

HON RON MARK, MINISTER OF DEFENCE

Proposal to Continue New Zealand's Contribution to Afghanistan Army Training

December 2018

This publication provides the documents supporting Cabinet's decision in September 2018 to continue the New Zealand Defence Force's contribution of 11 personnel to the Afghanistan National Army Officer Academy out to 30 September 2019. Cabinet also agreed that a strategic reassessment of New Zealand's contribution to Afghanistan be provided to Cabinet by June 2019 for the purpose of considering New Zealand's presence in Afghanistan, including possible future military and civilian contributions.

The pack comprises the following documents:

- September 2018 Cabinet minute entitled *Proposal to Continue New Zealand's Contribution to Afghanistan Army Training* [CAB-18-MIN-0450]
- Cabinet paper entitled *Proposal to Continue New Zealand's Contribution to Afghanistan Army Training* [CAB-18-SUB-0450].

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)].

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



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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

Proposal to Continue New Zealand's Contribution to Afghanistan Army Training

Portfolios Foreign Affairs / Defence

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

- 1 **noted** that New Zealand's deployment to the Afghan National Army Officer Academy:
 - 1.1 advances New Zealand's national security interests by playing its part to ensure that Afghanistan is not used again as a safe haven for terror groups to plot, launch and inspire global terror attacks;
 - 1.2 supports international efforts to achieve long term peace, stability and prosperity in Afghanistan; and
 - 1.3 supports the maintenance of the international rules-based order;
- 2 **noted** that the legal basis for New Zealand's involvement in Resolute Support Mission is through the Arrangement between New Zealand and NATO and the Status of Forces Agreement between NATO and Afghanistan, and that the Mission is endorsed by UNSCR 2189;
- 3 **noted** that the unmitigated operational threat for the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel in Afghanistan s6(a), and the Operational Risk Management Strategies applied to the mission;
- 4 **agreed** to continue NZDF's contribution of 11 personnel to the Afghanistan National Army Officer Academy out to 30 September 2019;
- 5 **agreed** that a strategic reassessment of New Zealand's contribution to Afghanistan be provided to Cabinet by June 2019 for the purpose of considering New Zealand's presence in Afghanistan, including possible future military and civilian contributions as well as other options s9(2)(f)(iv);
- 6 **agreed** that the NZDF may temporarily exceed the Cabinet-mandated personnel numbers for New Zealand's Afghanistan deployments (including the two personnel at Resolute Support Mission Headquarters) for the purposes of command reconnaissance, rotation, and extraction of forces from theatre;

- 7 **noted** that the Chief of Defence Force will inform the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in advance whenever Cabinet-mandated personnel numbers are exceeded for the reasons set out in paragraph 6;
- 8 **noted** that the total estimated cost of the deployment to 30 September 2019 is assessed as \$2.299 million;
- 9 **noted** that \$0.536 million of the estimated costs for 2019/20 can be met from within the existing funding for Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Stability and Interests;
- 10 **noted** that there is a shortfall of \$1.763 million in 2018/19 that is not able to be met within existing baselines;
- 11 **approved** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision in paragraph 4 above, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance:

Vote Defence Force Minister of Defence	NZ \$m – increase / (decrease)				
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2021/22 & out-years
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Security, Stability and Interests MCA					
Departmental Output Expense: Military Operations in Support of a Rules-Based International Order (funded by revenue Crown)	1.763	-	-	-	-

- 12 **agreed** that the additional expenses required in 2018/19 under paragraph 11 above be a charge against the tagged Operating contingency established as part of Budget 17 for Military Operations in Support of a Rules-Based International Order; and
- 13 **agreed** that the change to appropriations for 2018/19 above be included in the 2018/19 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increase be met from Imprest Supply.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution:

Prime Minister
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Minister of Defence

