

# **BARRIERS TO THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF WOMEN IN THE NZ ARMY**

**An understanding of the issues and suggested  
recommendations**

**June 2020**



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## Introduction

**The NZ Army has made a public commitment to increase the number of women in the ranks and to improve the culture of the Army to be a safe, positive, and inclusive work environment for all its members.** Efforts have been made during the past two decades to increase gender diversity within the NZ Army, however the proportion of women in the NZ Army has remained static at around 13%. Without addressing some of the key issues inhibiting the retention and recruitment of women this figure will not improve. The purpose of this report is to provide an understanding of eight key issues identified through research that create barriers to recruitment and retention of women in the NZ Army. The key findings and recommendations within this report have been presented to the Army Management Board (AMB), and the Army Leadership Board (ALB) throughout 2019. Simultaneously, other bodies of work have been addressing similar organizational issues and for that reason some of the recommendations presented within this report have already been implemented, or are currently under action.

### Sources of Data

The findings in this report are based on the views and experiences of 65 current and ex-serving NZ Army women. It is important to note that these 65 women do not necessarily represent the experiences of every woman in the NZ Army, however they are from a wide range of corps, trades, ranks and camp locations. The data includes:

- interviews in 2018 with 20 ex-serving, regular force (RF), women officers from this century;
- personal insights from the researcher (who served from 2003 – 2013), as part of a PhD focusing on the social well-being of women officers who have left the NZ Army; and
- individual interviews in late 2019 with 44 current serving RF women soldiers and officers.

The women were primarily ranked Captain, or Sergeant, and below. The participants each were interviewed for an average of one hour. There were no apparent differences between the 2018 and 2019 data sets. To protect the identities of the women who were interviewed, quotes and specific details of experiences have not been shared in this report. The analysis and recommendations within this report are based primarily on the 2019 data. A more detailed breakdown of the sources of data for each section of this report is provided at annex A.

Dr Ellen Nelson conducted the research which forms the basis of this report. Dr Nelson conducted this research in a similar manner to that which contributed to her PhD (awarded in August 2019). The research referred to in this report has benefited by having an interviewer who has served and therefore understands the NZ Army context, yet who is far removed from the participant's 'chain of command'. The interviewer did not wear uniform or refer to her rank. This helped in building trust and gaining insights from the various research participants and is a useful insight for conducting subsequent research to measure progress. It is recommended this report be shared with all commanders across the NZ Army, to provide an appreciation of the range of challenges uniformed women may face.

Recommendations in relation to the research findings come from Dr Ellen Nelson (based on her own insights, suggestions from the research participants, and academic literature) as well as from others in NZDF who are working to increase gender diversity.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr Nelson served as an Army Officer in the RNZE as Ellen Ford, during 2003 - 2013 and conducted the research referred to in this paper on a Short Term Regular Force Engagement during 2019.

## **Acknowledgements**

Appreciation must go to the women who participated in this research. This report could not have been produced without the participants' openness and willingness to share their experiences as current (or retired) Soldiers and Officers in the New Zealand Army. The insights gained in the research are useful for identifying improvement opportunities for NZ Army. Finally, sincere thanks to Dr Ellen Nelson for undertaking this important research. The NZ Army leadership plan to utilise the findings to positive effect. To this end, it is worth noting a Project Manager position is being created to lead Army's gender diversity work.

## Issue 1: Recruiting

This section was presented to the AMB in April 2019. Key data that was analysed includes eight recruiting videos used by the NZ Army during the 1990s and 2000s (which was the time period prior to the women interviewed for the PhD enlisting); six versions of the “We Want You” video used during 2018/2019; and the NZ Army career website at March 2019 and December 2019. Across all sources of data, there was a lack of military women featured in NZ Army advertising material. Further, when women were depicted, they were not conducting combat, command or physical tasks.

### Videos Used during 1990s/2000s

These eight videos were dominated by images of men. In total, 187 men and 17 women were identified. Further, men were consistently observed doing more physical, combat and command related tasks compared to women. When women were depicted, they were typically sitting at a computer, talking on a radio or providing medical attention. The table below provides more detail. In some cases, images were double coded (eg: ‘firing a weapon’ and ‘wearing camouflage cream’).

