



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Government

2025

DEFENCE

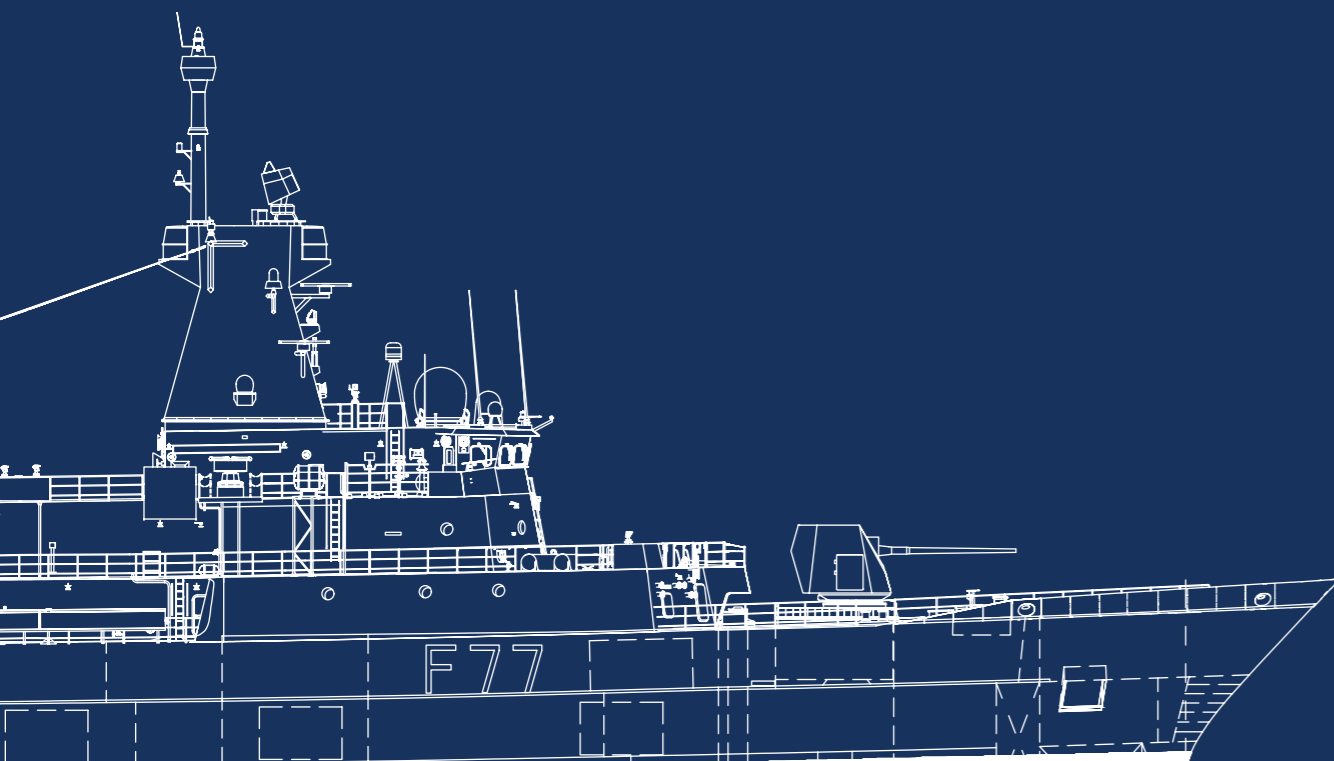
CAPABILITY

PLAN



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# MINISTER OF DEFENCE FOREWORD

**FOR DECADES, NEW ZEALAND HAS ENJOYED A WORLD UNDERPINNED BY AN INTERNATIONAL RULES-BASED ORDER THAT REFLECTED OUR VALUES, PROTECTED OUR INTERESTS, AND SUPPORTED OUR AMBITIONS. WE NOW FACE A VERY DIFFERENT WORLD.**

Our economic security is inextricably tied to our national security. For the future prosperity of our small island nation that relies on trade for its economic wellbeing, the movement of people and capital, rules consistent with our values, and trusted international partnerships to underpin our security, we need a clear pathway for sustained investment in New Zealand's defence.

This Defence Capability Plan (DCP) provides a blueprint for that investment, to ensure the people of our New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) can operate in an increasingly volatile world. A world where our personnel are expected to be called upon more often, in more places, for longer. For this, they must be equipped and trained for a range of operations, to be more combat capable, and able to deter actions adverse to our interests while also being ready to provide essential humanitarian assistance and disaster response.

Our military is tasked with protecting New Zealand and our interests, and is the only force capable of doing so. We should never rule out that we may need to defend ourselves.

We need a defence force that is able not only to respond in a crisis but also able to maintain stability in our region, support our Pacific neighbours, contribute to upholding the existing international rules-based order, deter potential threats, and work with others to increase resilience in our region.

Defence needs a plan that is enduring and flexible, to restore the NZDF to a position where it can make a meaningful contribution to the security and prosperity of New Zealand.

This DCP delivers that. It lists indicative investments and focuses on rebuilding the NZDF and investing in critical areas. It is sustainable, scalable and sets us up for the future.

During the next four years there will be a planned commitment of \$12 billion on Defence capability and enablers, including a \$9 billion increase to baseline funding.



We have deliberately focused on the first four years so we can adapt as the world around us changes, scale up as the fiscal situation allows, and ensure we can track progress and build the force in a sustainable way.

That doesn't mean we are taking a short-term approach to investment in defence – the opposite is true. Indicative investments over the next 15 years have been outlined to show our intent for the force of the future and we are committed to pacing investments as quickly as our fiscal situation allows.

Our approach deliberately focuses on what we can and must do to rebuild the NZDF and invest wisely in critical capability to ensure we are combat-capable, interoperable, and ready to be of use wherever we are needed.

This DCP outlines how decisions will result in New Zealand being more integrated with our ally Australia, making both countries stronger together.

It enables us to plan for the replacement of capability and deliver in a way that reduces capability gaps and minimises risks to our interests and our people. We will rebuild the NZDF to ensure it has the supports it needs, and purchase the right capability at the right time to ensure our personnel can use it to maximum effect.

The world is changing rapidly, and we must adapt – that is why this DCP will be updated every two years to enable us to invest in areas that respond to the world in which we live and trade, and for us to make the most of innovation and scale with our partners and industry.

Investment in our nation's security must be enduring. These are significant investments of vital importance, and we can't afford to get it wrong.

To be successful, Defence will need to be innovative and consider new ways of delivering and operating capabilities, while the Government will need to play its part and make significant financial decisions over the next 15 years.

All of this is essential to prepare for challenges that we as a country and as a region face now, and into the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Judith Collins".

**Hon. Judith Collins KC**  
Minister of Defence

# DEFENCE CAPABILITY PLAN 2025

**THIS DEFENCE CAPABILITY PLAN IS THE GOVERNMENT'S PLAN TO REBUILD THE NZDF AND PREPARE FOR AN INCREASINGLY VOLATILE WORLD. WHILE THIS PLAN HAS BEEN DESIGNED WITH A 15-YEAR HORIZON IN MIND, IT DELIBERATELY FOCUSES ON CRITICAL INVESTMENTS IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS TO ENSURE WE CAN ADAPT AS THE WORLD AROUND US CHANGES.**

To respond to the deteriorating strategic environment the NZDF needs to be increasingly combat capable, interoperable with our partners, able to act as a force multiplier with Australia, and make the most of innovations which allow us to be more effective. To do this over the next 15 years we will invest in:



A focused and combat capable Navy with a mixture of combat, patrol, and multirole ships.



An Army that can operate independently, integrate with Australia, has improved strike capabilities, and is fully networked.



An Air Force that operates globally, with select combat capability, and which provides situational awareness and intelligence.



Strengthened cyber and information capabilities to protect the NZDF's networks and systems, and provide defensive cyber, electronic and information warfare effects.



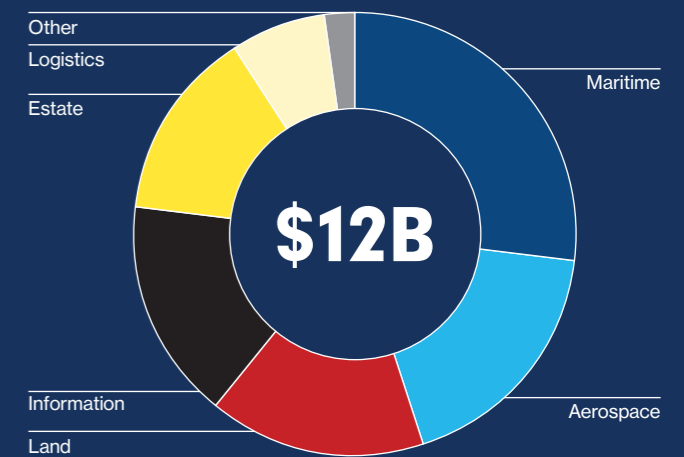
A workforce with the physical and digital infrastructure that is fit-for-purpose for a modern defence force.

## MAJOR INVESTMENTS 2025-2028

- Enhanced strike capabilities
- Frigate sustainment programme
- Persistent surveillance (uncrewed autonomous vessels)
- Replacing the maritime helicopters
- Javelin anti-tank missile upgrade
- Network Enabled Army
- Special Operations sustainment
- Vehicles for the NZDF
- Counter Uncrewed Aerial Systems
- Long-range remotely piloted aircraft (drones)
- Replacing the Boeing 757 fleet
- Space capabilities
- Enhancing cyber security capabilities
- Enterprise resource planning
- Improved intelligence functions
- Updating classified digital services
- Accommodation, messing, and dining modernisation
- Defence estate regeneration
- Defence housing programme
- Future Devonport naval base design
- Ohakea infrastructure programme
- Defence Science & Technology uplift
- Technology Accelerator
- Information management
- Digital modernisation
- Logistics resilience
- Consolidated Logistics Project infrastructure
- Implementing a workforce strategy

The Defence Capability Plan outlines indicative spending of \$12 billion on major capability and critical supports over the next four years. These indicative investments focus on what is required in the short term to rebuild the NZDF and prepare for future.

