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Attention: Manawatu District Council Plan Change 65 Hearings Panel

By email: [governance@mdc.govt.nz](mailto:governance@mdc.govt.nz)

Dear Hearing Panel members

**PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE 65 TO THE MANAWATU DISTRICT PLAN:  
OUTSTANDING NATURAL FEATURES AND LANDSCAPES (ONFL)  
NZDF LETTER TO BE TABLED AT HEARING**

**Introduction and background**

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) has military interests throughout New Zealand and has a long history in the Manawatu District, with the RNZAF Ohakea Air Base and Raumai Air Weapons Range located within the District. This enduring relationship has been acknowledged with the 2019 re-signing of a Statement of Intent between New Zealand Defence Force, Manawatu District Council and Palmerston North City Council, citing mutual benefits between the three parties and recording the intention of these parties to work together in mutual areas of interest.

Against that background, NZDF undertakes Temporary Military Training Activities (TMTA) across the country as part of its function of maintaining the nation's security, maintaining operational capability and providing for the well-being, health and safety of communities. TMTA can include a range of activities, from office/classroom based activities to large scale military exercises, and may involve Search and Rescue, infrastructure support (such as deployment of water purification and supply facilities as used in the aftermath of the Canterbury and Kaikōura earthquakes), bomb deactivation training, personnel movements etc. They may be undertaken over a period of hours, days or weeks, during both day and night.

Given the location of RNZAF Base Ohakea and the Raumai Air Weapons Range within the District and the proximity of Linton and Waiouru Camps, the Manawatu District is important strategically as being an area where TMTA could be undertaken. It is vital for NZDF personnel to be able to train in a variety of off-site environments to reflect real world scenarios. This is of local and national importance. It is therefore essential that NZDF is able to carry out temporary military training activities across all zones in a district.

**NZDF's submission on Plan Change 65**

Proposed Plan Change 65 (PC65) seeks to recognise and protect natural features and landscapes within the Manawatu District. PC65 proposes a new Natural Feature and Landscapes chapter of the Plan, amends characteristics and values of the areas and the extent of these areas, and identifies a number of new features and landscapes. PC65 also

provides a range of permitted activities, and other activities for which resource consent must be sought.

NZDF submitted on PC65 requesting that a permitted activity rule be added, to provide for TMTA to take place within the areas covered by the Plan Change. NZDF identified several locations affected by PC65, including the Ruahine Ranges, as being possible locations for TMTA. TMTA in these areas could include search and rescue training, and pack marching by personnel. NZDF discussed the various issues with Council staff in relation to TMTA within these areas.

### **Plan Change 65 Hearing**

The S42A Report states that enabling TMTA within these ONFL areas is contrary to the overall direction of the plan change, which is to protect the values and characteristics of the identified areas. The Report also states that some small scale TMTA (such as search and rescue or tramping) may be able to be undertaken under the proposed permitted activities that are provided for by PC65.

NZDF would prefer that, to avoid ambiguity, TMTA is specifically provided for as a permitted activity within these areas through a specific rule, with standards relating to vegetation clearance and earthworks. NZDF's proposed wording is as follows:

*NFL-Rx Temporary military training activities where:*

- 1) No indigenous vegetation disturbance or clearance will be undertaken, and*
- 2) Earthworks will comply with the relevant provisions in Chapter 3D.4.*

Further, NZDF requests that where a TMTA is not permitted, then it has Discretionary activity status, with proposed wording as follows:

*NFL-Rxx Temporary Military Training Activities that cannot meet the permitted activity standards under Rule Rx.*

The temporary nature of TMTA themselves, combined with the proposed permitted activity standards requested above, ensures that any potential effects of TMTA on the characteristics and values of the identified ONFL areas are able to be managed and if required, mitigated.

### **Summary and closing**

NZDF will not attend the hearing on Plan Change 65 of the Manawatu District Plan but requests that the Hearings Panel take into consideration the matters set out above. Should further information be required on any of the above, please contact the undersigned at [Rebecca.Davies@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:Rebecca.Davies@nzdf.mil.nz) or 021 445 482.

Yours sincerely,



**Rebecca Davies**

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