Task	Number of Men	Number of Women
Physical training (non-combat)	86	3
Physical training (combat)	10	1
Firing or aiming a weapon	23	0
Patrolling with a weapon	19	2
Giving orders or lessons	10	1
Trade task	5	0
Wearing camouflage cream on face	9	0
On a radio	5	3
At a computer	2	2
In a vehicle (plane, truck, boat)	33	1
Interacting with children	2	1
Haka	7	0
Giving medical attention	1	2
Receiving a qualification	0	1
Logistics tasks	2	2

### ‘We Want You’ videos used during 2018/2019

These advertisements included civilian and military personnel. There was diversity of gender and types of activity being performed with regards to the civilian personnel depicted. However, of the clips with military personnel, 88 were identified as men and only seven as women (7.3%). Further, of the military personnel wearing camouflage uniform, only 2.7% were women.

### NZ Army Career Website: March & December 2019

The ‘front page’ of this website displayed nine tiles for different career groups. Only one of the nine tiles included an image of a woman and she was in the ‘Army Reserve’ tile; there were no images of women in the RF roles. Each tile then led to approximately eight more images. Of these images:

- ‘Combat’, ‘engineering & technical trades’, and ‘specialist’ images were exclusively of men.
- At least 80% of the images for ‘apprenticeship trades’, ‘logistics and administration’, ‘intelligence, IT and communications’ and ‘reserves’ were of men.
- ‘Medical and health’ and ‘hospitality’ had an even balance of men and women.

## NZ Army Career Website: 'Browse Roles' December 2019

The 'browse roles' page on this website advertised 53 roles. Of those 53 roles, nine of the roles included images of women. The roles where women were depicted included:

- Movement operator (Reserves),
- Steward,
- Information systems operator / operational support and information specialist,
- Dental officer / dental hygienist / dental assistant,
- Medical officer / nursing officer, and
- A woman was depicted receiving support from a male chaplain in the 'chaplain' role.

These roles are not combat; one is a combat support role and the remainder are combat service support roles.

## Impact

Across all of these sources of data, there was a significant lack in representation of women. Further, when women were depicted, they were not conducting physical, combat or command related activities. This messaging could imply that women may not be as welcome as men, as these recruiting mediums do not actively include pictures of women. Further, the messaging suggests to the women who are recruited that they may not be eligible, or able, to undertake the same roles as men. The possible impact of this is:

- Young girls and women may therefore discount the NZ Army as a valid career option from the outset; 'you can't be what you can't see'.
- Parents, caregivers, teachers and career advisors of young girls and women may discourage them from considering the NZ Army as a viable career option.
- Young men may construe the NZ Army's message that it is an organisation for men, and not for women. This may perpetuate some of the issues detailed further in this report.

## Women seeing women is important

The interviewed women note that when young girls and women do see women in uniform performing a range of activities it demonstrates that women can be successful in the NZ Army. Some of the interviewees commented on the positive influence that seeing and meeting women in uniform had on their decision to enlist, and this highlights the importance of depicting serving women for the purpose of recruiting women.

## 2019 IPSOS research on gender diverse recruitment

The global market research organisation, Ipsos, conducted qualitative research in 2019, with civilian women aged 18 – 24, to understand how the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) can specifically appeal to women. Some of the barriers to, and opportunities for, recruitment identified in their report align with the findings outlined in this report. The civilian women felt that authentic personal stories from, and interaction and engagement with, current serving women, were well-received. This aligns with findings and recommendations in this section, regarding the important role that current serving women play in recruiting future women.

Being successful was identified as important to the civilian women. This suggests that they could potentially be drawn to an organisation such as the NZ Army, which aims to develop its personnel for future success. Being able to make a positive difference and helping others was also cited by the civilian women as a driver for career selection.

The Ipsos report also identified barriers to recruitment:

- The civilian women were concerned about an NZDF career causing a lack of control on their personal life, impacting current relationships, and potentially affecting future family relationships.

- It was important for the civilian women to work in an inclusive and welcoming environment. The findings across many of the sections in this report suggest this is an area the NZ Army needs to significantly work on.
- The report also recommended it was important to advertise that people do not need to change to fit in if they join the NZDF.

## Recommendations

In light of the findings above, the following recommendations are made in order to improve the recruitment of women into the NZ Army:

### 1. Include more women in recruiting material and initiatives

- Include significantly more women in all recruiting material (videos, website images, posters, radio adverts, brochures etc). If needed, actors could be utilised in recruiting material.
- Include more women in recruiting initiatives (recruiting staff, career stands, open days, army experience activities etc). Reserve Force and ex-serving women could be utilised.