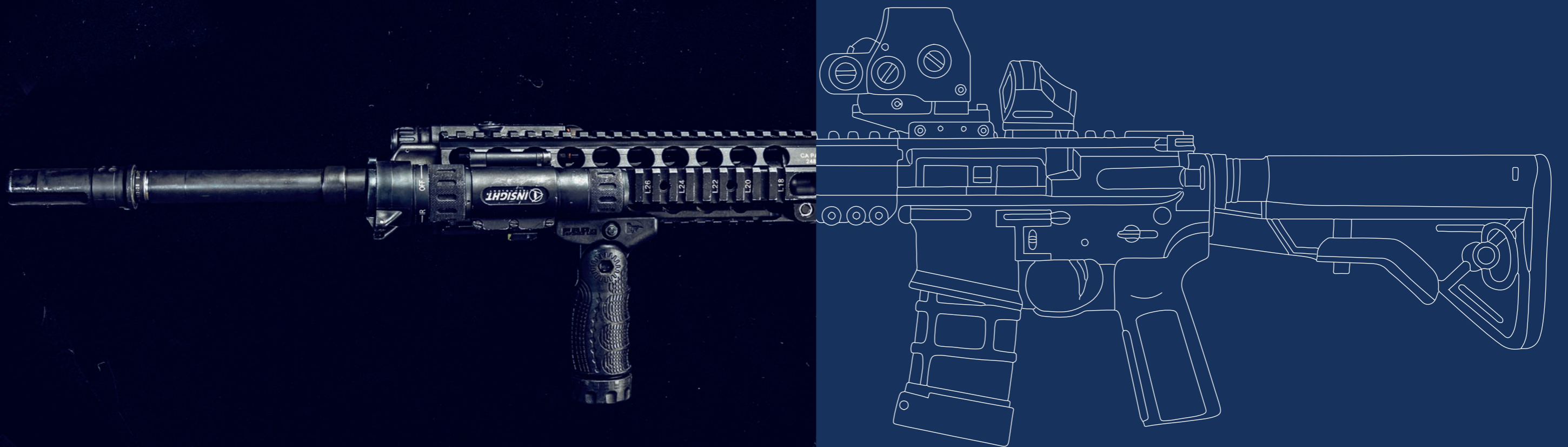
### INDICATIVE SPEND BY AREA





# STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

NEW ZEALAND IS FACING ITS MOST CHALLENGING AND DANGEROUS STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT IN DECADES. EVENTS DURING THE PAST YEAR HAVE DEMONSTRATED THE INCREASING AND COMPOUNDING NATURE OF THREATS TO OUR NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS.





## NEW ZEALAND'S CHALLENGING AND DANGEROUS STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

New Zealand is facing its most challenging and dangerous strategic environment for decades. Recent geopolitical developments demonstrate the increasing and compounding nature of threats to our national security interests. These include Russia's continuing illegal war against Ukraine and blatant disregard for international law, ongoing tensions in the Middle East, and growing strategic competition in the wider Indo-Pacific.

The existing international rules-based order is increasingly being challenged by those who seek to undermine international rules or norms or reshape global orders in ways contrary to New Zealand's values and interests.

Intensifying strategic competition is increasing global and regional tensions, and raising the prospect of military confrontation and conflict.

The Indo-Pacific is a primary geographical theatre for strategic competition, most visibly between China and the United States. China's assertive pursuit of its strategic objectives is the principal driver for strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific, and it continues to use all of its tools of statecraft in ways that can challenge both international norms of behaviour and the security of other states. Of particular concern is the rapid and non-transparent growth of China's military capability.

States within the Indo-Pacific and globally are responding to these pressures by increasingly investing in their own military and security capabilities, deepening and broadening their bilateral and multinational security partnerships, and adopting sharper security postures. This includes our closest international security partners and other states that share security interests with New Zealand.


Rising competition and tensions in the wider Indo-Pacific are playing out in New Zealand's immediate region, which spans from Antarctica through to the South Pacific. While wider international engagement and interest in the Pacific can bring some benefits to the region, it also presents challenges for regional security, stability, and unity.

Climate change remains the primary security concern for Pacific Island countries. It is driving increasing and intensifying natural disasters, and over time could cause critical challenges for some Pacific countries both directly and by exacerbating other security issues.

Both climate change and growing strategic interest in the Pacific are layering on top of other regional security challenges, including vulnerability and exposure to natural hazards, transnational organised crime, illegal fishing, and maritime security threats. Civil disorder has also demonstrated the potential for instability in the Pacific.

Strategic interest in the Southern Ocean and Antarctica is also growing. The Antarctic Treaty System continues to provide the framework for state activity, but it is increasingly coming under pressure. It is clear that the Antarctic region is not immune to the spill-over impacts of strategic competition elsewhere.

New Zealand's geographic isolation no longer shelters us from threats to the extent it once did. We are seeing increasing threats to, and through, our extensive maritime area of interest. In addition to the risk of illegal activities, we face the increasing prospect of hostile forces operating in our wider maritime domain in ways that are coercive and threatening. Cyber intrusions are an ever-present threat, and our physical and virtual connections to the world are increasingly vulnerable.



**INTENSIFYING STRATEGIC COMPETITION IS INCREASING GLOBAL AND REGIONAL TENSIONS, AND RAISING THE PROSPECT OF MILITARY CONFRONTATION AND CONFLICT.**



# STRATEGIC DEFENCE POLICY

## NATIONAL SECURITY

Protecting New Zealand from threats and advancing our national interests through harnessing all tools of statecraft

## OUR DEFENCE INTERESTS

A secure, sovereign, and resilient New Zealand

A stable, secure, and resilient region

Collective security through a strong network of partners

A strong and effective international rules-based order

## OUR DEFENCE POLICY OBJECTIVES

### DEFENCE WILL ACT EARLY AND DELIBERATELY IN PURSUING AND PROTECTING OUR DEFENCE INTERESTS

#### 1 Protect and promote the security of New Zealand and the immediate region.

*Safeguarding our sovereignty and territorial integrity, and promoting and protecting the security of our immediate region and sustaining regional conditions favourable to our security interests.*

#### 2 Enhance the ANZUS alliance with Australia and New Zealand's most important security partnerships.

*Material contributions to our security partnerships, particularly to our alliance with Australia, to the wider Five Eyes partnership, and our bilateral and regional Pacific partnerships.*

#### 3 Contribute to achieving New Zealand's global interests.

*Contribute to global security through ongoing defence engagement, operations, and activities.*

## OUR DEFENCE STRATEGY

### UNDERSTAND

Defence will develop and share enhanced awareness and understanding of key operational and strategic environments, including through close cooperation with domestic and international partners, and the innovative use of new technologies.

### PARTNER

Defence will work closely with other New Zealand agencies and our international partners to support collective security approaches to shared challenges, including through maximising opportunities for enhanced interoperability, and integration.

### ACT

Defence will act early and deliberately to promote and protect New Zealand's interests, and will maintain credible, combat-capable forces able to operate and respond to events across the spectrum of military operations, both independently, and alongside our international security partners.

## BASED ON FOUNDATIONS OF

EQUIP AND SUPPORT THE FORCE

REGENERATED, FIT-FOR-PURPOSE WORKFORCE

CHAPTER TWO

# STRATEGIC DEFENCE POLICY 2025



**THE ONGOING  
DETERIORATION OF OUR  
STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT  
HAS REINFORCED THE  
NEED FOR A PROACTIVE,  
STRATEGY-LED DEFENCE  
POLICY APPROACH.  
DEFENCE WILL ACT EARLY  
AND DELIBERATELY  
IN PROMOTING AND  
PROTECTING KEY  
DEFENCE INTERESTS.**

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**A SECURE,  
SOVEREIGN,  
AND RESILIENT  
NEW ZEALAND**

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**A STABLE, SECURE,  
AND RESILIENT  
REGION**

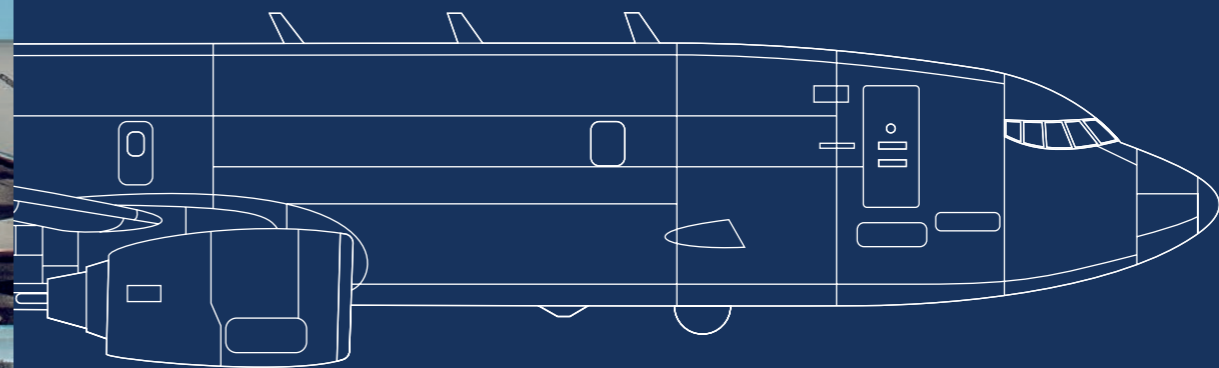
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**COLLECTIVE  
SECURITY THROUGH A  
STRONG NETWORK OF  
PARTNERS**

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**A STRONG AND  
EFFECTIVE  
INTERNATIONAL  
RULES-BASED ORDER**

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The Government has set a high ambition for New Zealand's defence policy, with a particular focus on enhancing our alliance with Australia and our most important security partnerships, and increasing New Zealand's contributions to global collective security efforts that strengthen the existing international rules-based order.

The Government has also emphasised the critical and non-discretionary importance of ensuring the security of our immediate region, which spans from Antarctica into the Pacific, and our constitutional obligations towards defence and security of the Realm. Defence<sup>1</sup> plays a key part in ensuring the security, stability, and resilience of our immediate region, by deterring actions contrary to the security of New Zealand and our regional partners, and helping sustain wider regional conditions favourable to New Zealand's security interests.

To give effect to these priorities, the Government has determined that New Zealand's strategic defence policy will be updated to centre on three new defence policy objectives.

