



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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### Further Deployment of Royal New Zealand Navy Patrol Vessels to Fiji in 2018

Portfolios                      Foreign Affairs / Defence

On 19 March 2018, Cabinet:

- 1        **noted** that on 14 March 2017, the previous government agreed to the deployment of a Royal New Zealand Navy Inshore Patrol Vessel to Fiji in 2017 to support Fiji's patrolling capacity, and noted that an assessment of the ongoing need for an Inshore Patrol Vessel beyond 2017 will be conducted in the last quarter of 2017 [ERD-17-MIN-0003];
- 2        **noted** that Fiji has requested further assistance from New Zealand in 2018, [REDACTED] s6(b)(i);
- 3        **noted** that the deployment of an Inshore Patrol Vessel to Fiji under Operation Wasawasa 2017 was successful, [REDACTED] s6(b)(i);
- 4        **agreed** to the deployment of two Royal New Zealand Navy Patrol Vessels consecutively to Fiji in 2018 to support Fiji's patrolling capacity, as follows:
  - 4.1      the deployment of an Inshore Patrol Vessel for up to three months during May – August 2018;
  - 4.2      the deployment of an Offshore Patrol Vessel for two patrols during [REDACTED] s6(a) 2018;
- 5        **noted** that the deployment will be announced publicly in due course;
- 6        **noted** that the total estimated cost of the deployment of two Patrol Vessels to Fiji from May 2018 to [REDACTED] s6(a) is assessed as \$1.351 million;
- 7        **noted** that the estimated costs are unable to be met from within the existing baseline funding in 2017/18 or 2018/19;

- 8 **approved** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision in paragraph 4 above with a corresponding impact on the operating balance:

Vote Defence Force Minister of Defence	NZ \$m – increase / (decrease)				
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 & out-years
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure: Protection of New Zealand and New Zealanders MCA Departmental Output Expenses: Defence International Engagement	0.425	0.926	-	-	-

- 9 **agreed** that the change to appropriations for 2017/18 above be included in the 2017/18 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increase be met from Imprest Supply;
- 10 **agreed** that the additional expenses required in 2017/18 and 2018/19 under paragraph 8 above be a charge against the tagged operating contingency established as part of Budget 2017 for Military Operations in Support of a Rules-based International Order.

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet

**Hard-copy distribution:**

Prime Minister  
Deputy Prime Minister  
Minister of Defence

Chair

## FURTHER DEPLOYMENT OF ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY PATROL VESSELS TO FIJI IN 2018

### Proposal

1. This paper seeks agreement to a deployment of two Royal New Zealand Navy Patrol Vessels consecutively to Fiji in [REDACTED] s6(a) 2018 to support resource protection activities in their exclusive economic zone.

### Executive Summary

2. Fiji has requested New Zealand's assistance with the provision of maritime surveillance and interdiction capability during the 2018 fishing season, [REDACTED] s6(b)(i). This follows the successful Operation Wasawasa 2017, under which Cabinet agreed to deploy an Inshore Patrol Vessel to Fiji from May to November 2017 in response to a similar request. We propose that New Zealand respond positively to Fiji's request through the deployment of two Patrol Vessels for patrols during May to [REDACTED] s6(a) 2018. This supports our mutual resource protection and regional security interests, and contributes to our broader relationship-building objectives.

### Background

3. New Zealand's relationship with Fiji has significantly improved since the 2014 democratic elections. New Zealand has successfully implemented a programme of sequenced defence re-engagement including initiatives such as Operation Wasawasa 2017. In March 2017 Cabinet agreed to deploy an Inshore Patrol Vessel, HMNZS Hāwea, for six months from May to November 2017 to support Fiji's maritime surveillance and patrolling capacity [CAB-17-MIN-0095 refers]. [REDACTED] s6(a)

4. Operation Wasawasa 2017 was in response to Fiji's request for assistance [REDACTED] s6(b)(i)

As foreshadowed by discussions, on 22 February 2018 the Government of Fiji submitted a formal request by a diplomatic note for another deployment in 2018 to assist Fiji [REDACTED] s6(b)(i).

## Comment

### *Proposed Patrol Vessel deployment*

5. Maritime security and surveillance is important to both New Zealand and Fiji. Operation Wasawasa 2017 strengthened New Zealand's status with Fiji as a trusted partner. An additional deployment of Royal New Zealand Navy vessels would encourage continuous collaboration between both defence forces, [redacted] s6(b)(i). Fiji has indicated it is prepared to receive the Inshore Patrol Vessel again in 2018, and is also making provision to receive an Offshore Patrol Vessel, should New Zealand decide to deploy a second vessel.