### 2. Depict women conducting a range of activities

- Women have typically been depicted doing administrative and medical tasks. This should continue, as many young girls and women find these roles appealing.
- Women also need to be depicted conducting physical, combat and command tasks.

### 3. Focus not just on recruitment, but on 'attraction' as well by increased community engagement

- Increased visibility of NZ Army women in the community will support normalisation of women in uniform, and provide additional opportunities beyond recruitment for career influencers and potential recruits to interact with NZ Army women.
- Community engagement can be 'virtual' as well as in real life (e.g. make use of social media such as Instagram, Linked in and Facebook).

### 4. Continue to embrace diversity and inclusion

- Being able to bring your genuine self to the workplace was identified as important for women. The NZ Army can support positive perceptions of itself as an organisation by continuing to visibly support diversity and inclusion (e.g. via external communications on social media and also internal communications [given that current serving personnel also have the ability to influence whether someone joins or not]).

## Issue 2: Uniforms and Equipment

This section was presented to the AMB in April 2019. The prime reference for clothing within the NZ Army is the NZ P23 which states that the guiding principles are solidarity, multi-functionality and operational capability.

### Combat & physical training uniform and equipment

It was considered by the women interviewed that the camouflage uniform and combat equipment within the Army was primarily designed for and based on a male body type. The uniform does not always fit women properly and can, in worst cases, become less functional. It can also result in sub-optimal performance when performing combat tasks such as fire and manoeuvre, or climbing. Several of the interviewees commented on the way in which combat equipment, such as webbing and body armour, did not fit women's bodies correctly and therefore resulted in performance issues. This includes the physical training uniform, specifically the shorts, which were referred to as being ill-fitting for women.

It has been noted by Logistics Command (Land) that MCU was developed with limited consideration of the full population of the Army and also with limited consideration of gender. Note: the incoming NZ Multi Terrain Pattern (MTP) uniform currently being evaluated includes a line of development to ensure it better meets the fit, form, function for gender. The sizing of stock is based on a mixed outcome of small being shaped to female part of the population, middle sizes are gendered neutral and large sizes based on males. This matches data achieved from both the US as well ADF. The future goal, therefore, is to issue a uniform that maximises within the NZDF population for the best fit, form and functionality.

### Service dress (SDAR) and mess uniform

Although these uniforms have a female 'version', which has been altered to allow for hips and a bust, the design has been based on the male version of the same uniform. Some of the women interviewed felt that the male versions of these uniforms were reflective of men's attire in the corporate world, whereas the female versions of these uniforms were not reflective of corporate women's attire. It is intended that these uniforms look smart and professional, however it was also found by many of the women who were interviewed that they do not feel good about themselves, or proud of their appearance, when they wear these uniforms. In particular, they found it to be unflattering and unprofessional. A lack of appropriate maternity uniforms was also raised and this is discussed in more detail in a later section of this report.

Service Dress reflects the first three principles of the P23, primarily as office and ceremonial dress. It has been acknowledged by Logistics Command (Land) that the female uniform is a subset of the male uniform which is historical in its basis.

### Impact

The provision of ill-fitting uniforms to women is inconsistent with, and erodes, NZ Army's message of inclusiveness. Wearing uniforms and equipment (such as body armour and webbing) that is not designed for a woman's body also reduces functionality and in some circumstances, safety. The phrase, 'look good, feel good' is also applicable and important, as many of the women interviewed stated they did/do not feel good about themselves in the various NZ Army uniforms.

### Recommendations

In light of the findings above, the following recommendation is made:

1. **Provide well-fitting uniforms and equipment for women**
  - Define the issues experienced by women with respect to current NZ Army uniforms
  - Issue a women's camouflage uniform and physical training uniform.
  - Issue an improved service dress and mess uniform for women.
  - Issue an improved maternity uniform (expanded in a later section).



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- In all cases, due to the variance in body shapes across women, access to tailoring should be provided, so that all personnel have well-fitted uniforms.
- Issue female versions of all applicable equipment: body armour, webbing, packs etc.

