. (Annex A contains a proposed breakdown of personnel). [redacted] s9(2)(f)(iv)

33. Australia contributes approximately 300 personnel to the joint BPC mission in Taji; [redacted] s6(b)(i)

34. We propose therefore that Cabinet extends the mandate for NZDF's deployment to Iraq to 30 June 2019, to match the conclusion of the current BPC training cycle. By that point, we expect the nature of support required by the Coalition and by the Iraqi Government and its security forces to have changed, including in ways which over time will likely see the military footprint decreasing and more civilian forms of assistance increasing.

35. This provides an opportunity for New Zealand to adjust the nature of its own contribution to meet these changing needs. [redacted] s6(b)(i)

[redacted] we expect New Zealand could (i) move to a 'train the trainers' model of security capacity building, (ii) reduce the number of NZDF troops deployed, and [redacted] s9(2)(f)(iv)

[redacted] s6(b)(i)

36. Therefore, and in the context of these changing needs, we recommend that officials further explore these possibilities, and advice be provided to Cabinet before the end of April 2019 on possible options for New Zealand contributions to Iraq from July 2019 onwards.

### *Rotations*

37. In 2012 Cabinet agreed to the inclusion in all NZDF deployment papers of a provision that allows NZDF to temporarily exceed Cabinet-mandated personnel numbers for the purposes of command reconnaissance, rotation, and extraction of forces in and out of theatre [CAB Min (12) 10/2 refers]. In July 2018 Cabinet noted the 2012 decision and agreed that this convention will continue [CAB 18-MIN-0346 refers]. The Chief of Defence Force will inform the Minister of Defence, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister in advance whenever a rotation, extraction or command reconnaissance is planned above mandated numbers.

### **Consultation**

38. This paper has been prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry of Defence and the NZDF. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (NAB, NSG, PAG) and the Treasury were consulted.

### **Financial Implications**

#### *Financial implications of a seven month extension*

39. The estimated cost of the deployment is \$20.012M.

40. There is a shortfall in funding available from current appropriations of \$18.913M because funding for Vote Defence Force: Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Security, Stability and Interests is fully committed for 2018/19 as a result of existing mandated missions. The additional funding required of \$18.913M is proposed to be charged against the tagged Operating Contingency established as part of Budget 17 for Military Operations in Support of a Rules-based International Order.

41. The funding of \$1.099M in 2019/20 can be met from current appropriations.

42. The following table sets out the expenditure and funding arrangements for this deployment:

Vote Defence Force	NZ \$million				
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total
Estimated cost of proposed deployment	18.913	1.099	-	-	<b>20.012</b>
Total funded from existing appropriation: Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Security, Stability and Interests	-	1.099	-	-	<b>1.099</b>
Additional Funding Required	18.913	-	-	-	<b>18.913</b>

43. The following table sets out the impact of this deployment (and other pending deployment decisions for Cabinet consideration) on the tagged Operating contingency

established as part of Budget 17 for Military Operations in Support of a Rules- based International Order:

Vote Defence Force	NZ \$million				
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
Balance of tagged Operating contingency	2.420	20.000	20.000	-	42.420
Previously approved deployments	(3.410)	(8.332)	-	-	(11.742)
Afghanistan Deployment - pending	-	(1.763)	-	-	(1.763)
UNTSO Deployment - pending	-	(0.748)	-	-	(0.748)
MFO Deployment - pending	-	(1.994)	-	-	(1.994)
UNMISS Deployment - pending	-	(0.525)	-	-	(0.525)
Funding for this mission.	-	(18.913)	-	-	(18.913)
<b>Remaining tagged operating contingency balance</b>	<b>(0.990)</b>	<b>(12.275)</b>	<b>20.000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6.735</b>

## Publicity

44. The outcome of this paper will be announced with the concurrent Cabinet deployment decisions by the Prime Minister. A redacted version of this Cabinet paper will then be pro-actively released.

## Recommendations

45. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence recommend that the Committee:

1. **note** New Zealand's deployment in Iraq meets our objectives to:
  - i. advance and protect our national security interests by playing our part in international efforts to counter the threat posed by ISIS to New Zealand and New Zealand's interests;
  - ii. support international efforts to combat global terrorism, in line with the values New Zealand seeks to promote internationally; and,
  - iii. support the maintenance of the international rules-based (and regional) order, institutions and arrangements that reinforce global security.
2. **note** the challenging security situation in Iraq and the importance of a continued, explicit commitment by the international community to support the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi Security Forces;
3. **note** that the current training cycle for the Building Partner Capacity mission in Taji runs until 30 June 2019;
4. **agree** that given the changing needs, the size of the NZDF contingent can be reduced from November to a total of 121 personnel – comprising 95 in Taji, 17 in coalition headquarters and support locations in the region, and an operational contingency of 9 personnel applied to the entirety of the mission;

5. **note** that the Chief of Defence Force will inform the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs whenever operational contingency personnel are deployed;
6. **agree** to extend the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) deployment to Iraq and the region from 30 November 2018 to 30 June 2019 at a reduced number of up to 121 personnel;
7. **invite** the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs to report back to Cabinet on possible options for New Zealand contributions to Iraq, from July 2019, before the end of April 2019;
8. **note** the legal basis for New Zealand's military presence in Iraq rests on the invitation and consent of the Government of Iraq [redacted] s6(a) [redacted]. All New Zealand Defence Force operations in Iraq are carried out in accordance with domestic and international law, including the law of armed conflict;
9. **note** that the unmitigated threat level for New Zealand Defence Force personnel in Iraq [redacted] s6(a) [redacted];
10. **agree** that the New Zealand Defence Force may temporarily exceed the Cabinet-mandated personnel numbers for this deployment for the purposes of command reconnaissance, rotation, and extraction of forces from theatre;
11. **note** that the Chief of Defence Force will inform the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in advance whenever Cabinet-mandated personnel numbers are exceeded for the reasons set out in recommendation (10);
12. **note** that the total estimated cost of the approved deployment for seven months to 30 June 2019 is assessed as \$20.012M;
13. **note** that there is a shortfall of \$18.913M in 2018/19 that is not able to be met within existing baselines;
14. **note** funding of \$1.099M in 2019/20 can be met from current appropriations;
15. **approve** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision in recommendation (6) above with a corresponding impact on the operating balance;

Vote Defence Force	NZ \$m – increase / (decrease)				
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 & out-years
<b>Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure</b>					
Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Security, Stability and Interests MCA					
<b>Departmental Output Expense:</b>					
Military Operations in Support of a Rules-Based International Order	18.913	-	-	-	-

(funded by revenue Crown)					
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16. **agree** that the additional expenses required in 2018/19 under recommendation (6) above be a charge against the tagged Operating contingency established as part of Budget 17 for Military Operations in Support of a Rules-Based International Order;
17. **agree** that the proposed change to appropriations for 2018/19 above be included in the 2018/19 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increase be met from Imprest Supply.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters  
**MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Hon Ron Mark  
**MINISTER OF DEFENCE**

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

**Annex A: NZDF Deployed Personnel**

Location	NZDF Personnel Numbers	Description
Iraq (Taji)	95	Trainers, headquarters staff, force protection and logistics
Iraq (Baghdad)	9	Eight staff officers at coalition headquarters in logistics, planning, legal, training, and information roles, as well as, one movement specialist at the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Centre.
Qatar	3	s6(a) US CENTCOM Forward (provided sufficient work remains to justify their ongoing deployment)
s6(a)	5	Staff supporting the logistics related to the Iraq deployment
Location as required	9	Operational contingency
<b>Total Mandate</b>	<b>121</b>	

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