

HON JUDITH COLLINS KC, MINISTER OF DEFENCE

New Zealand Defence Force Participation in the Counter Terrorism Information Facility in Singapore

June 2024

This publication provides details on Cabinet's 19 March 2024 decision to continue the New Zealand Defence Force's contribution of one analyst to the Counter Terrorism Information Facility in Singapore.

The pack comprises the following documents:

- the Cabinet minute of decision: *New Zealand Defence Force Participation in the Counter Terrorism Information Facility in Singapore* [FPS-24-MIN-0005]
- the Cabinet paper: *New Zealand Defence Force Participation in the Counter Terrorism Information Facility in Singapore* [FPS-24-SUB-0005]

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

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

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

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

Information is also withheld in order to:

- protect the privacy of natural persons [section 9(2)(a)]
- maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty [section 9(2)(g)(i)]



Cabinet Foreign Policy and National Security Committee

Minute of Decision

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

New Zealand Defence Force Participation in the Counter Terrorism Information Facility in Singapore

Portfolio Defence

On 19 March 2024, the Cabinet Foreign Policy and National Security Committee:

- 1 **noted** that in June 2022, Cabinet agreed to contribute one New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) analyst to the Singaporean Counter Terrorism Information Facility (CTIF) from July 2022 to June 2024 [CAB-22-MIN-0016];
- 2 **noted** that the CTIF supports the safety of New Zealanders, New Zealand's Counter Terrorism Strategy, and is valued by other contributing nations, s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- 3 **noted** that:
 - 3.1 s6(a)
 - 3.2 s9(2)(g)(i)
- 4 **approved** the contribution of one NZDF s6(a) analyst to the CTIF;
- 5 **approved** the conclusion of Cabinet oversight of this posting and the delegation of future decisions associated with maintaining, extending, or withdrawing the commitment of this position to the Chief of Defence Force;
- 6 **noted** that the total estimated cost of this contribution from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2026 is \$0.874 million (2024/25 financial year: \$0.437 million; 2025/26 financial year: \$0.437 million);
- 7 **noted** that this contribution can be funded through Vote Defence Force baseline funding.

Janine Harvey
Committee Secretary

Present: (see over)

Present:

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Rt Hon Winston Peters (Chair)
Hon David Seymour
Hon Nicola Willis
Hon Judith Collins
Hon Mark Mitchell
Hon Todd McClay

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Officials Committee for FPS
Office of the Chair of FPS

Released by the Minister of Defence

Office of the Minister of Defence

Chair, Foreign Policy and National Security Committee

PROPOSAL TO CONTINUE THE NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE'S PARTICIPATION IN THE COUNTER TERRORISM INFORMATION FACILITY IN SINGAPORE

Proposal

1. To seek approval to continue the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF)'s current contribution of one analyst to the Singaporean Counter Terrorism Information Facility (CTIF) and to delegate future decisions on maintaining, extending or withdrawing the commitment to the Chief of Defence Force (CDF).

Relation to Government Priorities

2. Providing a contribution to the CTIF supports Government priorities by:
- 2.1 Supporting New Zealand's National Security Strategy (NSS), Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the National Security and Intelligence Priorities (NSIPs), and aligns with New Zealand's *Engagement Strategy for Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in South East Asia 2018-22*.¹
 - 2.2 This contribution is also consistent with current Defence priorities.

Executive Summary

3. This paper recommends that Cabinet agree to maintain New Zealand's commitment of one NZDF analyst to the CTIF, a multinational [s6(a), s6(b)(i)] counter-terrorism information sharing and collaboration facility in Singapore.

4. It also seeks Cabinet's agreement to delegate authority to the CDF for decisions on future NZDF contributions to the CTIF. This is consistent with other non-operational NZDF outputs, such as the Information Fusion Centre² in Singapore, and the Defence Intelligence Liaison posts, which are managed within the CDF's authority. Defence officials will ensure the Minister of Defence is informed of any developments or changes to the NZDF's commitment to the CTIF.

5. New Zealand's involvement in the CTIF supports New Zealand's national security interests by helping to provide early warning of terrorist threats emanating from the South East Asia region. This applies to both New Zealand's domestic security situation as well as to New Zealanders overseas. The NZDF contribution to CTIF also contributes to collective efforts to counter violent extremism and terrorism in South East Asia; [s6(a)]

¹ This includes enhancing regional counter terrorism frameworks by supporting groupings and initiatives to encourage greater coordination and focus.

