

OIA-1743-2012  
NZDF 1461/4

16 September 2012

Mr Joshua Grainger  
fyi-request-512-328b924f@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Grainger

Please refer to your e-mail of 22 August, in which you requested under the Official Information Act (OIA) *all correspondence, reports, emails, or other such documents relating to the acquisition of MATVs for the NZDF.*

This is a very sensitive subject area, given the ongoing operational deployment of New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel in an area where fatalities and other serious casualties have been sustained. Accordingly, I must decline your request under sections 6(a), 6(b)(i) and 6(d) of the OIA.

Firstly, to make the information you have requested available would be likely to prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand. Release of some of the information would also be likely to prejudice the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand by the Governments of other countries, or agencies of those Governments, or international organisations. Thirdly, release of some information about military vehicles could endanger the safety of NZDF personnel.

By way of background to the issue, after the incident in August 2010 which claimed the life of Lieutenant O'Donnell, the NZDF investigated a range of vehicles, including Mine Resistant Armour Protected (MRAP) vehicles. The US offered the NZDF an MRAP vehicle (the MaxxPro) in 2010 as the US began to supply new military all-terrain vehicles (MATVs) to their units. Naturally, the first MATVs were sent first to US units, but coalition partners were notified that MATVs could be available once US units were fully-equipped.

The MaxxPro, the vehicle on immediate offer, was not suitable for the NZDF's operations in Bamyán Province. The Province's difficult terrain and, in parts, high altitude, limit the effectiveness of the range of vehicles categorised as MRAPs. MRAPs operated by New Zealand's coalition partners are better suited to the flatter terrain of Afghanistan's southern Provinces. One of their chief disadvantages for operations in Bamyán is that they have high centres of gravity. This top-heaviness means that an MRAP would be much more likely to roll over on some of the roads in Bamyán. Their weight also means that they may not be sufficiently mobile to operate freely off the roads in parts of the Province. In addition, some

wider than the NZLAV and Humvees. MRAPs would therefore have difficulty moving through some villages in Bamyan.

Attached images show the nature of some of the Bamyan Province terrain, an NZLAV in Bamyan, the type of Humvee used by the NZ Provincial Reconstruction Team and four different MRAPs.

I hope that this will satisfy your request for information about the consideration of different military vehicles by the NZDF, but you retain the right, under s28(3) of the OIA, to ask an Ombudsman to review this response to your request.

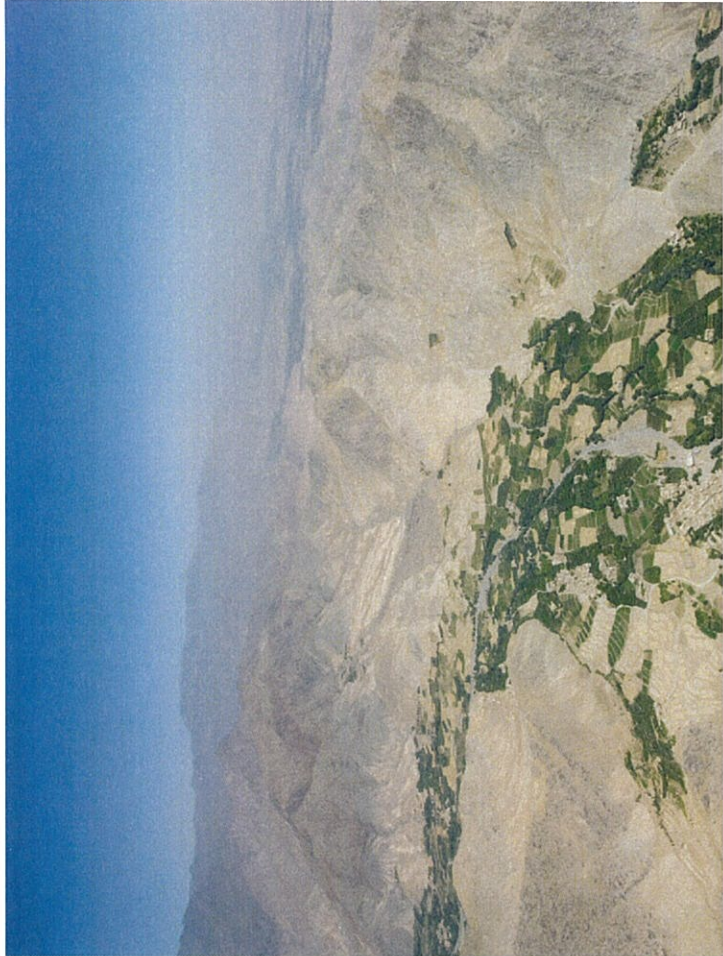
Yours sincerely



**R.R. JONES**  
Lieutenant General  
Chief of Defence Force

Enclosures:

1. Four examples of the terrain and climatic conditions encountered by the NZPRT in Bamyan
2. An NZLAV and a Humvee of the type employed by the NZPRT.
3. Four examples of MRAP vehicles.