Chair, External Relations and Security Committee

PROPOSAL TO CONTINUE NEW ZEALAND'S CONTRIBUTION TO AFGHANISTAN ARMY TRAINING

Proposal

1. This paper seeks Cabinet's agreement to continue New Zealand's 11 person contribution to the Afghanistan National Army Officer Academy until 30 September 2019. This deployment is a part of the NATO Resolute Support Mission. A strategic reassessment of New Zealand's presence in Afghanistan will be provided to Cabinet by June 2019 and will include consideration of possible future military and civilian contributions as well as other options [REDACTED] s9(2)(f)(iv)

Executive summary

2. The international community is still working to support the Government of Afghanistan and its security forces against the Taliban insurgency and other international terrorist groups. New Zealand plays a small but important part in that effort, training the next cadre of Afghan military leadership. Our current contribution continues an ongoing multi-phased investment by New Zealand as part of an international effort to support peace and stability in Afghanistan, dating back to 2001, and achieves the following strategic objectives:

- i. to advance our national security and strategic interests by playing our part in the global collective security effort to ensure that Afghanistan is not used again as a safe haven for terror groups to plot, launch and inspire global terror attacks;
- ii. to support international efforts to achieve long-term peace, stability and prosperity in Afghanistan in line with the values New Zealand seeks to promote internationally; and,
- iii. to play our part in supporting the maintenance of the international rules-based order.

3. New Zealand's deployment in Afghanistan is consistent with our international legal obligations: the legal basis is provided through the framework of the NATO-Afghanistan Status of Forces Agreement; and the international community's security effort in Afghanistan has also been endorsed by the United Nations, most recently through UN Security Council Resolution 2189 (December 2014).

4. Afghanistan faces a long-term terrorist insurgency waged by the Taliban and other groups such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS' Afghan affiliate, Islamic State in Khorasan Province, vying for permanent influence in the country. While there has been some progress in Afghanistan since 2001, with improvements across a range of social indicators [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED], there are significant security challenges faced by the Government of Afghanistan in achieving its objectives of peace and stability.

5. New Zealand's contribution to the Afghanistan National Army Officer Academy ('Officer Academy') has been a modest yet effective contribution to support the Government of Afghanistan's security efforts. The 11 NZDF personnel at the Officer

Academy are responsible for training Afghanistan's future military leaders – not just in military tactics, but also instilling leadership values, and teaching communications and computer skills.

6. New Zealand's partners in Afghanistan, including numerous European Union members such as Germany, Denmark and Italy, as well as the US, UK and Australia are committed to the NATO Resolute Support Mission to train, advise and assist the Afghanistan Security Forces. At the July 2018 NATO Leaders' Summit in Brussels, troop-contributing countries expressed their long-term in-principle commitment to remaining in Afghanistan until 2024. The Government of Afghanistan continues to request the security support of the international community and to welcome the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission.

7. Given the long-standing contribution New Zealand has made to Afghanistan, this paper proposes undertaking a strategic reassessment of New Zealand's contribution to Afghanistan. This recognises the changing environment in Afghanistan and the region, and aligns with the Government's medium-term approach. This reassessment [REDACTED] s9(2)(f)(iv) will include advice on how New Zealand could possibly contribute to Afghan security through a different type of deployment and/or various other civilian/development contributions. This strategic reassessment will be provided to Cabinet by June 2019 [REDACTED] s9(2)(f)(iv).

8. The current mandate for New Zealand's contribution to the Officer Academy expires on 30 September 2018, having been extended three months by Cabinet in June 2018 to allow for a more complete consideration of New Zealand deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) in Israel, Lebanon and Syria, the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) mission on the Sinai Peninsula and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in September 2018. For the reasons expressed in this paper, we recommend Cabinet agree to continue the deployment of 11 NZDF personnel to the Officer Academy until 30 September 2019.

Background

Deployments

9. Since 2001, over 3,500 New Zealand personnel have served in Afghanistan through successive military deployments and New Zealand has contributed almost NZD\$100m of development assistance. New Zealand's military contributions have evolved as the mission in Afghanistan has changed. The New Zealand Special Air Service undertook combat operations from 2001 to 2005 and 2009 to 2012, when the US and then NATO were responsible for providing security in Afghanistan. Also in this period, New Zealand directly provided security and development assistance in Bamyán through the New Zealand Provincial Reconstruction Team from 2003 to 2013.