² The Information Fusion Centre is a regional maritime security centre hosted by the Singaporean Navy, which aims to facilitate information collaboration between partners to enhance maritime security. New Zealand has a Liaison Officer posted to the Information Fusion Centre.

s6(a)

6. New Zealand's interests weigh in favour of maintaining our contribution to the CTIF.

s6(a)

7. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

s6(a), s6(b)(i)

8. Following Cabinet's decision, officials will notify Singapore and key CTIF partners before it is announced publically.

Background

9. The CTIF was established in 2020 to enable regional militaries and law enforcement agencies to better detect and analyse regional terrorist threats and areas identified as enablers of terrorism. s6(a)

10. In June 2022, Cabinet agreed to extend the contribution of one NZDF analyst to the CTIF from July 2022 to June 2024 [CAB-22-MIN-0016 refers].

What is CTIF and how is it contributing to regional counter terrorism efforts?

11. The CTIF is a multinational, s6(a), s6(b)(i) CT information sharing and collaboration facility in Singapore. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

Current contributions to the CTIF

s6(a), s6(b)(i)

12. The CTIF is intended to complement, rather than duplicate, existing regional CT initiatives such as the Indonesian-led ASEAN 'Our Eyes Initiative' (OEI)³ and the Interpol Regional Counter Terrorism Node (RCTN)⁴. [redacted] s6(a)

13. The CTIF is expected to become a mainstay of regional CT and the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) architecture. [redacted] s6(a), s6(b)(i)

New Zealand's interests in participating

14. New Zealand's commitment to the CTIF is consistent with New Zealand's approach to national security, as outlined in the NSS, focusing on prevention – to the greatest degree possible. Our specific interests are:

- 14.1 Early warning of terrorist threats to New Zealand emanating from South East Asia; and
- 14.2 Potential threats to New Zealanders living or travelling in the South East Asia region.

15. New Zealand's commitment to the CTIF is also consistent with Defence's priorities. This includes Defence's contributions to collective security efforts to protect and promote New Zealand's interests and values, including a strong and effective international rules-based system with a particular focus on the Indo-Pacific region.

16. The current commitment of one NZDF analyst is proportionate to the size of our defence force and the contributions of other member countries. [redacted] s6(a)

The case for delegating authority for future CTIF contributions to the CDF

17. [redacted] s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

18. Such a role is not operational in nature and would normally reside within the CDF's mandate. It is not funded from Output 5 (Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Security, Stability and Interests), does not involve operational allowances, medallic recognition or meet qualifying operational service status under the *Veterans Support Act 2014*. This is consistent with other non-operational postings with partners, including the Information Fusion Centre (IFC) in Singapore, [redacted] s6(a)

³ The Our Eyes Initiative is a cooperation pact for intelligence information exchanges related to terrorism and radicalisation initiated by Indonesia and signed by Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Thailand and Singapore.

⁴ Interpol Regional Counter Terrorism Nodes are located in terrorism hotspots and provide direct support to law enforcement in those regions to enhance their counter-terrorism response.

s6(a)

As with CTIF, the benefits of these posts primarily relate to the maintenance of regional defence s6(a) relationships and are considered non-operational.

Options Analysis

Option 1: Maintain the current CTIF contribution and delegate authority for future contributions to the CDF (recommended)

19. This option involves extending the contribution of one NZDF s6(a) analyst to the CTIF and the delegation of authority to consider future contributions to the CDF. CDF's authority ordinarily includes the decision to reduce, increase, extend or withdraw NZDF's contributions to non-operational postings, such as CTIF. The Minister of Defence will be notified of any change to future CTIF contributions via the Defence Weekly Report.

Objectives for Option 1

20. New Zealand's objectives for the recommended CTIF contribution (Option 1) are:

20.1 To maintain awareness of current and emerging violent extremism and terrorism threats, from South East Asia, to New Zealanders both domestically and overseas s6(a)

20.2 To uphold the international rules-based system s6(a) to support collective security efforts to counter the violent extremism and terrorism threat with a particular focus on the Indo-Pacific region.

