

OIA-2017-2923

17 January 2018

John

fyi-request-6976-30cdbebb@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear John

I refer to your request of 10 December 2017 to the Ministry of Defence, made under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), asking the following: "...how many people has been appointed as a honorary Captain of the Royal New Zealand Navy and what are the requirements to get consider to this role".

The Honorary Captain system was established in 1998, with the programme announced on 2 September, and the first individuals appointed with effect 1 October later that same year. The appointment confers no authority or power of command, nor pay. It recognises people who have had a distinct association with the Navy in the political, commercial or academic fields, or who have otherwise provided exceptional support to the Navy. Appointment as an Honorary Naval Officer is only by the personal direction of the Chief of Navy, although others in the organisation may highlight individuals who could be considered for the role.

Since the role was established, 23 people have been appointed as an Honorary Captain, although four have passed away and have been removed from the role. It is a lifetime appointment, and some Honorary Captains are more active than others, depending on their circumstance and preference. A number of people were appointed in 1998 and 1999 to establish the scheme, and others have accepted the role in the intervening years.

Honorary Captains provide the Navy with support through their experience and expertise, although they are not uniformed personnel and their backgrounds and the contribution they make vary widely. The role enables the Navy to specifically recognise their individual contribution, and highlight a relationship that the Navy wants to be enduring. Honorary Captains are invited to attend different events throughout the year, dependant on their personal background and preferences, and have been speakers at different events. It is intended that the scheme will continue, and after a review in 2017, more appointments will be considered in 2018. While in the past the role has been focussed on recognition at the end of a period of exceptional support, this may not always be the case as the Navy may choose to use the scheme to recognise the people who make an ongoing contribution to the organisation from their expertise.

You have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to ask an Ombudsman to review my response to your request.

Yours sincerely



G.R. SMITH
Commodore, RNZN
Chief of Staff HQNZDF