### **DEFENCE POLICY OBJECTIVE 1: PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE SECURITY OF NEW ZEALAND AND THE IMMEDIATE REGION**

Central to New Zealand's freedom, security, and prosperity is the safeguarding of our sovereignty and territorial integrity. Being secure at home enables New Zealand to engage and act regionally and globally in support of our values and wider international interests. This includes delivering on New Zealand's constitutional responsibilities to the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau.

New Zealand also maintains a fundamental interest in the stability, security, and resilience of our immediate region. Defence plays a key role, alongside other New Zealand agencies and international partners, to promote and protect the security of our immediate region, and help sustain wider regional conditions favourable to New Zealand's security interests.

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#### **Defence will:**

- Defend New Zealand and our key strategic interests, and protect against coercion by force.
- Support New Zealand's security and resilience, including by contributing to responses to national contingencies.
- Protect the security of New Zealand's wider maritime area of interest.
- Promote New Zealand's freedom of action in our immediate region.
- Support the security and resilience of Pacific countries, and of the Pacific region as a whole.
- Deter actions contrary to the security of New Zealand and our immediate region, including preventing states that do not share our interests from establishing or normalising a military presence in our immediate region.
- Promote adherence to the existing international rules-based order.
- Ensure its readiness to respond to events across the spectrum of military operations.

### **DEFENCE POLICY OBJECTIVE 2: ENHANCE THE ANZUS ALLIANCE WITH AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND'S MOST IMPORTANT SECURITY PARTNERSHIPS**

Collective security arrangements have always been central to New Zealand's defence and security policy. The Government will ensure New Zealand is materially contributing to our security partnerships, particularly to our alliance with Australia, to the wider Five Eyes partnership, and to our bilateral and regional Pacific partnerships.

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#### **Defence will:**

- Further strengthen our alliance with Australia, including by:
  - Deepening alignment and coordination on policy and strategy development, responses to events, and increasing information sharing.
  - Growing the interoperability and integration of our respective forces to increase our collective strategic weight.
  - Expanding our combined operations and activities in the Pacific and wider Indo-Pacific to address shared security concerns.
- Deepen New Zealand's defence and security engagement and cooperation with Pacific countries.
- Improve our defence engagement, cooperation, and interoperability with our Five Eyes partners.
- Pursue bilateral and multinational opportunities to deepen defence and security cooperation in alignment with our national interests.

### **DEFENCE POLICY OBJECTIVE 3: CONTRIBUTE TO ACHIEVING NEW ZEALAND'S GLOBAL INTERESTS**

New Zealand's interests are global, and Defence will continue to contribute to global security through ongoing defence engagement, operations, and activities.

New Zealand has a particular interest in Indo-Pacific security. This is where our security partners are closely engaged, where Defence contributions would be expected, and where our economic and strategic interests converge. Defence will focus on contributing to activities that reinforce the existing international rules-based order such as exercising our rights and obligations under the United Nations Charter and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS), and supporting the sovereignty and security of regional states.

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#### **Defence will:**

- Contribute to collective efforts to promote and protect Indo-Pacific security.
- Contribute globally to upholding and strengthening the existing international rules-based order.
- Support New Zealand's broader international policy goals.

### **DEFENCE STRATEGY THEMES: UNDERSTAND / PARTNER / ACT**

New Zealand's proactive strategic defence policy approach is guided by three mutually reinforcing themes, which provide direction for Defence's planning and capability development:

**UNDERSTAND:** Defence will develop and share enhanced awareness and understanding of key operational and strategic environments, including through close cooperation with domestic and international partners, and the innovative use of new technologies.

**PARTNER:** Defence will work closely with other New Zealand agencies and our international partners to support collective responses to shared challenges, including through maximising opportunities for enhanced interoperability and integration.

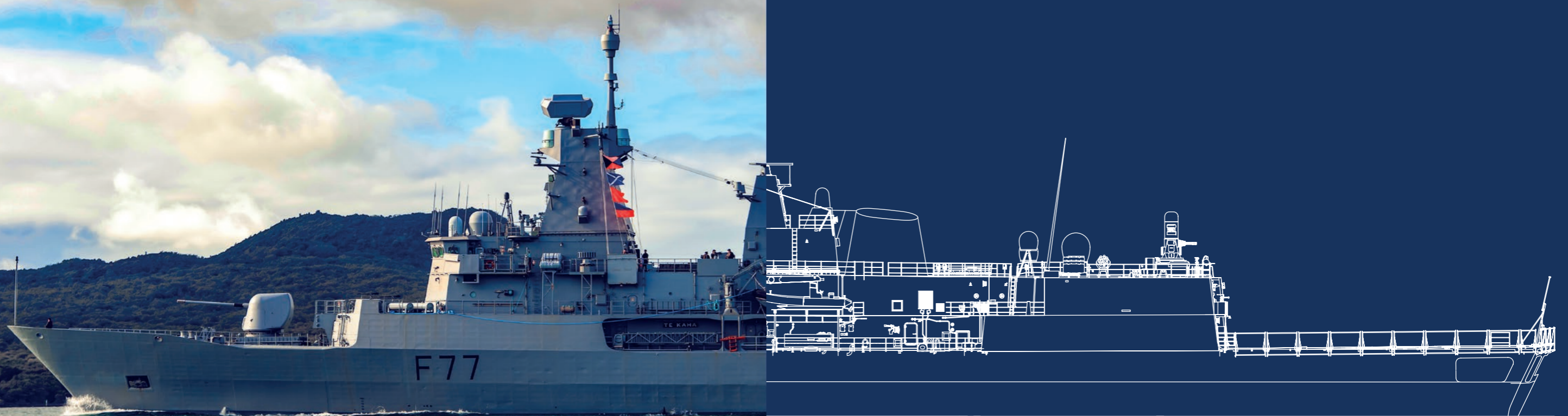
**ACT:** Defence will act early and deliberately to promote and protect New Zealand's interests, and will maintain credible, combat-capable forces able to operate and respond to events across the spectrum of military operations, both independently and alongside our international security partners.

<sup>1</sup> Defence refers to the Ministry of Defence and the New Zealand Defence Force.



# HOW DEFENCE WILL MEET POLICY

THE NZDF PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN THE NATIONAL SECURITY SYSTEM, SUPPORTS NATIONAL RESILIENCE, AND IS THE ONLY ARM OF STATE MANDATED TO APPLY MILITARY FORCE. NO OTHER STATE ENTITY HAS A SIMILAR SCALE OF TRAINED PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE FOR CRISIS RESPONSE.





The core role of the NZDF is to protect New Zealand from threats, and advance New Zealand's interests through operations at sea, on land, and in the air. The NZDF, therefore, must have the trained people and necessary military equipment so it can act effectively in what is becoming a more demanding and deteriorating security and humanitarian operating environment.

## AREAS OF INVESTMENT EMPHASIS

The DCP covers major investments to deliver an NZDF that is:

### Combat capable with enhanced lethality and deterrent effect

Over the next 15 years the NZDF will need to have the combat readiness, capability, and resilience to act in dangerous situations and environments, for extended periods of time. The NZDF also needs greater flexibility to both protect against and utilise new technologies, as well as an ability to deter adversaries through new strike capabilities. This requires investment across the maritime, land, aerospace, and information domains.

### A force multiplier with Australia and interoperable with partners

New Zealand and Australia have committed to modernise our alliance and further strengthen our bilateral defence relationship, including the development of a more greatly integrated 'Anzac' force. This means the two countries will combine military forces in defence of shared interests, common values, and territory. This will include the introduction of more common, complementary, and increasingly interoperable capability<sup>2</sup>, further entrenching our ability to act together in support of shared interests.

In addition to being a force multiplier with Australia<sup>3</sup>, the NZDF must be increasingly interoperable with our Five Eyes partners, Pacific Island countries, and our partners in the wider Indo-Pacific including with the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA)<sup>4</sup> ASEAN partners, Japan, and the Republic of Korea.

### Innovative and has improved situational awareness

Innovation in this DCP covers new ways of doing things, as well as exploring new technologies for the NZDF that will help with intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR).

In the short and medium term there will be a greater focus on uncrewed technology. This includes long-range uncrewed aerial vehicles to provide more persistent maritime surveillance; uncrewed vertical take-off and landing aircraft to replace some maritime helicopter tasks; and uncrewed surface and sub-surface vessels to help monitor and protect our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and support our Pacific partners.

Defence will also continue to explore innovative delivery models, including joint procurement with Australia when it makes sense to do so.

A two-yearly review cycle of this DCP will provide greater flexibility by adopting technologies earlier in their lifecycle, and by incorporating new but proven technologies.

<sup>2</sup> Interoperability is the ability of military equipment and/or personnel to operate effectively with each other. This refers to the NZDF's equipment and personnel being able to work seamlessly with the Australian Defence Force, and with partners' militaries.

<sup>3</sup> A force multiplier refers to something (such as equipment, training, or strategy) that enhances the effectiveness of a military force(s). This enables a force to achieve greater results than it could with its own size or resources.

<sup>4</sup> The Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) provide a framework for defence cooperation between Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and the United Kingdom, and came into being on 1 November 1971.



## WHAT THE NZDF WILL NEED TO DO

To meet the expectations of the Government, the New Zealand public, Australia and our close partners, and to uphold our constitutional obligations towards the Realm countries (the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau), the following effects must be delivered by the NZDF:

**PROJECT** force<sup>5</sup>: The NZDF needs to be able to project force to deter adversaries and respond to crises in our region, and defend the Realm countries.

**MAINTAIN** persistent situational awareness in our EEZ, the South Pacific and Southern Ocean: A range of capabilities must be available to ensure that the NZDF has persistent awareness of New Zealand's EEZ, the South Pacific, the Southern Ocean and the Ross Dependency.

**DETER** through denial of opportunity: The NZDF, alongside our Pacific and other international partners and as part of a whole-of-government approach, should act to address existing and emerging regional security challenges. This will serve to deny opportunities for actors that seek to challenge the existing regional strategic balance and undermine our shared security in the Pacific.

**SUSTAIN** combat operations concurrently: For example, the NZDF should be able to sustain land combat operations for at least 24 months, or multiple smaller concurrent operations.