10. Following the end of the NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in December 2014 security responsibility was transferred from the international community to the Afghanistan Security Forces. New Zealand's military commitment in Afghanistan has since been delivered under ISAF's successor, NATO's Resolute Support Mission; a non-combat mission currently comprising 41 NATO partners and allies.

11. The Resolute Support Mission's purpose is to support Afghanistan's security forces and institutions to develop their capacity through providing training, advice and assistance activities. The Mission also complements broader institutional capacity-building and

stabilisation efforts that are designed to shape the conditions for future political reconciliation between the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban. The Mission does not currently have a fixed end date but NATO has endorsed the Afghanistan Security Forces' Four Year Roadmap to lift their capability and performance until 2020. At the NATO Summit in July NATO members committed in-principle to continuing their contributions to the mission until at least 2024. However, the mission will continue to have a 'conditions-based' end date that will be determined by conditions on the ground.

Previous relevant Cabinet decisions

12. In 2013, Cabinet agreed to contribute eight personnel to the Officer Academy [CAB Min (13) 43/17 refers]. In May 2016, Cabinet agreed to extend the NZDF contribution to the Officer Academy until 30 June 2018 and to increase the size of the contribution to 10 personnel [Cab Min (15) 11/16 refers]. In August 2017, Cabinet approved an additional increase of one, bringing the total to 11 personnel [CAB Min (17) 04/37 refers].

13. In August 2017, Cabinet also decided that New Zealand would contribute two NZDF personnel to the NATO Resolute Support Mission Headquarters in Kabul to 30 June 2019. One role is responsible for overseeing operational planning related to future NATO train, advise and assist activities, and the second is a subject matter expert on training who advises the Head of the Resolute Support Mission Advisor Team.

14. On 11 June 2018, Cabinet considered the Afghanistan deployment. Cabinet extended the mandate to align it with other regional deployment decisions. This allowed for a more strategic consideration of the Afghanistan deployment alongside a range of other deployments. [REDACTED] s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)

15. In August 2018, Cabinet agreed in principle to an intermediate step of undertaking a strategic reassessment of New Zealand's contribution to Afghanistan to support the Government's medium term approach. Cabinet also agreed that the intention to conduct a strategic reassessment be communicated to the public and coalition partners, [REDACTED] s6(a)

Security situation in Afghanistan

16. The last 17 years have seen some notable successes, notably the prompt removal of the Taliban from power, and driving Al-Qaeda into hiding and significantly hampering its capability. A number of social indicators, for example, access to education and healthcare, particularly for women and girls, have improved. Whilst the social progress achieved to date is not irreversible, there is the potential for Afghanistan to continue on its current course of gradual social progress.

17. The security situation in Afghanistan has, however, deteriorated since the US and NATO drawdown of forces in Afghanistan and the handing over of security responsibility from NATO to the Afghanistan Security Forces in 2015. As a result, the Taliban now holds more territory across Afghanistan than at any time since their removal from power in 2001; as of May, it is estimated that the Government of Afghanistan controlled or influenced 58.5 percent of the country, the insurgents 19.4 percent, while the remaining 22 percent was contested. [REDACTED] s6(a) United Nations

data indicating that nine Afghans were killed, and 19 injured, every day across the first six months of the year.

18. While the Taliban has not managed to capture and hold any major population centres in 2018 (a prominent metric for the Afghanistan Security Forces and coalition forces), it has been able to launch large scale offensives on provincial cities. In mid-May, the Taliban made an assault on Farah City, the capital of Farah Province, their first sizeable incursion into a provincial capital since 2016. The Taliban overran eight police checkpoints before temporarily seizing several government and Afghanistan Security Forces buildings in the city.