20.3 s6(a)

20.4 To enhance the NZDF's operational experience s6(a) within a multinational environment which will benefit future deployments s6(a)

Benefits associated with Option 1

21. The following benefits are associated with the recommended contribution:

Benefit	Assessment
Supports the safety of New Zealanders	Contributes in a substantial way to a well-established mission that helps to address a key regional and global security concern with consequences for New Zealand's own security, economy and prosperity.
Contributes to collective security efforts that protect New Zealand's interests and values	Demonstrates New Zealand's continued commitment to contributing Defence personnel to efforts to counter violent extremism and terrorism, in line with current Defence policy/NSS/ASEAN CT strategy. It also can provide early warning of terrorist threats to New Zealand emanating from South East Asia and potential threats to New Zealanders living or travelling in the region.
Partner relationships and interoperability	Strengthens New Zealand's relationships with CTIF partners, s6(a)

Benefit	Assessment
Contributes to the enhancement of NZDF operational skills.	s6(a)
Support retention of NZDF talent.	CTIF has the benefit of allowing NZDF personnel to conduct meaningful activities with a sense of real purpose, supporting retention and morale amongst NZDF.

Risks associated with Option 1

22. The following risks are associated with the recommended contribution:

Risk	Assessment
s6(a)	s6(a)

Option 2: Not approve the proposed contribution to CTIF

23. This option involves the withdrawal of the contribution of one NZDF s6(a) analyst at the conclusion of the current mandate period.

Benefit	Assessment
Financial	This option would result in potential savings in the vicinity of \$437,000 per annum from the NZDF budget.

Risks associated with Option 2

Risk	Assessment
Reputation and Relationships	<p style="text-align: center;">s6(a)</p> <p>Withdrawal is likely to undermine our reputation as a contributor to countering violent extremism and terrorism in the region. s6(a), s6(b)(i)</p> <p style="background-color: #cccccc;"> </p> <p style="background-color: #cccccc;"> </p> <p style="background-color: #cccccc;"> </p>

Consideration of increasing the NZDF's contribution to CTIF

24. Consideration was initially given to increasing New Zealand's contribution to the CTIF. However, this option was discounted s6(a)

Financial Implications

25. Should Cabinet agree to the recommended option to contribute one NZDF s6(a) analyst to the CTIF, the proposed contribution can be funded within the existing baseline for Vote Defence Force. Below is the expenditure and funding arrangements for this posting:

	24/25	25/26
	\$M	\$M
Personnel Costs	s9(2)(a)	
Operating Costs	s9(2)(a)	
Total	0.437	0.437

s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

Detention Policy Framework

28. In 2022, Cabinet approved a Detention Policy Framework for New Zealand organisations operating overseas. Due to the proposed role at the CTIF, this activity does not fall within the scope of the Policy Framework. Accordingly, the Detention Policy Framework is not engaged, and an assessment under the Framework is not required.

Consultation

29. This paper was jointly prepared by the Ministry of Defence and the New Zealand Defence Force. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (National Security Group and Policy Advisory Group), New Zealand Police, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Treasury and the National Assessments Bureau were consulted.

Next Steps and Proactive Release

30. Should Cabinet approve the renewal of New Zealand's contribution to the CTIF, it is recommended that Singapore be notified of Cabinet's decision before it is announced publically. Partner messaging will occur through official channels.

31. Should Cabinet decide not to renew New Zealand's contribution, it is recommended that this decision not be made public until Singapore and key partners have been advised.

32. The Ministry of Defence will proactively release this paper subject to redactions as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendations

The Minister of Defence recommends that the Committee:

1. **note** that in June 2022, Cabinet agreed to contribute one NZDF analyst to the CTIF from July 2022 to June 2024 [CAB-22-MIN-0016 refers].
2. **note** that CTIF supports the safety of New Zealanders, New Zealand's Counter Terrorism Strategy, and is valued by other contributing nations, s6(a), s6(b)(i)

3. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

4. **agree** to:

EITHER

Option 1: Maintain the current CTIF contribution and delegate authority for future contributions to the CDF (recommended)

- 4.1 **approve** the contribution of one NZDF s6(a) analyst to the CTIF;
- 4.2 **approve** the conclusion of Cabinet oversight of this posting and delegate future decisions associated with maintaining, extending or withdrawing the commitment of this position to the CDF;
- 4.3 **note** that the total estimated cost of the contribution from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2026 is \$0.874M (FY24/25: \$0.437M; FY25/26: \$0.437M);
- 4.4 **note** that the option can be funded through Vote Defence Force baseline funding.

OR

Option 2: Not approve the contribution of one NZDF s6(a) analyst to the CTIF (not recommended)

- 4.5 **approve** the withdrawal of the contribution of one NZDF s6(a) analyst at the conclusion of the current mandate period;
- 4.6 **note** that should New Zealand elect to withdraw, officials would notify Singapore and partner nations of Cabinet's decision before it is announced publically.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Judith Collins KC MP
Minister of Defence