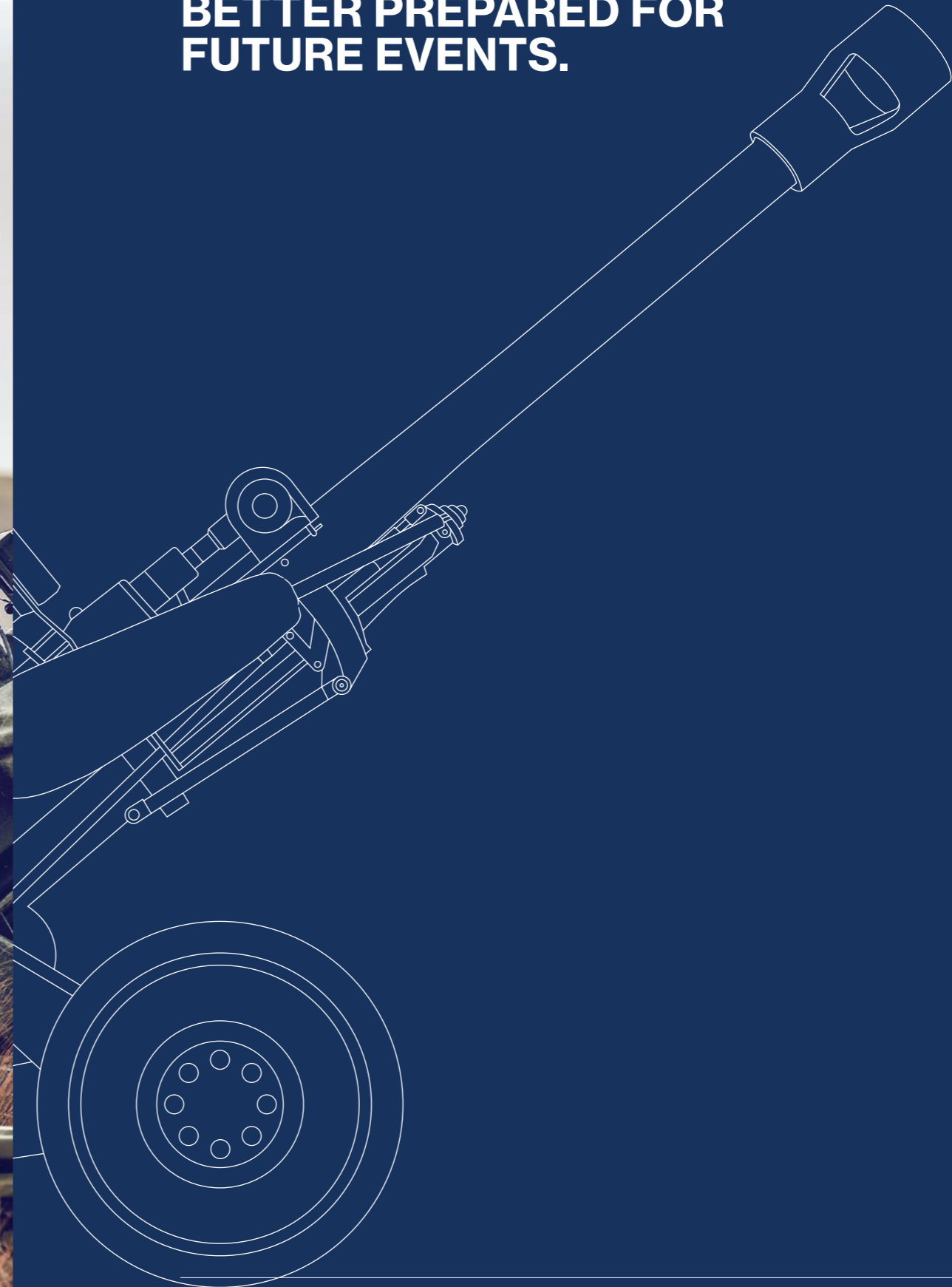
**CONTRIBUTE** to national defence and help deliver whole-of-government security objectives: This includes assisting other agencies to detect and respond to transnational organised crime in our immediate region, including the Realm countries; by responding to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, narcotics and people smuggling; undertaking search and rescue; and providing other domestic support, including in response to disaster relief, counter-terrorism, and explosives disposal.

<sup>5</sup> The ability to project the NZDF, including its people and equipment, to another region in the world according to the needs of a military operations.



# INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS

INVESTMENTS NEED TO BE MADE TO FIRST STABILISE THE NZDF AND THEN BUILD IT TO BE BETTER PREPARED FOR FUTURE EVENTS.





**THIS DCP IS AN INDICATIVE COMMITMENT OF \$12 BILLION ON DEFENCE CAPABILITY AND CRITICAL SUPPORTS OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS. IT INCLUDES A \$9 BILLION INCREASE TO BASELINE FUNDING.**

Delivering the force for New Zealand's future will take time, but this DCP is realistic, phased, and flexible. It outlines an indicative commitment of \$12 billion on Defence capability and critical supports over the next four years. This includes a \$9 billion increase to baseline funding.

The DCP outlines investments in new capabilities to enhance combat capability, including strike capacity, as well as the replacement of critical assets and the tools and supports NZDF personnel will need to succeed.

It focuses on the next four years in order to allow the plan to adapt as the world around us changes, and to ensure progress can be tracked and the force built in a sustainable way, at a pace that the NZDF can absorb. Indicative investments out to 2040 have been outlined to show intent for the force of the future, but this is not a static plan. The mix of investments and timings is likely to change over the next 15 years.

This DCP outlines indicative major investments in capability and critical enablers (investments with an indicative cost of more than \$50 million)<sup>6</sup> to support the force of the future. Defence took a bottom-up approach to develop an NZDF that meets the current and predicted future environment. Compared to previous DCPs, this plan includes further investments in lethality, uncrewed systems, and digital systems.

In addition to the major investments, the NZDF undertakes many smaller capital investments. These projects will focus on replacing and refreshing essential pieces of equipment that can be acquired on a small scale and with lower risk. These projects are not individually listed in this document, but their total investment is included in the indicative four-year commitment total.

Detailed descriptions of priority investments cover maritime, land, aerospace, and information domains, as well as other critical areas including people, estate, digital and logistics. The DCP is informed by considering the 'whole-of-life' costs of platforms, personnel, and activities.

Through these investments, New Zealand will have a force with more personnel, modern equipment, and fit-for-purpose estate. This will enable the NZDF to have greater situational awareness, and an increased ability to act.

<sup>6</sup> Cost figures in this document include both capital and operating uplift, unless stated otherwise, and therefore are not directly comparable with previous DCPs.

## ENHANCED STRIKE

Due to the deteriorating security environment, and the increased threat to New Zealand's defence interests, the level of strike capability will be increased through the procurement of new missile systems. This will provide a deterrent effect to adversaries and an ability to respond to hostile vessels at a greater range.

### NEAR-TERM INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2025–2028

#### Enhanced strike capabilities

**What it is:** The NZDF will improve its combat capability by enhancing its strike capabilities, particularly in the maritime domain and at longer range. Options include arming existing air and maritime platforms with missiles, such as the P-8A Poseidon fleet and the Anzac frigates or exploring other options, including land-based strike.

**Why it is important:** Strike capabilities provide a deterrent against vessels threatening New Zealand's territory or NZDF units deployed on operations. To enhance interoperability, Defence will explore acquiring the same capabilities as Australia or partners, who are enhancing their capabilities in this area.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$100–300M**

### FUTURE INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2029–2039

#### Maritime strike across domains

While the initial investment will be focused on selecting the first asset/s (ships, planes, or vehicles) to be equipped with missiles, future refreshes will consider expanding this to other assets, potentially delivering long range strike from multiple domains.

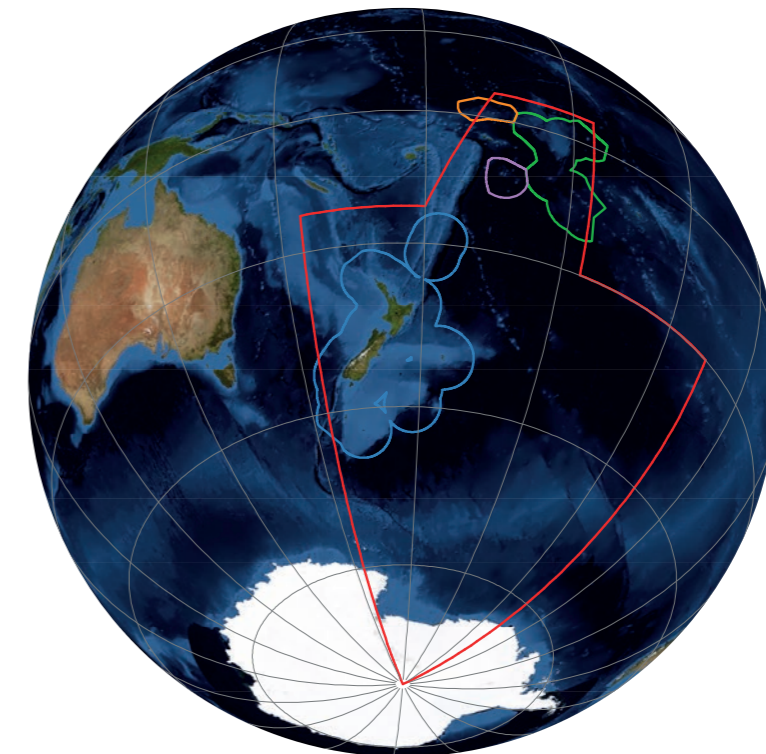


Figure 1: New Zealand's Territory

Orange line	TOKELAU EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE
Green line	COOK ISLANDS EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE
Purple line	NIUE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE
Blue line	NEW ZEALAND EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE
Red line	NEW ZEALAND SEARCH AND RESCUE REGION

## MARITIME DOMAIN

New Zealand's geographic location carries unique challenges. We are an island state with significant maritime responsibilities, that require specialist equipment and personnel skills, knowledge, and experience. New Zealand's search and rescue area, as well as its EEZ, are amongst the largest in the world.

New Zealand is also far removed from its trading partners – as such it relies on the free and open movement of global trade, robust border controls, and related defence and security measures.

The NZDF undertakes a range of tasks to support New Zealand's maritime interests, including monitoring and understanding what is happening in our maritime areas, patrolling and interdicting, moving people and equipment over the sea/ocean, and supporting search and rescue efforts.



