

SEPTEMBER 2017

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## INVICTUS GAMES TEAM HEAD TO CANADA

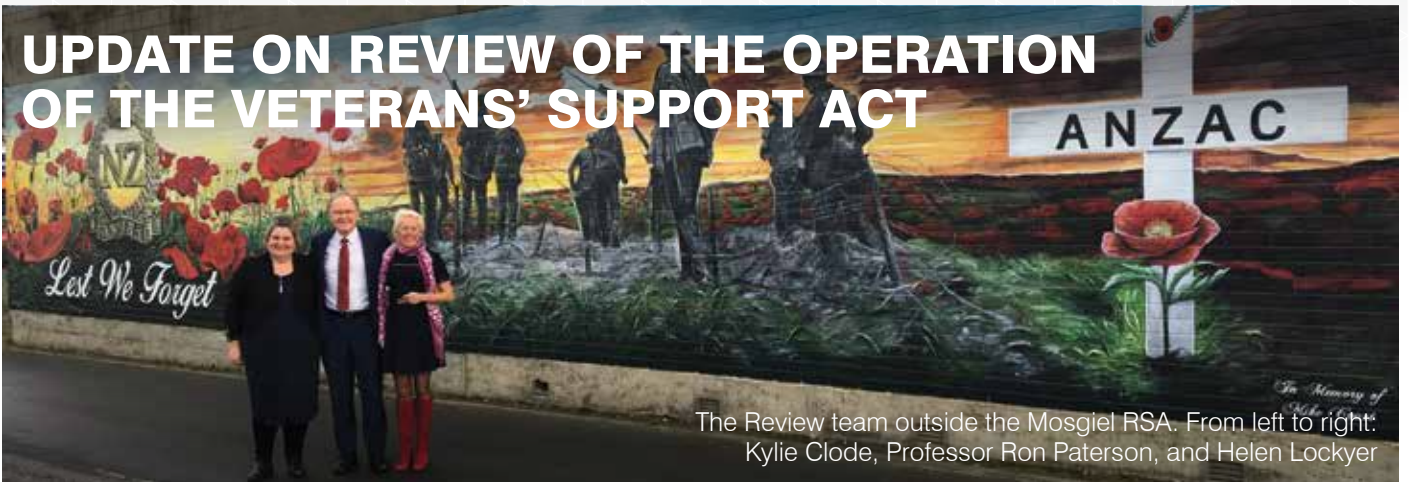


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## YOUTH AMBASSADORS WORK TO ENSURE WE REMEMBER PASSCHENDAELE



# UPDATE ON REVIEW OF THE OPERATION OF THE VETERANS' SUPPORT ACT



The Review team outside the Mosgiel RSA. From left to right: Kylie Clode, Professor Ron Paterson, and Helen Lockyer

**Professor Ron Paterson and the review team have been meeting with veterans and their families across the country, from Whāngārei to Invercargill. The feedback they are receiving is invaluable in helping them to understand how the Act is working in practice.**

“It has been a privilege to meet men and women who have served New Zealand, and the families who have supported them. I’m grateful to everyone who has come along to talk to us, shared their experiences and suggested where things could be improved” says Professor Paterson. “In particular, I want to acknowledge the many moving personal stories that veterans and their support people have told me”.

The review team has been impressed with the turnout at the meetings, which have had up to 200 attending. They are looking at the possibility of holding some additional discussions and focus groups in October and November. These would focus on possible solutions to some of the issues that have been raised.

A focus group has been held with currently serving personnel at Linton

Military Camp, and further meetings on bases are planned for October. The review team will also be meeting with the advisory and decision-making bodies that were set up under the Veterans’ Support Act.

### What has the review team heard so far?

Some common issues have been raised at the meetings:

- There seem to be barriers to getting assistance, such as a lack of knowledge about the Act and what can be provided, and difficulty dealing with different agencies with different processes.
- Eligibility requirements have been questioned – such as the definition of the term ‘veteran’, and eligibility criteria that are seen as complex or narrow.
- There is a need for more support for families and whānau – such as ongoing counselling, and support for health issues.
- Post Traumatic Stress Injury and other mental health disorders are prevalent, particularly in younger veterans.
- There is a perceived stigma that deters some veterans from seeking help under the Act.

- Currently serving personnel are concerned that if they seek assistance, it could be detrimental to future deployments or roles with the New Zealand Defence Force.
- There is a need for better transition planning when people leave the New Zealand Defence Force.

### Next steps

Submissions were due by Friday 15 September. The review team expects to receive a total of about 200 submissions – a very good return rate – for their consideration.

Professor Paterson’s report is due with the Chief of Defence Force by 15 December. It will draw on the feedback he had received from the consultation meetings and submissions, as well as information and studies that are available from international and New Zealand sources.

The Chief of Defence will submit Professor Paterson’s report to the Minister of Veterans’ Affairs for tabling in Parliament. The Government will consider the report and make decisions about the need for any changes to the Act.