6. The New Zealand Defence Force has completed an assessment of the request, which identified that a deployment for [redacted] s6(a) is the most effective use of New Zealand Defence Force resources. We propose that New Zealand provides the assistance sought by Fiji through:

- (i) the deployment of an Inshore Patrol Vessel for up to [redacted] s6(a) during May-August 2018; and
- (ii) the deployment of an Offshore Patrol Vessel to conduct [redacted] s6(a) patrols from [redacted] s6(a) 2018.

7. During Operation Wasawasa 2017, the Inshore Patrol Vessel was beneficially used to support coastal fisheries, [redacted] s6(b)(i). More than 528 inspections across 13 patrols resulted in 107 infringements issued by Fijian officials including for illegal fishing. Approximately 43 Fijian Naval and Fisheries officers were involved, providing the opportunity for training and general mariner skills development. While shorter in duration than the 2017 deployment, a three month deployment in 2018 is the maximum timeframe New Zealand can support, while still meeting our own Navy training and capability generation requirements.

8. The inclusion of an Offshore Patrol Vessel would enable patrolling throughout Fiji's exclusive economic zone, [redacted] s6(b)(ii). It would also meet broader engagement objectives, such as the opportunity for Republic of Fiji Military Force (RFMF) female personnel to participate in maritime activities, and capacity to include greater numbers of Fijian personnel more generally. The last time a New Zealand Offshore Patrol Vessel patrolled within Fiji's Exclusive Economic Zone in 2016, a total of 18 tuna fishing vessels were boarded and inspected, representing a significant percentage of all fishing operators within the area at that time as reported [redacted] s6(b)(ii).

9. In 2018, an Offshore Patrol Vessel is programmed to be in the region for Operation Calypso with a route that potentially encompasses Samoa, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Australia, and the Cook Islands for a range of activities. It is proposed that the Offshore Patrol Vessel visits Fiji to conduct [redacted] s6(a) patrols in its Exclusive Economic Zone during [redacted] s6(a).

*Rationale for the proposed deployment*

10. With an exclusive economic zone of approximately 1,290,000 square kilometres, a third of the size of New Zealand's, maritime surveillance of this area is important as Fiji has a relatively high dependence on fisheries resources for food security and income. A deployment would complement New Zealand's existing programme of work with Fiji to improve fisheries performance. It provides a significant training benefit to Fiji, maximising the effect they can achieve once they have received refurbished and replacement patrol boats in the future. The presence of maritime patrols is useful to deter other transnational organised crime activities, including the trafficking of drugs and precursors, persons and small arms. It is also in-line with the priority we place on engagement with Fiji as a close neighbour and key partner. [REDACTED] s6(a)

11. There are multiple benefits associated with this deployment, including:

- it is consistent with the refreshed New Zealand approach to the Pacific Islands region proposed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Cabinet [NSC-18-SUB-001];
- significant benefit to the bilateral Fiji-New Zealand relationship;
- positive run-on implications for New Zealand's maritime security and reduced risk to New Zealand due to the close proximity of our exclusive economic zones;
- enhancing linkages between the New Zealand Defence Force and the RFMF, [REDACTED] s6(a) and [REDACTED];
- assisting in the professional development of the RFMF, Fijian fisheries and customs personnel attached to the vessel, and others, on an opportunity basis.

12. [REDACTED] s6(a)

13. Australia has traditionally supported Fiji's patrolling through the provision of patrol boats and training. They have indicated they support New Zealand's deployment and would consider contributing a small number of personnel, if requested.

*Risks and trade-offs*

14. [REDACTED] s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)  
[REDACTED] s6(b)(i) [REDACTED] s6(a)

15. The Offshore Patrol Vessel in particular has competing demands from resource protection requirements in deep water fisheries including our own, and those of our Pacific partners. [REDACTED] s6(b)(i)

[REDACTED] Consideration will be given to providing support to other Pacific island countries through subsequent deployments over the medium term. [REDACTED] s6(b)(i)

16. Fiji's general election is likely to take place during this deployment. It is unlikely that the election should impact on the proposed deployment. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] New Zealand has been providing support to help the Fiji Electoral Commission and Electoral Office prepare for this year's election.