## The new maritime fleet

Most of the current ships in the Royal New Zealand Navy fleet will reach the end of their intended design life by the mid-2030s. A Maritime Fleet Renewal programme has been established to analyse a range of options to deliver a modern naval fleet.

It is expected that the future fleet will be able to deliver maritime combat, maritime patrol, maritime security, sealift, hydrography and diving support, support to other government agencies, and support to humanitarian and disaster events.

While crewed ships are expected to comprise most of the investments, complementary investment in uncrewed assets will also be explored. The capabilities will collectively be able to operate across a range of environments.

The current fleet comprises eight ships across five classes, with many aspects of unique and customised design. Maintenance, operations, and training varies significantly between ship classes. As such, considerations to simplify the fleet, including the potential for a common hull design for the frigate and patrol vessel replacement, will be considered.

The investments identified in this DCP provide an indicative example of capability. The final selection of the future fleet will be determined through programme and individual business cases.

Development of uncrewed systems and preparation for the future fleet will be a priority in the first four years, while most maritime fleet replacement investments occur in the next phase of the DCP. This will allow for the adoption of new and emerging technology to achieve transformational change for the Navy, including across training, trades, and infrastructure.

HMNZS Manawanui will not be replaced with a new vessel. Dive and hydrographic tasking will be undertaken by other platforms rather than a dedicated platform.

## NEAR-TERM INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2025–2028

### Frigate sustainment programme

**What it is:** This programme provides additional maintenance and upgrades to extend the life of the Anzac frigates HMNZS Te Kaha and Te Mana into the early 2030s. This allows for the full benefits of the recently completed combat system upgrades of the frigates to be met, prior to their replacement.

**Why it is important:** Extending the life of the frigates will retain Defence's combat capable ships and the skilled workforce required to operate combat vessels until the ships are replaced. This ensures retaining a critical combat capability able to operate at home, in our region, and globally. Rather than removing the frigates from service for an extended period, the maintenance work is planned to progress incrementally, aiming to ensure the frigates are available for training, operations, and contingencies.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$300–600M**

### Persistent surface surveillance (uncrewed autonomous vessels)

**What it is:** Surveillance from uncrewed surface vessels will complement traditional crewed ships and aircraft and provide a persistent capability. These systems may be deployed from crewed ships to enhance their effective sensor range, and/or independently for multiple months to enhance NZDF's maritime domain awareness and in support of other government agencies constabulary missions such as countering transnational criminal activity and resource protection.

**Why it is important:** The NZDF is required to operate across a vast area that spans from Antarctica to the equator. Persistent uncrewed surveillance capabilities provide the NZDF and other government agencies with better awareness and targeting. It will provide a better visibility of activities in the region (thereby enhancing deterrence by detection), and allow for more targeted, effective, and efficient use of traditional crewed platforms.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$50–100M**

Note: additional investments in these capabilities are also proposed for future years (see below).

## Replacing the maritime helicopters

**What it is:** The procurement of a fleet of helicopters able to operate from Navy ships. The NZDF's current SH-2G(I) Super Seasprite maritime helicopters, which can operate from the Navy's frigates, offshore patrol vessels, the fleet tanker, and multi-role vessel, were purchased second-hand and are all reaching the end of their life.

**Why it is important:** Maritime helicopters are a core part of the frigates' capability as they increase the platform's defensive and offensive abilities. They also extend the frigates' surveillance range, overall weapon capability, and ability to support non-combat tasks like humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. These helicopters can also be used on other naval vessels, increasing their surveillance capability, potentially providing offensive combat capability and supporting transporting land forces from ship to shore, and in support of other government agencies.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$2B PLUS**

In future years, investments will consider acquiring uncrewed systems to increase the number of deployable aircraft and provide longer endurance, and for related infrastructure.

## FUTURE INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2029–2039

### Multirole vessel

HMNZS Canterbury, the Navy's multirole vessel, provides the ability to transport and deploy personnel, vehicles, helicopters, uncrewed systems, and supplies over long distances, including over-the-shore.

### Persistent surface and sub-surface surveillance

Investment in uncrewed maritime surveillance capabilities, with consideration given to subsurface systems to complement uncrewed and crewed surface vessels.

### Replacing the Anzac frigates and patrol vessels

Maintaining a maritime combat capability enhances New Zealand's freedom of action at sea, and its ability to deter malign actions within our area of interest. New Zealand also needs to be able to patrol, defend, and enforce its EEZ, and make meaningful contributions to regional and global maritime security efforts, with Australia and partners.

Investment will continue to sustain the Anzac frigates until their replacements are introduced to service. The Anzac frigates will be replaced with comparable contemporary frigates and the offshore patrol vessels will also be replaced with consideration given to whether commonality of design or systems with the frigates may be possible. The importance of a common design is to maximise crew training, qualification, and flexibility, while reducing costs of ongoing maintenance and support. A combination of capabilities from combat platforms, uncrewed technologies (air, surface and subsurface), deployable teams (for example survey, diving, and boarding), and patrol ships will be considered.

### Southern Ocean patrol capability

The Navy's existing patrol capabilities do not fully meet New Zealand's requirements, particularly in the Southern Ocean. A new Southern Ocean patrol capability would close this gap. It would broaden the patrol area and enhance our awareness of what is occurring in the Southern Ocean. This could include a combination of uncrewed technologies, deployable boarding teams, and platforms.



## LAND DOMAIN

When Defence responds to security events and conflicts in our region, and beyond, it is land forces on the ground that restore peace, help build the capabilities of foreign forces, secure areas, and protect civilians. There is a continued need to retain a deployable and a combat capable land force that is agile and responsive to the changing environment and threats to New Zealand. The Army needs to be able to operate in environments where increasingly sophisticated high-tech systems are used.

Our land forces are a critical part of supporting our alliance with Australia, by acting as a force multiplier as part of the trans-Tasman coalition. Throughout history our land forces have deployed and fought alongside each other, and this will continue. Defence will continue to ensure our land forces are interoperable and able to provide an integrated force when needed, while maintaining the ability to operate independently.

Investments in the land domain over the next four years focus on continuing to develop an Army that is combat capable and protected on the contemporary battlefield. Investments focus on the continued replacement of the Army's vehicle fleet, further rollout of the Network Enabled Army programme, and beginning the refresh of the Army's combat capabilities.

## NEAR-TERM INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2025–2028

### Javelin anti-tank missile upgrade

**What it is:** The Javelin is a guided anti-armour<sup>7</sup> missile system designed to destroy tanks and other armoured vehicles and fortified positions. The system is currently in service with the NZDF but requires replacement with a newer version, able to fire improved missiles.

**Why it is important:** Having a medium range anti-armour weapon is a critical capability for infantry and Special Forces as it enables them to defend against threats at range. The essential nature of this weapon system has been proven on modern battlefields.

**INDICATIVE COST: UP TO \$50M**

### Network Enabled Army

**What it is:** The Network Enabled Army (NEA) is an ongoing programme to provide the New Zealand Army, from the individual soldier to Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand, with the capability necessary to operate in a modern military context, through provision of digital communications, intelligence, surveillance, and electronic warfare systems.

In this period, upgraded radios with improved network capabilities will be purchased, and improved network infrastructure provided, to ensure the effective deployment of a Network Enabled Army.

**Why it is important:** Modern military capabilities are networked, so that information can more effectively be shared with platforms and soldiers.

A network enabled army will provide the force with more timely and complete information. This means better decisions can be made and disseminated faster, which is advantageous across the spectrum of operations from combat to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. A network enabled army is also able to integrate and communicate effectively with other government agencies, and key partners. It includes the integration of communications suites into fleets of vehicles as well as on the person.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$300–600M**

## Special Operations sustainment programme

**What it is:** An ongoing programme of equipment replacement and upgrades ensuring the Special Forces capability continues to be able to operate at an elite level, with a particular focus on interoperability with our Five Eyes partners.

**Why it is important:** Special Forces provide a range of military options up to, and including, combat, and can deploy at short notice to any location in the world. This includes being capable of operating in a wide range of geographic areas throughout the full spectrum of operations.

This requires a Special Forces capability that is integrated across the national security sector and globally connected with Australia and partners.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$50–100M**

### Vehicles for the NZDF

**What it is:** Continued replacement of many of the Army's and wider NZDF vehicles. This will include the replacement of garrison and training support vehicles, upgrading the light armoured vehicle (LAV) turrets, replacing recovery vehicles, and continued replacement of the fleet of Unimog and Pinzgauer vehicles for operational tasks. These investments will also include networked communications equipment as well as associated training, infrastructure, and maintenance support.

**Why it is important:** Garrison and training support vehicles are needed for use in New Zealand to support domestic operations. The vehicles are also used for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

The need for operational utility vehicles, the Unimogs and Pinzgauers, has been demonstrated through their heavy use over the past two decades, from protecting the NZDF's frontline forces to providing support to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief following natural events in New Zealand and our region.

The upgraded LAVs will help ensure NZDF personnel can continue to safely and effectively manoeuvre and fight on the modern battlefield.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$600M–1B**

## FUTURE INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2029–2039

### Future Land-based Strike

This investment will look at replacements for the New Zealand Army's 105mm Light Gun, which could be replaced by towed artillery (or mortars), self-propelled artillery (or mortars), or rocket-based systems. Included within the project is the associated training, maintenance and infrastructure that relates to a new system.

### Future Manoeuvre Systems (LAV replacement)

New Zealand Army's fleet of LAVs are the NZDF's primary combat vehicle. They provide land forces with firepower, manoeuvre, and protection. Investment in their replacement may include a similar armoured vehicle or other technology to enable the combat capability of land forces.

### Network Enabled Army

The Network Enabled Army programme will procure additional equipment to ensure the entire Army is network enabled, as well as the requisite infrastructure to ensure equipment is stored and maintained effectively.

### Vehicles for the NZDF

Completion of the replacement of the Army's vehicle fleet, with a particular focus during this period on the heavier vehicle fleets.

### Other investments

The NZDF's Special Forces, which includes sailors, soldiers, aviators, and civilians, will continue to be invested in as they provide government with response options that conventional forces cannot offer.

The DCP also includes multiple projects focused on replacing and refreshing essential pieces of soldier systems that can be acquired on a small scale and with lower risk.

<sup>7</sup> Armoured vehicles can withstand the impact of bullets, shells, rockets, and missiles. Anti-armour weapons can penetrate these armoured vehicles.