The Youth Ambassadors with the Hon David Bennett,  
Minister of Veterans' Affairs



## Youth Ambassadors work to ensure we remember Passchendaele

Following the successful inaugural Youth Ambassador delegation to the centenary of the Gallipoli landing in 2015, a further delegation will head to Belgium this year for the Battle of Passchendaele centenary. They will be there as part of the NZDF contingent.

The Youth Ambassador programme is an initiative of the Minister of Veterans' Affairs. It involves the current generation of young New Zealanders sharing their stories and experiences about how New Zealand's service in war and conflict is remembered and honoured.

"We want as many New Zealanders as possible to experience what it would be like to be at the centenary" says Youth Ambassador Emma Catto. "So we'll be using social media to share our experiences and stories".

If you, or your family, would like to follow the Youth Ambassadors on social media you can.

 [facebook.com/YANZ2017](https://www.facebook.com/YANZ2017)

 Instagram: @YANZ2017belgium

They'll be regularly updating their followers as they travel to Belgium and take part in the commemorations.

## Elder abuse – it's not ok

Up to 70,000 people will experience some form of elder abuse. The abuse can be financial, psychological, physical or sexual.

But most often, it's more than one type of abuse. A son who clears out an elderly mother's bank account. A 79-year old man whose family members pressure him to change his will. An 83-year-old woman whose husband refuses to let her see her family or friends.

We've seen many horrifying cases in the media, but the sad truth is most cases go unreported. In response the government has introduced a new Elder Abuse Response Service. It is there to support both victims of abuse — and anyone witness to abuse who wants to know how to help.

If you're worried about someone, it can be as simple as asking if they're OK. If they want to talk. Just to find out how they are. The sooner you reach out, the sooner they can get help.

If you're concerned about how someone is being treated you can call a free and confidential elder abuse helpline that has translation services.

## Defence Force insurance cover available to veterans



The NZDF offers comprehensive insurance to its members and civilian staff through AON insurance brokers. NZDF has now made available Life & Terminal Illness, Income Protection and Trauma Insurance to the wider Defence community, including veterans.

If you were a member of the NZDF between 01 January 1990 and 30 September 2014, and meet the eligibility criteria, then this insurance offering may be of interest.

Also available is Funeral Cover which pays you or your nominated beneficiary a lump sum from \$7,500 to \$15,000, if you pass away. Adults can access this cover from ages 50 to 80 years. For applicants who meet the age criteria there is no medical assessment required.

To talk about either of these options, or to get more information, call AON on 0800 642 748 or email [nz.nzdf.enquiries@aon.com](mailto:nz.nzdf.enquiries@aon.com)



## ELDER ABUSE

IT'S NOT OK  
**SPEAK OUT**

OUR SENIORS DESERVE  
**RESPECT**

0800 EA NOT OK  
**0800 32 668 65**  
TOLL FREE CONFIDENTIAL HELPLINE

[www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz](http://www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz)



## SPOTLIGHT ON THE SINAI PENINSULA

### New Zealand engineers help shore up security for multinational peacekeeping force in Sinai

A 34-member engineering team from the NZDF has built a new entry control point and helped construct a 3.3-kilometre perimeter fence to shore up security for a multinational peacekeeping force in the Sinai Peninsula.

Lieutenant Tom Gilbert, the Troop Commander of the NZDF engineering team, said both projects were a big boost to security at the Multinational Force & Observers' (MFO) South Camp.

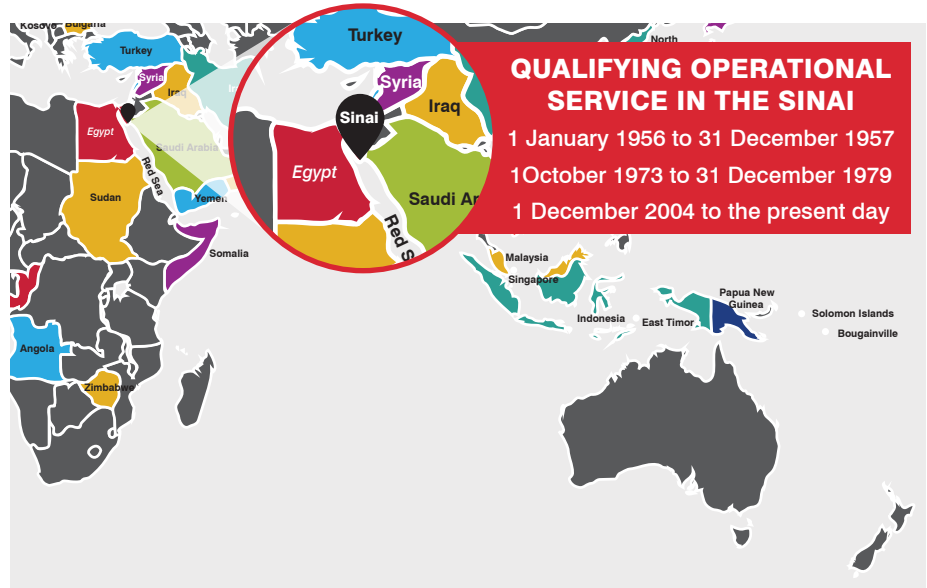
"Our engineers have done our country proud with their work. I felt humbled every time I heard comments commending their work and their dedication to get the job done," Lieutenant Gilbert said after the contingent returned in mid-June from their six-month deployment to the Sinai.