*Legal arrangements for the deployment*

17. The Arrangement of Cooperation for Operation Wasawasa 2017 indicated the possibility for a 2018 deployment. Officials will ensure there is an arrangement in place between Fiji and New Zealand to cover off issues such as jurisdiction, entry and exit requirements, and other such points necessary to lawfully facilitate the deployment. It is likely this would be achieved by entering into an arrangement with Fiji that extends the scope of the 2017 arrangement.

**Consultation**

18. This paper was prepared by the Ministry of Defence, the New Zealand Defence Force, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Ministry for Primary Industries, and the Treasury were consulted. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (Policy Advisory Group) was informed.

**Financial Implications**

19. The estimated cost of the deployment for May 2018 to [REDACTED] s6(a) 2018 is \$1.351M. This deployment is additional to activities currently planned in order to deliver Defence Force outputs. The expenditure to be funded from Crown Revenue is \$1.351M, which will require additional funding in 2017/18 and 2018/19 for Vote Defence Force: Protection of New Zealand and New Zealanders – Multi Category Appropriations (Defence International Engagement). The following table sets out the expenditure and funding arrangements for this deployment.

	NZ \$M – increase / (decrease)			
<b>Vote Defence Force</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total cost of deployment	0.425	0.926	-	1.351
Funded by:				.....
Vote Defence Force: Protection of New Zealand and New Zealanders	-	-	-	-
<b>Equals: Additional Appropriation Required</b>	<b>0.425</b>	<b>0.926</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1.351</b>

20. The additional funding required is proposed to be charged against the tagged Operating Contingency established as part of Budget 2017 for Military Operations in Support of a Rules-based International Order. The following table sets out the impact for this deployment on the tagged operating contingency established as part of Budget 2017 for Military Operations in Support of a Rules-based International Order.

	NZ \$M			
<b>Vote Defence Force</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>Total</b>
Balance of tagged Operating contingency	2.420	20.000	20.000	42.420
Previously approved deployments	(2.985)	(4.883)	0.000	(7.868)
Funding for this mission	(0.425)	(0.926)	0.000	(1.351)
<b>Remaining tagged operating contingency balance</b>	<b>(0.990)</b>	<b>14.191</b>	<b>20.000</b>	<b>33.201</b>

### Human Rights, Legislative, Gender, Regulatory Impact Analysis

21. There are no implications for this paper.

## Publicity

22. Should Cabinet agree to the deployment of Patrol Vessels to Fiji, we will announce the decision in due course.

## Recommendations

23. We recommend that the Cabinet:

1. **note** that Fiji has requested further assistance from New Zealand in 2018 s6(b)(i)  
[REDACTED];
2. **note** that the deployment of an Inshore Patrol Vessel to Fiji under Operation Wasawasa 2017 was successful s6(b)(i)  
[REDACTED];
3. **agree** to the deployment of two Royal New Zealand Navy Patrol Vessels consecutively to Fiji in 2018 in order to support Fiji's patrolling capacity:
  - (i) the deployment of an Inshore Patrol Vessel for up to three months during May- August 2018; and
  - (ii) the deployment of an Offshore Patrol Vessel for s6(a) patrols during s6(a)  
[REDACTED] 2018;
4. **note** that the deployment will be announced publicly in due course;
5. **note** that the total estimated cost of the deployment of two Patrol Vessels to Fiji from May 2018 to s6(a) 2018 is assessed as \$1.351M;
6. **note** the estimated costs are unable to be met from within the existing baseline funding in 2017/18 or 2018/19;
7. **approve** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision in recommendation 3 above with a corresponding impact on the operating balance:

	NZ \$m - increase / (decrease)				
Vote Defence Force Minister of Defence	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 & out-years
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:					
Protection of New Zealand and New Zealanders MCA			-	-	-
Departmental Output Expenses:					
Defence International Engagement	0.425	0.926			

8. **agree** that the proposed change to appropriations for 2017/18 above be included in the 2017/18 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increase be met from Imprest Supply; and
9. **agree** that the additional expenses required in 2017/18 and 2018/19 under recommendation 7 above be a charge against the tagged Operating contingency established as part of Budget 2017 for Military Operations in Support of a Rules-based International Order.

Authorised for lodgement

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

Hon Ron Mark  
**MINISTER OF DEFENCE**

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