## Issue 3: Authentic Leadership

### Different leadership approaches

It was found that many of the women interviewed did not feel they could truly be themselves and could not always lead in an authentic manner while serving in the NZ Army. In particular, there were a number of comments about the leadership approach taught within the NZ Army as being of a very specific type. The words used to describe this type included: directive, masculine, dictatorial, aggressive, autocratic, competitive, regimental and stern. Academic literature categorises this as 'masculine' leadership. In contrast, 18 of the 20 women from the PhD interviews, described their own leadership approach as being at the opposite end of the spectrum: collaborative, relationship focused, caring, emotional, inclusive and empathetic. Academic literature categorises this as a 'feminine' style of leadership. While the women in the PhD study can, and did, adopt both approaches at different times, the women considered it was more natural, or more authentic, for them to predominantly lead in a more feminine manner. When the women adopted their authentic leadership approach, they achieved positive outcomes for their soldiers and good outcomes for their operational outputs. Despite this, the women cited they often experienced criticism from their (mostly male) managers for demonstrating feminine characteristics such as caring, empathy and bubblyness.

When the women received criticism for their leadership approach, the women reacted in one of two ways (the data was split evenly across these two approaches). They would either continue to lead in an authentic manner, but get worn down due to receiving criticism about their abilities as a leader. Alternatively the women would try to be someone they were not, however they found this to be challenging, and at times exhausting.

### Impact

The ex-serving women who felt they remained authentic in their leadership style found they would receive constant criticism about their leadership approach and as a result they became disillusioned, and eventually left the NZ Army. Some of the women who tried to change their leadership style, to 'fit the mould' also eventually left the NZ Army because they felt being inauthentic was challenging.. This is not only a loss to the women who left, but critically, a loss to Army of a leader who has a diverse leadership perspective. When people do not feel that they can be authentic, they may not necessarily be the best leader that they can be and as a result, the organisation may not get the best from them. Additionally, not all personnel in the NZ Army respond well to one specific type of leader. Diversity of leadership approaches across the organisation can be beneficial as it demonstrates an inclusive approach to leadership.

### Recommendations

**1. Appoint a higher ratio of women to instructor roles in training establishments.**

- In order to help to encourage a range of leadership approaches. In particular at The Army Depot (TAD), the Officer Cadet School (OCS) and other leadership courses (also recommended in later sections of this report).

**2. Review current assessment criteria and curriculum with a view to ensuring both feminine and masculine approaches are taught and assessed. Such approaches could include the following:**

- Ensuring that grading criteria on leadership courses, and annual performance appraisals, include both 'masculine' and 'feminine' approaches to leadership; in more equal weighting.
- Ensuring that the leadership curriculum, case studies and examples of leaders, taught on leadership courses, include a range of leadership styles and include both genders.
- Review assessment on promotion courses, at all levels, to ensure that trainees are being assessed on both hard and soft leadership skills, such as relationship building, empathy and collaboration.

## Issue 4: Personal Relationships

### Findings

Defence Force Orders (DFOs) set out specific parameters for unlawful sexual relationships. An unlawful relationship is when personnel are in a direct chain of command, or if one person has influence or authority over the other (such as within a training establishment), and in some operational settings.

The majority of the women interviewed spoke about the excessive scrutiny, and at times persecution, they received from their peers and their superiors, about their personal relationships and sex-lives, or even purely perceptions or rumours, about their sex lives.

The women interviewed said they experienced criticism if they had multiple sexual partners or if they had sex with someone of a different rank. The interviewees also made comments about the perceived difference in treatment between men and women with regards to their sexual choices. It was identified that it is common practice for women to be pulled aside and warned about how they should conduct their personal lives; the women said this did not seem to be common practice for men.

A number of women who were interviewed experienced sex-based shaming<sup>2</sup> and bullying from their peers. This treatment predominantly came from men, however, there were also examples of women exercising sex-based shaming towards other women. Some of the women also discussed how this treatment could be 'weaponised', in that people could make up malicious rumours about a woman's sex-life, specifically to discredit and shame her.

As well as experiencing bullying by peers, many of the women also discussed being chastised by their bosses for matters that were highly personal in nature. It was common for these women to be told by their boss that they should be more careful about how they might be perceived. In addition to being berated, there were several accounts where the interviewed women felt they had experienced specific career discrimination as a direct result of their sexual choices, or perceptions about their sexual choices. This included examples of women being told they would be held back from attending courses, postings or deployment. Some women shared their experiences of receiving this treatment, even though their relationships were deemed as lawful according to the DFOs.