He said the members of the engineering team, who included combat engineers, carpenters, plumbers, maintenance fitters and electricians from the New Zealand Army's 2nd Engineer Regiment, considered their deployment had been "a very rewarding experience".

"The MFO plays a vital role in maintaining peace in this area of the Middle East and being a part of it is

highly satisfying. The team can be proud of what they have achieved here," Lieutenant Gilbert said.

The NZDF has had personnel in the Sinai Peninsula for more than 35 years. Since the MFO was established in 1982, the New Zealand contingent has included a transport section, a training and advisory team, and a number of key staff positions.



*"If you have qualifying operational service in the Sinai then Veterans' Affairs may be able to provide you support — now or in the future"*

## INVICTUS GAMES TEAM HEAD TO CANADA

The NZDF Invictus Games team will head to the 2017 Invictus Games in Toronto, Canada following a year of training.

The Games will be held between 23 and 30 September. It will be the biggest Games yet. Around 550 wounded, injured and ill active duty and veteran service men and

women from 17 allied nations will be competing in 12 adaptive sporting events.

Invictus is the only international adaptive sporting event for wounded, injured and ill active duty and veteran service members. It uses the power of sport to inspire recovery, support rehabilitation, and generate broader

awareness of the physical and psychological injuries sustained by wounded warriors — and how these can be overcome.

The New Zealand team includes 24 current and former serving members of the NZDF who have been wounded, injured or become ill as the result of their service to our country.



You can follow the team's journey throughout the Games on social media:

 [facebook.com/InvictusGamesNZ](https://www.facebook.com/InvictusGamesNZ)

 Twitter: @nzdefenceforce

We'll also feature a round up in the December edition of VA News.

## New Chair appointed to the Viet Nam Veterans And Their Families Trust

Lindsay Pope has recently been appointed as the Chair of the Viet Nam Veterans And Their Families Trust by the Hon David Bennett, Minister of Veterans Affairs. The appointment, which is for a three-year term, sees Lindsay replace Phillipa Smith-Lambert who chaired the Trust since 2010.

The Trust was established in 2007 as part of a package of measures, agreed to by the Crown and two veterans' organisations, to address concerns of the Viet Nam veteran community. It's purpose is the relief of poverty and hardship of New Zealand

Viet Nam veterans and their families, as well as other matters beneficial to their veteran community.

"Since its inception the Trust has disbursed over \$3 million to Viet Nam veterans and their families" says Lindsay, who has served in the trustee field for 40 years.

"If Viet Nam veterans, or their families, are experiencing poverty or hardship then they should consider making an application to the Trust."

This year the Trust's AGM will be held in Auckland on Saturday 2 December 2017 at 10.30 am. Lindsay encourages all Viet Nam veterans, as well as their families, to attend if they're able. "It's a great opportunity to find out more about the Trust and talk to the Trustees."

The location of the AGM will be advised to local RSAs in October. It will also be published on the Veterans' Affairs website.

Application forms and further information on the Trust is available at:

- [communitymatters.govt.nz](http://communitymatters.govt.nz)
- 0800 824 824
- [trusts@dia.govt.nz](mailto:trusts@dia.govt.nz)

## Accessing mental health support

We all face challenges to our mental health at various times in our lives. The way we're feeling can affect both how we think and how we deal various situations.

It's important to reach out and ask for help if it's needed. There are a range of support services available. Some are designed specifically for current and former military personnel.

### 0800 NZDF4U

The NZDF supports a confidential telephone helpline service. It is staffed by trained health professionals who provide advice on depression, anxiety and other mental health matters. You can call them 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

0800 NZDF4U | 0800 693 348

### No Duff

No Duff is a volunteer organisation, founded by veterans, and committed to providing immediate welfare support to past and present members of the NZDF.

Call 022 307 1557 or email [noduff.ngo@gmail.com](mailto:noduff.ngo@gmail.com)

### 1737

Call or text 1737 for free, at any time, to get support from a trained counsellor.

## Remembering the North African Campaign

National commemoration to mark the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of El Alamein

OCT 11.00am,  
27 Friday 27 October 2017

Hall of Memories, Pukeahu  
National War Memorial Park  
Wellington

## Help us with our new website

Veterans' Affairs is in the final stages of developing a new and improved website.

"We want to offer veterans a website that is intuitive to use and easy to understand" says Matthew Dyson, Advisor Projects and Communications at Veterans' Affairs. "We see the best way to make this happen is to test the site with the veteran community before we launch it".

We would love to hear your feedback. If you can help us by checking out our website and getting back to us with your comments, you would be helping both us and your fellow veterans to make sure what we offer is going to be what you need.

Sign up for early access by visiting [www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/new-website](http://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/new-website)



### Our sincerest apologies

When VA News was sent out in July, a number of readers received a copy which addressed them incorrectly. We have investigated the cause of the problem, and can confirm that the

fault was the result of human error at our print provider.

We are working with our print provider to ensure this doesn't happen again. In the meantime we unreservedly apologise for the error.