## AEROSPACE DOMAIN

As a geographically remote country which deploys expeditionary forces and needs to cover considerable distances, the ability to operate from the air is critical. Given our vast maritime domain, surveillance from the air and space plays a key role in understanding and responding to what is happening in our region. Air transport is the only way to deploy forces rapidly and over long distances.

New Zealand recently acquired four P-8A Poseidon and five new C-130J-30 Hercules aircraft. In the next four years this investment will be complemented by additional surveillance and transport investments.

Guaranteeing access to satellite communication and other systems that rely on space will also be critical to a range of new and existing technologies and systems used by the NZDF.

## NEAR-TERM INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2025–2028

### Counter Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UAS)

**What it is:** The procurement of deployable UAS defence systems.

**Why it is important:** UAS systems have become ubiquitous, and the unauthorised use of them is increasing. UAS are cheap, easy to acquire, and can pose a significant safety hazard or a security threat. The NZDF requires a capability that can detect, track, identify, and, when necessary and legally permitted, defeat unauthorised UAS that pose a safety hazard or a security threat.

**INDICATIVE COST: UP TO \$50M**

### Long-range remotely piloted aircraft

**What it is:** Long-range, uncrewed, remotely piloted aircraft to support land and maritime forces with improved and persistent intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance over longer distances, including in the Pacific and Southern Ocean.

**Why it is important:** This will provide a greater range and coverage of operational areas. Crewed aircraft will remain in service but in some situations, particularly during long duration missions, it will be preferable to use uncrewed aircraft.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$100–300M**

### Replacing the Boeing 757 fleet

**What it is:** The procurement of modern passenger aircraft for the transportation of people and equipment. The aircraft will replace the NZDF's aging fleet of two Boeing 757s. The 757s were purchased second hand in the early 2000s, and are reaching the end of their economic life, resulting in increasing costs, reliability issues, and extended maintenance periods.

**Why it is important:** The 757s carry military personnel, equipment, and freight to support operations and deployments over long distances. They are also used to support New Zealand's presence in Antarctica, evacuate New Zealanders from conflict and disaster areas, and carry civilians and Ministers for trade, diplomatic, and consular missions. As a dedicated government aircraft, they can operate at short notice and at the direction of the Government, to areas where commercial airlines and other aircraft do not operate.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$600M–1B**

### Space capabilities

**What it is:** Space is critical for modern operations and has become a domain of competition. Investment will be made in systems that plug into partner networks to understand what is happening in space, especially to identify activities that might pose a risk to New Zealand's interests.

Additionally, modern operations are reliant on services provided from space systems, such as communication, surveillance, and navigation. Investment will be made to increase NZDF's access and resilience across such systems, including ground stations to access partner satellite systems.

**Why it is important:** Access to space systems has become critical on the modern battlefield, with space-based systems being relied on for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, communication, navigation, and targeting. Space systems enable precision on the battlefield, and these capabilities are a prerequisite to operate crewed and uncrewed systems as well as to maintain a combat capable, resilient, and flexible force.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$300–600M**

## FUTURE INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2029–2039

### C-130J-30 upgrades

Upgrades will be undertaken as required on the new C-130J-30 Hercules aircraft.

### Long-range remotely piloted aircraft

Additional long-range, uncrewed, remotely piloted aircraft will be procured to support land and maritime forces with improved and persistent intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance over longer distances, including in the Pacific and Southern Ocean. These capabilities reduce the risk posed to personnel in conflict zones.

### P-8A Poseidon aircraft upgrade

To fully retain the operational capability and interoperability with partners of the P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft, systems, and equipment upgrades will be installed as they become available. These upgrades will occur throughout the life of the aircraft and were planned for at the time of purchase of the fleet.

### Uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) defence

Further investment in systems to protect deployed personnel and infrastructure from attack and observation by uncrewed aerial systems (UAS).

### Space capabilities

Continued investment in space capabilities to support intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance communication, navigation, and targeting.

### Utility helicopter fleet

The make-up of the NZDF's fleet of utility helicopters (NH90s and A109s) will be considered, with the possibility of increasing numbers, a mid-life upgrade of current aircraft, and/or replacing with different aircraft.



## INFORMATION DOMAIN

The information domain includes intelligence activities, information operations, electronic warfare, and cyberspace operations.

Investment in the information domain, through the procurement of new hardware, software, and skilled personnel, will improve the NZDF's ability to respond to various threats, provide greater response options to government, and improve the NZDF's ability to make more informed and faster decisions in an increasingly complex environment.

## NEAR-TERM INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2025–2028

### Enhancing cyber security capabilities

**What it is:** The NZDF will further develop defensive cyber capabilities to ensure that it can defend deployed assets and people against cyber threats posed by adversaries.

**Why it is important:** Cyber connected capabilities must be protected to ensure that NZDF keeps pace and can defend against threats posed by adversaries while deployed. This will ensure that the NZDF remains a credible and trusted partner, can operate effectively, and deliver military effects while deployed.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$100–300M**

### Enterprise Resource Planning

**What it is:** Investment in modern military enterprise resource management software, which integrates multiple processes such as workforce management and payroll, logistics, supply and asset management, finance, and engineering by creating a single source of trusted organisational data.

**Why it is important:** This is a significant contributor to be able to competitively operate in a combat situation as well as maintain interoperability with Australia. Investments will allow NZDF to optimise its existing and future enterprise resource management system.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$1B PLUS**

## Improved intelligence functions

**What it is:** The NZDF will enhance its intelligence function. This includes training people, improving systems, and increasing the ability of the NZDF to process information that support operations across the spectrum of conflict.

**Why it is important:** By improving the NZDF's intelligence function, the force will be able to make more effective use of existing capabilities. It will improve targeting and ensure strike capabilities are available at the right place and right time if required. This will reduce the time that aircraft and ships spend searching and more time responding to events in New Zealand's EEZ and the region. More intelligence will be collected, and this will be more easily shared, when relevant, with other government agencies.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$50–100M**

## Updating classified digital services

**What it is:** Continued investment to update the systems that deliver classified digital services will ensure the NZDF's information and classified intelligence is protected, at home and during operations, that its personnel can communicate securely with one another and with partners when conducting joint operations, and that the NZDF will continue to have the ability to receive critical intelligence. This is the next phase of a current project.

**Why it is important:** Military personnel must be able to communicate securely internally and, with partners at home and while deployed. By updating classified digital services, the NZDF will enhance its interoperability with partners and will continue to meet current commitments including rapid real-time information sharing and exchange to help decision-making while maintaining the safety of NZDF personnel and capabilities.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$100–300M**

## FUTURE INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2029–2039

### Enhancing cyber capabilities

Ongoing investment in defensive cyber capabilities so the NZDF can continue to defend deployed assets and people against cyber threats posed by adversaries. This will ensure that the NZDF remains a credible and trusted partner that can operate effectively, and deliver military effects while deployed.

### Improved intelligence functions

Continued investment in an effective intelligence function to maximise the effectiveness of new platforms.

### Information Warfare Academy

Establishment of an information warfare academy to strengthen and consolidate the training for personnel operating in the information domain.



# INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS IN CRITICAL ENABLERS

## DEFENCE ESTATE

The Defence Estate is maintained on behalf of government by the NZDF. It comprises approximately 4,700 buildings across nine main camps and bases, two large training areas and numerous regional support facilities, with a 2024 land and building value of \$4.777 billion.

The NZDF's estate and infrastructure is a national strategic asset and a critical enabler of the NZDF. As well as providing training, working, and living environments, and vital infrastructure critical for generating and maintaining the NZDF, it adds to the resilience of New Zealand in times of need. The Defence Estate is also used by other government agencies, including the New Zealand Police, and the New Zealand Customs Service, as well as Australia and partners.

The Defence Estate consists of a range of buildings, facilities and infrastructure of varying ages and stages of repair, which, in most cases, were not designed or constructed to support modern military capabilities. A large proportion of the Defence Estate was built over 80 years ago, during World War II. In addition, living facilities are no longer meeting the needs of the NZDF and are largely unfit for purpose.

To improve the ability to recruit, train and retain personnel, the NZDF will provide the right infrastructure in the right locations, with safer and fit-for-purpose assets and facilities. This will allow the NZDF to support both its people and the delivery of outputs.

## NEAR-TERM INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2025–2028

### Accommodation, Messing, and Dining Modernisation

**What it is:** This investment is for a pilot programme at Linton Military Camp that will, over time, introduce buildings that are fit-for-purpose and support a modern and diverse NZDF to deliver military outputs.

**Why it is important:** Existing accommodation, messing and dining facilities are no longer fit-for-purpose. The lack of modern living facilities contributes to attrition of military personnel, which impacts the NZDF's capabilities.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$100–300M**

### Defence Estate Regeneration Programme

**What it is:** The overarching programme for managing the regeneration of the Defence Estate to ensure it is fit-for-purpose. Investment in this period focuses on compliance, resolving health, safety, and security concerns, and maintaining asset usefulness as far as practicable.

Some of the larger estate and infrastructure programmes of work, while part of the overall Defence Estate Regeneration Programme, are managed separately. More detail is provided on these below.

**Why it is important:** Like all infrastructure, the Defence Estate needs continuous investment to ensure that it remains fit-for-purpose. Facilities such as training areas, ranges, airfields, docks, barracks, workspaces, and accommodation are critical to ensuring NZDF personnel are combat-ready, and their equipment is well maintained.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$600M–1B**



**DEFENCE ESTATE  
COMPRISES OF  
APPROXIMATELY 4,700  
BUILDINGS ACROSS NINE  
MAIN CAMPS AND BASES,  
TWO LARGE TRAINING  
AREAS AND NUMEROUS  
REGIONAL SUPPORT  
FACILITIES, WITH A 2024  
LAND AND BUILDING  
VALUE OF \$4.777 BILLION.**



## MAIN NZDF LOCATIONS



## Defence Housing Programme

**What it is:** The Defence Housing Programme will create an affordable, modern, high-quality NZDF housing estate that supports operational effectiveness, mitigates attrition of key personnel, and provides overall value for money. This will be achieved through refurbishment, construction, and leasing of housing for NZDF personnel. This programme will continue beyond the first four years of this DCP.