19. More recently, in early August the Taliban launched a coordinated set of assaults across seven provinces ahead of the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha. An attack on the city of Ghazni involved up to 1000 fighters, with media reports indicating that more than 150 Afghan Security Forces personnel were killed, requiring the intervention of United States special operations units to lift the siege. Up to 200 further security personnel were reported as being killed across Afghanistan during the week of the Ghazni assault. s6(a)

[Redacted]

20. The United States Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction reported to the United States Congress in July that as at April 2018, the Afghanistan Security Forces were at 89.3 percent of their authorised strength, down from 93.7% in the second quarter of 2017 (a total of 314,242, compared to 322,742 in 2017). s6(a)

[Redacted]

21. Alongside this recent upswing in violence, positive signs towards peace talks were seen in June, when the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban declared separate cease-fires that lead to a total reduction of violent incidents across the country. Despite this progress, Taliban leaders continue to insist that as long as foreign troops remained in Afghanistan, they would negotiate peace only with the United States. s6(a)

[Redacted]

Comment

Principles underpinning the deployment

22. Advice on NZDF deployments considers a range of factors including national security, foreign, economic, legal and defence policy issues, as well as operational considerations, within the wider context of our national values, international reputation and the independence of our foreign policy.

23. Principles underlying defence deployments, many of which are articulated in the Strategic Defence Policy Statement, include: whether there is a clear, legitimate and compelling case for New Zealand involvement, which goes to issues of national and collective security; the values for which New Zealand stands, and our support for

international rules and norms; the legal basis for our involvement and the consistency of any proposed actions with international law; the risks to the safety and security of New Zealand personnel; and the implications for New Zealand's ability to still deploy to our immediate region should an emergency arise. The NZDF deployment to the Officer Academy is assessed against these principles below.

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

24. To ensure that Afghanistan cannot, once again, be used as a safe haven from which to inspire, plan or launch global terrorism, the international community remains committed to support the Government of Afghanistan and its security forces against the Taliban insurgency and other international terrorist groups. The threat posed by the long-term aspirations of terrorist organisations operating in Afghanistan to New Zealand and our partners remains the central strategic rationale behind NZDF's current deployment to the Officer Academy.

25. The Officer Academy deployment is consistent with the values for which New Zealand stands. New Zealand supports international efforts to achieve long-term peace, stability and prosperity. Progress in Afghanistan is dependent on the Government of Afghanistan's ability to provide security throughout the country through the Afghanistan Security Forces, New Zealand's substantive contribution to the NATO Resolute Support Mission has been geared towards training and enhancing the capabilities of young Army Officers and helping ensure their competence, proficiency and professionalism. Our partners and NATO leadership have consistently highlighted the effectiveness of our personnel and observed their unique approach, skill, and cultural empathy. Further, social and economic progress in Afghanistan is dependent on a stable security situation as established and maintained by the Afghanistan Security Forces. Our contributions directly assist the Afghanistan Security Forces in the pursuit of this objective.

26. New Zealand is a strong supporter of the international rules-based order through our support for institutions and arrangements that reinforce global security, in alignment with our values. The Taliban and other international terrorist groups operating in Afghanistan represent a direct threat to the sovereignty and stability of the Government of Afghanistan. The security assistance provided by the NATO Resolute Support Mission to the Government of Afghanistan and the Afghanistan Security Forces remains the major contributor to the international community's efforts to uphold the international rules-based order in this major conflict zone.

27. The Resolute Support Mission is the only NATO-led mission that New Zealand contributes to, making it a unique example of defence cooperation between New Zealand and the European members of NATO. This adds a further element to New Zealand's bilateral relationships with European troop-contributing nations including Germany (1,300 deployed troops), Denmark (155 deployed troops), and Sweden (29 deployed troops). The Strategic Defence Policy Statement recognises how New Zealand's links with Europe have developed as a consequence of our cooperation in Afghanistan [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED].

The legal basis for the deployment and consistency with international law

28. New Zealand's deployment to Afghanistan has legal bases both directly with the Government of Afghanistan and under international law. The overarching legal framework for the Resolute Support Mission is provided by a NATO – Afghanistan Status of Forces Agreement. This defines the terms and conditions under which NATO forces are

deployed, as well as the activities they are authorised to carry out. The mission was most recently endorsed by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2189 of 12 December 2014.

