



OIA-2019-3422

8 March 2019

Mr John Luke

fyi-request-9533-344c22ff@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Luke

I refer to your email of 7 February 2019 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information regarding honorary rank in the Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) and biographies of appointees, and asking if the New Zealand Army and the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) had made similar appointments.

Further, you asked what the requirements might be for honorary ranks and whether the general public could nominate people for appointment.

In the last decade, the Royal New Zealand Navy has appointed five honorary Captains:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Appointed</u>
Mr R.C. Croker, QSO, FCIS, CA	15 October 2010
Sir R.A. Harvey, KNZM, QSO	1 October 2010
Mr F.E.A. Declerck, MNZM	1 October 2015
Mrs S. Campbell	1 October 2015
Captain A Leechman (now deceased)	21 June 2017

Biographies of these individuals were not compiled, but the reasons for their appointments were given at the time they were invited to accept the appointments.

The Chief of Navy in 2010, Rear Admiral A.J. Parr, asked Mr Croker to accept the position of Honorary Captain as a recognition of the support Mr Croker had given to the RNZN as it implemented its Naval Excellence programme.

A later Chief of Navy, Rear Admiral J.R. Steer, asked Sir Bob Harvey, Mr Freddie Declerck and Mrs Shelley Campbell to accept honorary commissions. The invitations were issued in recognition of, respectively, strong support of the RNZN in the lead-up to the RNZN's 75th Anniversary Celebrations in 2016; service provided to all New Zealanders, particularly those visiting Belgium; and the motivation and development of personnel through the Sir Peter Blake Trust and its relationship to the RNZN.

The fifth Honorary Captain, Andrew Leechman, was appointed Honorary Captain in June 2017 by Chief of Navy Rear Admiral John Martin. Captain Leechman used his understanding of the Antarctic environment and the Ross Dependency region to aid the RNZN in establishing and sustaining its ability to conduct Southern Ocean maritime patrols. Captain Leechman has since died.

In the last ten years, the New Zealand Army has not made any honorary appointments.

The names of those offered honorary ranks in the RNZAF and the dates of their appointments are:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Appointed</u>
(Group Captain) Richard Westlake	18 December 2008
(Wing Commander) Craig Walker	18 December 2008
(Wing Commander) Brendan Deere	29 September 2015
(Wing Commander) Richie McCaw	29 September 2015
(Wing Commander) Michelle Dickenson	15 February 2019

Mr Richard Westlake's Honorary Commission recognised his commitment to an advisory position he held on the Air Force Leadership Board.

Mr Craig Walker was recognised for a long-standing association with the RNZAF, support of the Air Cadet Corps, and support of RNZAF Base Auckland.

Mr Brendan Deere has long been associated with the Air Force, as has his family. He has strongly supported the RNZAF Historic Flight and has been very generous in his support of Anzac Day and Battle of Britain commemorations, 485 Squadron reunions and graduation flyovers with the participation of a Spitfire from his aircraft collection.

Mr Richie McCaw was appointed as an exemplar of leadership, teamwork and a passion for aviation.

Dr Michelle Dickinson has been recognised for her commitment to RNZAF science, technology, engineering and mathematics youth outreach programmes and the RNZAF School to Skies Programme.

Appointments to honorary ranks in the RNZN, the Army and the RNZAF are at the sole discretion of the Chief of Navy, Chief of Army and Chief of Air Force.

I trust that this fully satisfies your request for official information but you retain a right, pursuant to section 28(3) of the OIA, to ask an Ombudsman to review this response.

Yours sincerely



A.J. WOODS
Air Commodore
Chief of Staff HQNZDF