**Why it is important:** To ensure the appropriate operational, training, and headquarters functions can be delivered from different camps and bases across the country, many NZDF personnel are required to relocate multiple times throughout their career, often far from their wider family and support networks. NZDF housing plays a role in supporting personnel and their families through the unique challenges associated with serving in the NZDF. Access to affordable, modern and healthy accommodation contributes to the retention of key personnel, the ability to post personnel to locations across New Zealand, and the effective deployment of military capability at short notice.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$300–600M**

## Future Devonport naval base design

**What it is:** A design for improved and upgraded facilities at Devonport Naval Base will be developed with a focus on upgraded and modern training environments, upgraded secure facilities and office spaces, and operational areas, including wharves, jetties and the dockyard, that are fit-for-purpose for the Navy's updated vessels and personnel. Once the design is completed construction work undertaken at Devonport will be funded through the overall Defence Estate Regeneration Programme.

**Why it is important:** The Naval Base is where sailors begin their career, is their primary place of work, and home to the functions that support the fleet when at sea. The Future Devonport Naval Base Programme will establish how this facility can be modernised to continue supporting New Zealand's Navy.

**INDICATIVE COST: UP TO \$50M**

## Ohakea Infrastructure Programme

**What it is:** This is the final phase of a programme which addresses the shortfalls with existing facilities and infrastructure. Investments in this phase include airfield upgrades, logistics facilities, accommodation upgrades, and three waters infrastructure.

**Why it is important:** Base Ohakea is a critical NZDF base. It houses the NH90 and A109 helicopters, the P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft, and pilot and aircrew training aircraft. Some of the existing facilities and infrastructure have issues with age, capacity, fitness-for-purpose, compliance, and staff living and working standards. These investments will ensure that Base Ohakea is able to continue supporting military operations out to, and beyond, 2035.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$300–600M**

## FUTURE INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2029–2039

### Defence Estate Regeneration Programme

Ongoing investment, building on the planning and design undertaken in the first four years. This will see significant work undertaken across the Defence Estate to ensure it is fit-for-purpose for personnel working, training, operational, and living needs.

### Defence Housing Programme

Continuation of the Defence Housing Programme to deliver an affordable, modern, high-quality NZDF housing estate that supports operational effectiveness, mitigates future attrition of key personnel, and provides overall value for money.



## DEFENCE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### NEAR-TERM INDICATIVE INVESTMENT 2025–2028

#### Defence Science & Technology uplift

**What it is:** Defence will invest in research and development in science and technology to ensure the NZDF can operate and compete alongside partners in contested and congested environments.

**Why it is important:** Defence Science & Technology provides specialist support to current and future operations and capabilities. They provide expertise to minimise risks and maximise opportunities from emerging technologies.

**INDICATIVE COST: UP TO \$50M**

#### Technology accelerator

**What it is:** A technology accelerator will be established to enable New Zealand's high technology sector to quickly develop advanced platforms and systems specifically focused on New Zealand defence problems, and the ability to deliver these rapidly where needed. It would help transition technology from the prototype phase to 'service ready' capabilities that could be readily acquired by the NZDF (at limited scale). This will include funding for projects and people to investigate new ways of delivering military effects.

**Why it is important:** The accelerator will improve industry's understanding of NZDF requirements, which will allow for rapid technology adoption by facilitating technology transfer and integration across classification. The accelerator will also increase national resilience.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$100–300M**

## DIGITAL

As technology continues to advance at a rapid pace, strong digital capability is critical to all NZDF operations. The NZDF needs to be able to utilise data and digital technologies to enhance its operations, improve decision-making, operate with allies, and streamline processes. In line with the Digital Strategy for Aotearoa, potential government-wide opportunities for cost-saving or ways to leverage shared investments across government will be investigated to ensure value for money.

### NEAR-TERM INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2025–2028

#### Digital modernisation

**What it is:** Investment to consolidate and integrate data and digital technologies across the services and platforms.

**Why it is important:** Consolidating data and digital technologies will ensure a stable and resilient digital base for combat forces, that is interoperable with Five Eyes partners and enhances the ability to collaborate with a wider range of nations without having to establish bespoke systems.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$100–300M**

#### Information Management

**What it is:** The programme will improve the NZDF's ability to store and retrieve information, and to share information with Australia and partners and other government organisations. It will allow for the growth of data, analytics, and information management capabilities.

**Why it is important:** Accurate, timely and trustworthy data and information are key to strategic decision-making, interoperability with Australia and partners, and working in real time across multiple domains, networks, and countries.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$100–300M**

### FUTURE INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2029–2039

#### Digital modernisation

Continued investment in ensuring data and digital technologies are coherent across the services and platforms.

## LOGISTICS

As COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine have highlighted, New Zealand's supply chains and logistics can easily be impacted by events on the other side of the world. A defence force is only able to operate as long as it has access to supplies and logistics support, whether that be food, fuel, spare parts or equipment. This makes logistics a critical enabler for the NZDF. Investment will be required to ensure more resilient supply chains and logistics.

### NEAR-TERM INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2025–2028

#### Logistic Resilience

**What it is:** Improved logistics, particularly addressing supply chain vulnerability through improved logistics and increased stocks of munitions and spare parts, will enable the NZDF to carry out an increasing number of activities. This will involve a gradual increase in the procurement of key commodities to build resilience across the logistics system.

**Why it is important:** Supply chains are stretched and under pressure. They are expected to remain contested in the future. The NZDF needs to secure reliable supplies and build more stocks of munitions and other key commodities.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$300–600M**

### Consolidated Logistics Project infrastructure

**What it is:** Completion of the Consolidated Logistics Project with a regional supply facility built at Burnham Military Camp and a regional vehicle storage facility built at Linton.

**Why it is important:** The NZDF has moved from an 'Equip the Unit' to an 'Equip the Force' approach. Equip the Force is fundamental to managing a broader array of equipment, with reduced fleet and equipment numbers, providing significant economic benefit to NZDF. To achieve this approach, centralised storage and maintenance facilities are key. These facilities will complete the Consolidated Logistics Project infrastructure builds and support the full realisation of the economic benefits of 'Equip the Force'.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$100–300M**

### FUTURE INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2029–2039

Addressing supply chain vulnerability through improved logistics and increased stocks of munitions, and spare parts.

Continued investments in the procurement and storage of key commodities to build resilience against supply chain shocks.



## PEOPLE

People are an essential component to any military capability. To deliver the force that New Zealand needs it is critical to have highly skilled, motivated, and experienced personnel serving in the military. The NZDF advances New Zealand's interests through the contribution of each of the Services (Navy, Army, and Air Force), working both independently and together. The current NZDF workforce consists of approximately 8,700 Regular Force personnel, 3,300 reserves, and 3,000 civilians. To support the delivery of our intentions, by 2040 NZDF will need to grow. While the exact growth will be determined by in-depth analysis as capabilities are developed, it is estimated that to support the delivery of this plan, by 2040 NZDF will have grown by around 2,500 people.

Over the past few years, the NZDF has faced significant challenges with the retention of qualified and experienced trades, specialists, and management personnel. While attrition has reduced, it will take time and investment to rebuild personnel numbers. This will also need to be supported by a range of initiatives to ensure people continue to want to join, and stay in, the NZDF.

To continue to protect New Zealand's interests, the NZDF needs to be more agile in adopting new technologies. It will also need to attract appropriate personnel to meet challenges in new areas.

Building an adaptable and enduring workforce to meet defence outputs and policy settings is critical. To do this, the NZDF will need to focus on:

- a long-term approach to developing and supporting personnel to meet current and future needs; and
- recruiting, training, and retaining the people NZDF needs.

To meet the force structure needed to deliver what the Government requires, the NZDF is developing a Workforce Strategy.

Veterans' Affairs supports those who served in New Zealand's Armed Forces through the funding of various treatments, compensation, and services to keep veterans independent in their homes. Veterans are an important part of the Defence family and the systems to support them are key. Veterans' Affairs will procure a new Veterans Affairs Support System to ensure veterans can seamlessly continue to access these services.

## NEAR-TERM INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2025–2028

### Implementing a Workforce Strategy

**What it is:** A Workforce Strategy and associated programme of work will be developed which outlines initiatives to build an adaptable and enduring workforce that can deliver defence outputs. This will include investments in systems and processes that support the recruitment, training and retention of the personnel the NZDF needs. This does not include funding for personnel salaries.

**Why it is important:** All investments in this DCP rely on the NZDF having a workforce that can operate the equipment Government will purchase. Investment to implement a Workforce Strategy, and related tools and system improvements, will enable the NZDF to provide a modern integrated operating model to plan, recruit, train, and deploy the workforce to meet military outcomes.

**INDICATIVE COST: \$50–100M**

## FUTURE INDICATIVE INVESTMENTS 2029–2039

### Workforce Strategy

Future investments will be made to grow, shape, and retain the NZDF's workforce to deliver the capabilities identified in this DCP. It should be noted that increasing the use of uncrewed systems will not require fewer personnel, but changing skillsets. Recruitment will need to ensure the NZDF attracts and employs the right mix of skills and interests to support the force of the future.