29. The formal mechanism for New Zealand's participation in the Resolute Support Mission is an Arrangement signed on 24 December 2014 between New Zealand and NATO, which approved the participation of New Zealand as an operational partner. This was refreshed during recent increases via exchanges of letters between the NATO Secretary General and New Zealand Ambassador to NATO in Brussels.

Risks to the safety and security of New Zealand personnel

30. The unmitigated operational threat level for Afghanistan is assessed by Defence Intelligence [REDACTED] s6(a). In order to mitigate the risk to NZDF personnel deployed to the region, a range of physical security measures are employed, coupled with the completion of an increased level of operational training and preparedness by personnel prior to deployment.

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

31. The Afghanistan deployment has minimal impact on our capacity to deploy within our immediate region. With 11 NZDF personnel at the Officer Academy, and a total of 13 personnel in the country overall, NZDF is more than able to continue the deployment to Afghanistan whilst maintaining its ability to deploy regionally should an emergency arise.

The Strategic Defence Policy Statement supports the recommendations of this paper

32. The Strategic Defence Policy Statement articulates many of the principles underlying defence deployments. It also highlights that New Zealand's deployment to Afghanistan has contributed to the maintenance of the international rules-based order, supported the development of the modern state of Afghanistan, and helped the Afghan people defend themselves from the threat of terrorism.

International approach to the Resolute Support Mission

33. Key coalition members, including the US, UK, Australia, NATO and EU members see that an explicit long-term, conditions-based (as opposed to time-bound) commitment to Afghanistan is required to i) continue to develop the capability and capacity of the Afghan security forces so they can protect the Afghan population and pressure the Taliban on the battlefield; and ii) ensure the Taliban understand that they cannot "wait out" the international community and are incentivised to enter meaningful peace negotiations with the Government of Afghanistan. Members of the NATO Resolute Support Mission have expressed a keen interest in ensuring that members of the mission maintain their contributions and commitment as this unity of purpose enhances the effectiveness of the mission's strategic messaging to the Taliban. [REDACTED] s6(a)

34. The US and NATO have established an increased operational tempo in Afghanistan this year, including with more US military capability [REDACTED] s6(a)

New Zealand's current commitment to the Officer Academy

35. Over the past five years, following the withdrawal of the New Zealand Provincial Reconstruction Team, the contribution to the Officer Academy has been regarded as the most efficient and effective option for New Zealand to contribute in Afghanistan.

36. The Officer Academy is a key part of the NATO's capacity building strategy. It focusses on delivering training and mentoring to the Afghan Army to train future Afghan military leaders, and develop the skills that will enable Afghanistan to take responsibility for its own defence. As of May 2018, 3359 Afghan Army Officer Cadets have been trained through this effort. In an important step in the development of the Afghanistan Security Forces, 147 of these graduates are female. While the numbers seem small, the 147 graduates demonstrate a significant shift in female representation in the Afghan National Army.

37. To date, the NZDF training and mentoring contribution has enabled the Officer Academy to progress from an instructional model to a train-the-trainer model, with Afghan Army instructors now acting as lead instructors in their own right, supported by the mentorship of Coalition personnel. NZDF mentors and instructors constitute 12% of the Officer Academy staff establishment, alongside Denmark (12%), Australia (18%) and the United Kingdom (58%). New Zealand's personnel are a core component of the UK-led effort at the Officer Academy.

38. The Officer Academy is a well-scoped, self-contained and largely secure mission which generates good outcomes. Compared to other options for military participation in Afghanistan, it is relatively low cost and low risk, given its position in a secure compound within a well-established organisation.