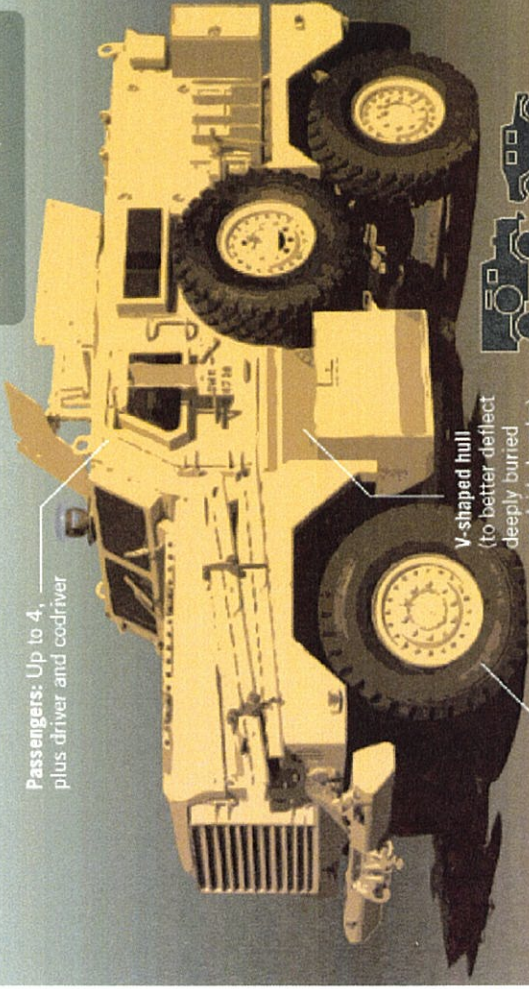
## Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected Vehicle (MRAP)

MRAPs like the Cougar can weigh two to five times as much as humvees, prompting concerns that they could cause some bridges to collapse. But sitting up high allows soldiers to see more.

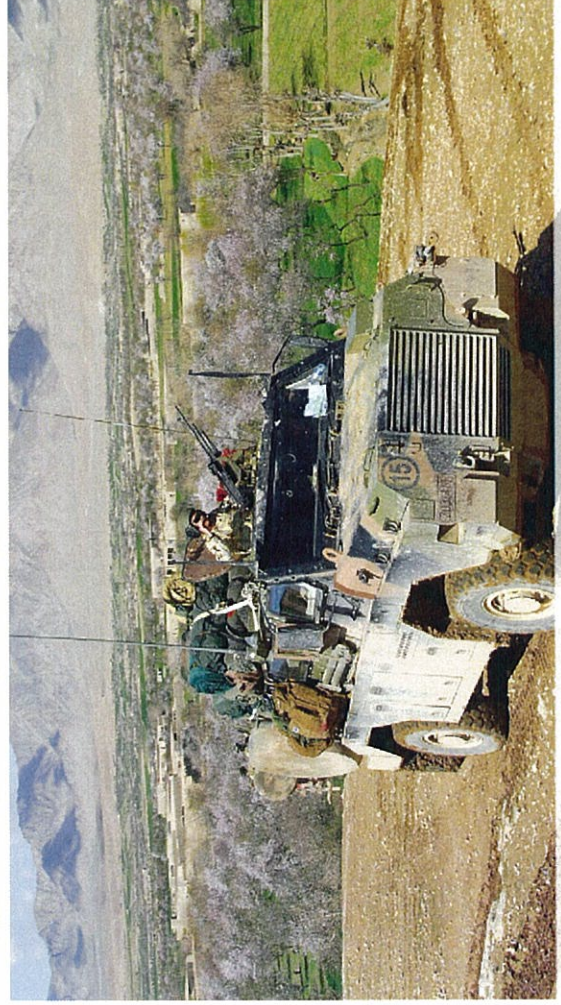
Passengers: Up to 4, plus driver and co-driver

V-shaped hull (to better deflect deeply buried roadside bombs)

HORSEPOWER	..... 330 at 2,400 rpm
RANGE	..... 420 miles
HEIGHT	..... Approx. 104 inches
WIDTH	..... 108 inches
LENGTH OVERALL	..... 233 inches
WEIGHT	..... 32,000 lbs.
PAYLOAD MAX	..... Up to 6,000 lbs.



MRAP - Cougar



Bushmaster



MRAP - RG31



MRAP MaxPro