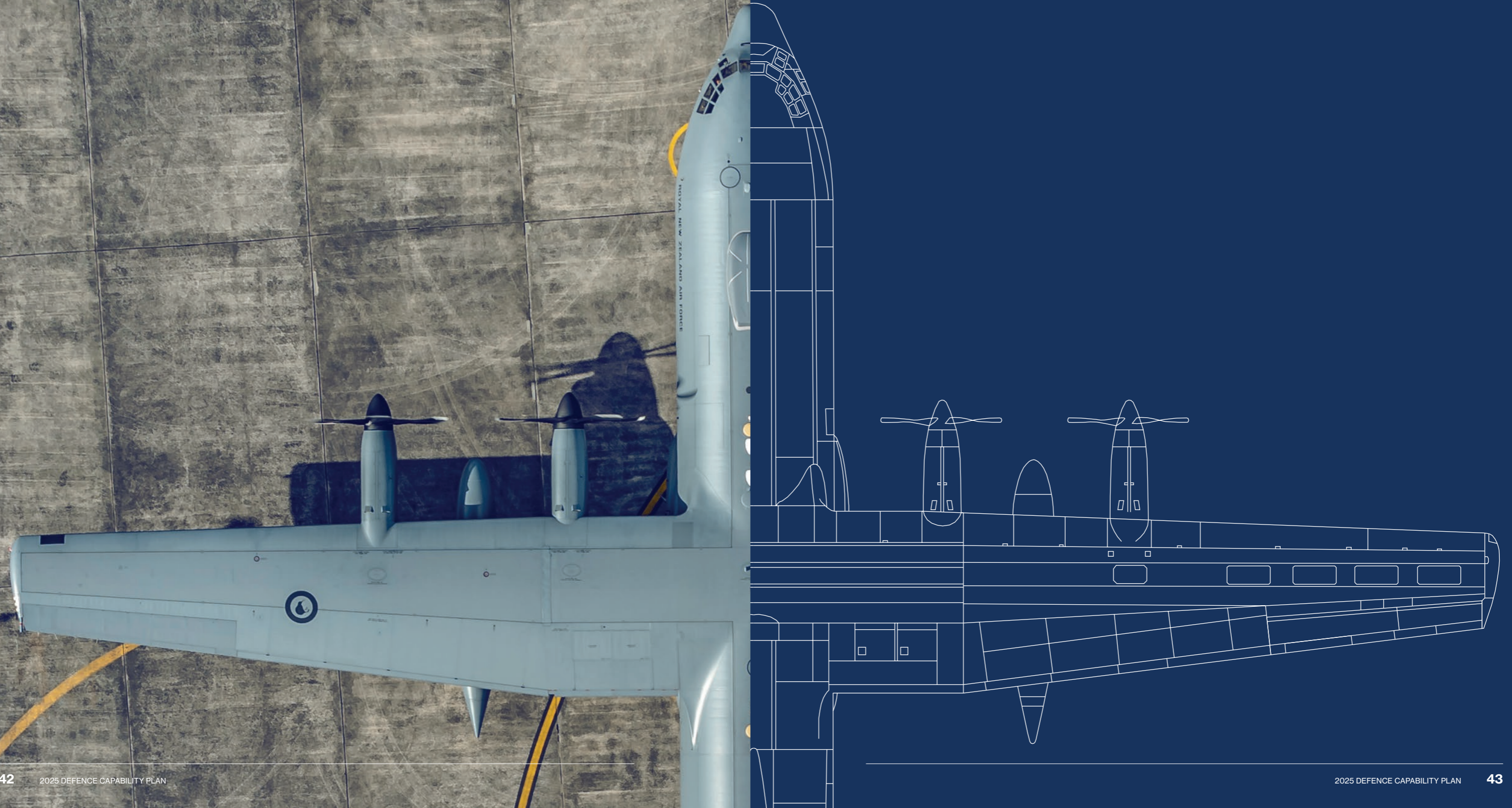
**THE CURRENT NZDF WORKFORCE CONSISTS OF APPROXIMATELY 8,700 REGULAR FORCE PERSONNEL, 3,300 RESERVES, AND 3,000 CIVILIANS. TO SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF OUR INTENTIONS, BY 2040 NZDF WILL NEED TO GROW.**





# IMPLEMENTATION

HOW THE DCP WILL BE IMPLEMENTED AND WHAT KEY IDEAS WILL CONTINUE TO DRIVE INVESTMENTS.





## DEVELOPING BUSINESS CASES

To drive innovative approaches, and increase interoperability (particularly with Australia), each individual investment business case prepared pursuant to this DCP will now start with four key considerations:

- 1 what is the Australian approach, and is there any reason for New Zealand to take a different approach;
- 2 can we partner with industry to deliver the capability differently;
- 3 what is the minimum viable capability needed (including to limit bespoke requirements); and
- 4 what is the most cost-effective and durable option.

As part of the business case process, officials will also assess whether investment is still needed, whether a different technology provides a better investment, and whether a generational technology jump is justified (for example, uncrewed vs crewed vessels).

## PARTNERING WITH INDUSTRY

Defence is a major contributor to the New Zealand economy, spending hundreds of millions of dollars locally on maintenance and repair, training support, and other engineering and commercial services. There are about 800 suppliers in New Zealand's Defence industrial base. Investment in this DCP will ensure significant growth opportunity for New Zealand businesses.

The indicative capability options outlined here will support delivery of the Government's defence policy. This cannot be done without industry, which is a critical partner in both the supply of military capability and infrastructure, and their sustainment and operation through-life.

The current strategic environment requires both Defence and industry to become more resilient, agile and innovative, whilst continuing to deliver value for money. In this context, implementing the DCP requires a partnership with industry to deliver capability faster and with resilience. This will be done by:

- providing greater clarity of what is needed by Defence, by when, within what budget;
- prioritising defence procurement and industry integration with Australia; and
- harnessing and enabling industry innovation and technologies.

How these objectives will be operationalised will be set out in a new Defence Industry Strategy to follow this DCP. Under the themes of Understand, Partner and Act, the Defence Industry Strategy will encompass underlying themes of building sector resilience and faster delivery of capability, without compromising on government and public trust and confidence in Defence's advice and processes. The expectation is better engagement between Defence and industry partners, greater shared information awareness, and a readiness to respond collectively to needs and requirements.

Importantly, the Defence Industry Strategy and implementation of the DCP will also support the Government's economic growth agenda, including by further optimising the use of New Zealand businesses in the defence industrial base, fostering exports, and promoting innovative and advanced technologies.

## PARTNERING WITH AUSTRALIA

As a globally connected country, New Zealand works with international partners to deliver Defence outcomes. Our military alliance with Australia, coupled with our single economic market under Closer Economic Relations, with mutual recognition for our domestic defence industries, provides a wide range of opportunities for joint capability procurement. New Zealand and Australia committed to prioritising combined defence procurement as an enabler of interoperability at the Australia-New Zealand Leader's Meeting in August 2024.

Ongoing defence industry cooperation between Australia and New Zealand will help in three major ways: drive cost effective solutions, build resilience into our respective supply chains, and develop cutting-edge technologies.

New Zealand will seek to procure the same assets and equipment as Australia where it makes sense to do so. This will help with interoperability.

## APPROVAL FOR INVESTMENTS

Indicative investments outlined in the DCP are subject to government approval of individual business cases which justify the investment and to funding being made available through the annual Budget process.

Business cases for major capability projects will be developed progressively, and follow a three-pass approval process for Cabinet:

- **Indicative Business Case:** Tests whether there is an acceptable level of benefit from a proposed investment, details the likely costs, and provides a range of options that could deliver the benefits required.
- **Detailed Business Case:** Examines one or more of the proposed investment options agreed in the indicative business case and contains the information that would allow Cabinet to make an informed decision on whether to progress the proposal to the point of initiating tenders or other competitive market proposals.
- **Implementation Business Case:** Reports on the outcome of a tender or other supplier selection process, the total costs of the proposal and seeks Cabinet approval to commit to the investment.

Major equipment investments will be managed within Defence's Capability Management System. The System was established in 2017 to address structural, operational, and information deficiencies within the previous system. It has since been assessed by multiple external reviews as the leading exemplar for long-term capital planning within the public sector.

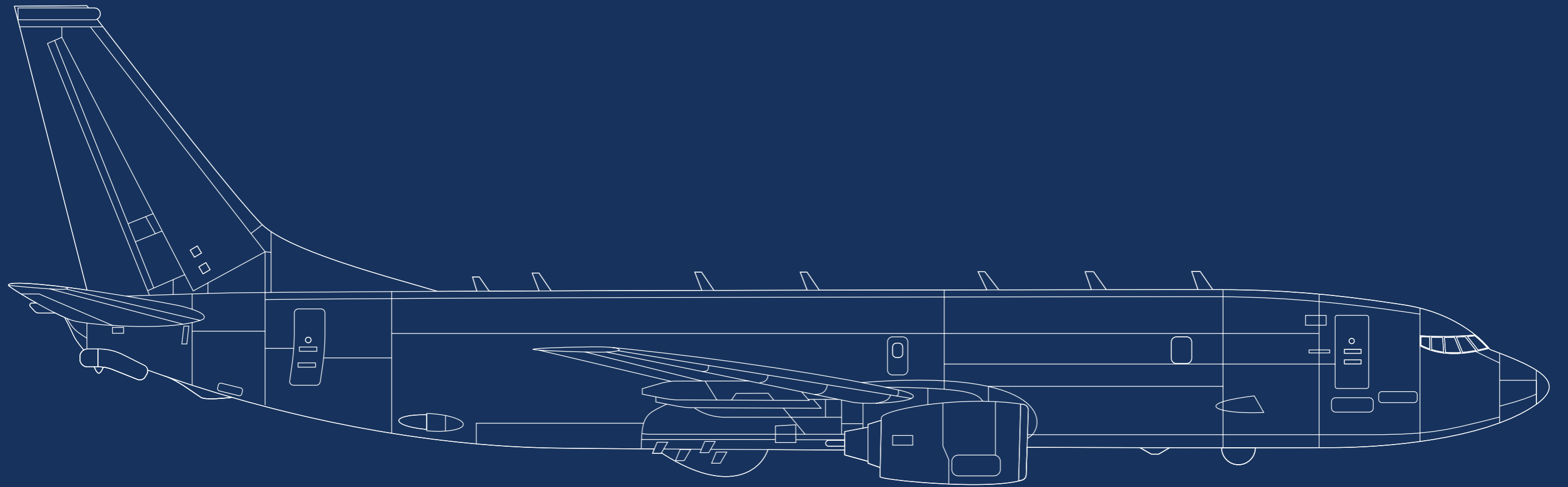
This system has managed complex and high value projects in recent years, with strong performance in the delivery and introduction to service of the new P-8A and C-130J-30 fleets, as well as HMNZS Aotearoa, all of which are undertaking operational tasking.

## REGULAR REVIEWS

To support long-term planning, Defence must be able to anticipate future challenges in the strategic environment, and understand technological developments and demographic changes in New Zealand that impact workforce planning.

To support this, the DCP will be reviewed every two years in a structured and repeatable process in order to re-evaluate the strategic environment and re-prioritise efforts as needed to ensure the NZDF remains a capable and credible force in a changing world. Reviews will ensure subsequent governments can provide refreshed direction to the DCP, based on an assessment of the current environment, previous decisions, the state of equipment and other key factors. It will also allow a staircase approach to investment, with additional capabilities added to the DCP as the strategic environment demands and the fiscal environment allows.









**Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government