2019 Strategic Reassessment of New Zealand's contributions to Afghanistan

39. This paper proposes that by June 2019, Cabinet will be provided with a strategic reassessment of New Zealand's presence in Afghanistan. This recognises the changing environment in Afghanistan and the region, and ensures the Government's medium term approach remains responsive to conditions on the ground in Afghanistan. The reassessment will consider possible alternative contributions, s9(2)(f)(iv). This intermediate step will incorporate discussions between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence and international partners.

Rotations

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

Consultation

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

Financial Implications

42. The estimated cost of the proposed deployment is \$2.299M.

43. There is a shortfall in funding available from current appropriations of \$1.763M because funding for Vote Defence Force: Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Security, Stability and Interests is fully committed for 2018/19 as a result of existing mandated missions. The additional funding required of \$1.763M is proposed to be charged against the tagged Operating Contingency established as part of Budget 17 for Military Operations in Support of a Rules-based International Order.

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

Vote Defence Force	NZ \$million				
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total
Estimated cost of proposed deployment	1.763	0.536	-	-	2.299
Total funded from existing appropriation: Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Security, Stability and Interests	-	0.536	-	-	0.536
Additional Funding Required	1.763	-	-	-	1.763

45. The following table sets out the impact for this deployment (and other pending deployment decisions for Cabinet consideration) on the tagged Operating contingency established as part of Budget 17 for Military Operations in Support of a Rules-based International Order:

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

Publicity

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

Recommendations

47. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence recommend that Cabinet:

1. **note** that New Zealand's deployment to the Afghan National Army Officer Academy:
 - i. advances our national security interests by playing our part to ensure that Afghanistan is not used again as a safe haven for terror groups to plot, launch and inspire global terror attacks;
 - ii. supports international efforts to achieve long term peace, stability and prosperity in Afghanistan; and,
 - iii. supports the maintenance of the international rules-based order.
2. **note** the legal basis for New Zealand's involvement in Resolute Support Mission through the Arrangement between New Zealand and NATO and the Status of Forces Agreement between NATO and Afghanistan, and that the Mission is endorsed by UNSCR 2189;
3. **note** the unmitigated operational threat for NZDF personnel in Afghanistan s6(a), and the Operational Risk Management Strategies applied to the mission;
4. **agree** to continue NZDF's contribution of 11 personnel to the Afghanistan National Army Officer Academy out to 30 September 2019;
5. **agree** that a strategic reassessment of New Zealand's contribution to Afghanistan will be provided to Cabinet by June 2019 for the purpose of

considering New Zealand's presence in Afghanistan including possible future military and civilian contributions as well as other options s9(2)(f)(iv)

6. **agree** that the New Zealand Defence Force may temporarily exceed the Cabinet-mandated personnel numbers for New Zealand's Afghanistan deployments (including the two personnel at Resolute Support Mission Headquarters) for the purposes of command reconnaissance, rotation, and extraction of forces from theatre;
7. **note** that the Chief of Defence Force will inform the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in advance whenever Cabinet-mandated personnel numbers are exceeded for the reasons set out in recommendation (6);
8. **note** the total estimated cost of the deployment to 30 September 2019 is assessed as \$2.299M;
9. **note** that \$0.536M of the estimated costs for 2019/20 can be met from within the existing funding for Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Stability and Interests;
10. **note** that there is a shortfall of \$1.763M in 2018/19 that is not able to be met within existing baselines;
11. **approve** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision in recommendation (4) above with a corresponding impact on the operating balance;

	NZ \$m – increase / (decrease)				
Vote Defence Force	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2021/22 & out-years
Minister of Defence					
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure					
Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Security, Stability and Interests MCA					
Departmental Output Expense:					
Military Operations in Support of a Rules-Based International Order (funded by revenue Crown)	1.763	-	-	-	-

12. **agree** that the additional expenses required in 2018/19 under recommendation (11) above be a charge against the tagged Operating contingency established as part of Budget 17 for Military Operations in Support of a Rules-Based International Order; and

13. **agree** that the proposed change to appropriations for 2018/19 above be included in the 2018/19 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increase be met from Imprest Supply.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon Ron Mark
MINISTER OF DEFENCE

Released under the Official Information Act 1982