### Impact

As a result of this scrutiny, many of the women talked about their associated experiences of anxiety. They were fearful about how they dressed, who they associated with, and where they socialised. Some of the women were scared to be too 'chatty' or 'bubbly' in case they were judged as being sexually promiscuous, or in the words of some of the interviewees, as 'sluts'. Other women would actively avoid socialising with NZ Army personnel in order to avoid such accusations.

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<sup>2</sup> Sex-based shaming refers to being critically judged for their sex lives (i.e. made to feel ashamed).

## Recommendations

### 1. Educate personnel on the unlawfulness of discrimination

- It is lawful for commanders to take action where close personal relationships contravene current NZDF policy or orders, or have a detrimental effect on the efficiency of the Armed Forces.
- It is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of sex, therefore commanders and all personnel must ensure that any contraventions are dealt with in a manner that is fair, equitable and in accordance with applicable authorities.
- Ensure Army personnel understand the parameters of the applicable DFOs and authorities.

### 2. Ensure that all personnel are aware of current appropriate and 'safe' channels to make a complaint

- Ensure that all personnel are aware of their ability to make a complaint (formal or informal) if they have been unlawfully discriminated against. This can be done via 'safe' channels and these safe channels may need to be reviewed to ensure that they are meeting the needs of all personnel.

# Issue 5: Gender Discrimination

## Findings

Some interviewees reported their observations that there are still some men in the NZ Army who do not believe women should serve within the organisation. Some of the women interviewed described the way in which they had been referred to in a derogatory manner, been made to complete the more trivial tasks in the group due to their gender, and even experienced men overtly stating they did not think women should be within the organisation. This in turn made them feel unwelcome within the organisation.

In addition to negative attitudes from peers, there were several examples of gender discrimination from personnel in leadership positions. This included commanders openly expressing their concern at having too many women in a unit due to potential pregnancies. Due to this, a number of the women interviewed commented on feeling they needed to constantly prove themselves. In particular, they felt like they needed to work twice as hard as their male colleagues, and often felt they were not considered to be as competent as their male colleagues.

There were five women from the sample interviewed in 2019 who specifically noted they had *not* experienced or observed gender bias in their workplaces. There were commonalities in the work environments of these women. The interviewees that had not experienced or observed gender bias came from units that had a much higher proportion of women than other units; at least 25 – 30% women. Further, there were senior ranked women in those workplaces.

## Impact

The impact of experiencing gender discrimination is significant. When this behaviour occurs (especially when it occurs overtly), it suggests there is a tolerance for this behaviour within the organisation, which can perpetuate the issue. The observation of these overt or conscious gender bias behaviours suggests there may be a higher likelihood of a range of impacts being experienced from unconscious biases as well. The impact of unconscious bias tends to be more nuanced and less overt, but still acts to undermine a sense of belonging and inclusivity.

## Recommendations

- 1. Ensure that NZ Army leadership is vocal in support of women, and the value of women within the NZ Army**
  - Demonstrate commitment to the inclusion of women by calling out sexism or behaviour that compromises gender equality and diversity (NB NZ Army can seek advice and support for overcoming gender discrimination and unconscious bias from the Directorate of Diversity and Inclusion as required).
- 2. Review the appointment, training and appraisal of leaders**
  - Identify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which can be explicitly utilised within the PDR process to assess personnel on gender inclusivity.
  - Ensure that leadership courses, at all levels, teach and assess personnel to lead inclusively. This should also form a critical aspect of promotion criteria at all rank levels.
  - Increase the dialogue about bias and impact across all training curriculum, and engage with NZDC to increase this dialogue in tri-service training.

- The performance of personnel across these behaviours, at all rank levels, should then determine whether or not they are appointed into leadership roles.

**3. Aim for critical mass of women in teams (at least 30%)**

- Work environments with a higher proportion of women and with women in senior positions have often seen a reduction in the prevalence of gender discrimination. It is therefore necessary in certain areas, such as training, to develop strategies to increase the proportion of women in certain teams. For example, to increase the number of instructors at training establishments such as OCS and TAD. This could be managed on a ratio basis rather than a percentage basis.
- Consider also grouping women at OCS, TAD and during Corps Training.

**4. Ensure that all personnel are aware of current appropriate and 'safe' channels to make a complaint**

- Ensure that all personnel are aware of their ability to complain if they have been unlawfully discriminated against. This can be done via 'safe' channels, and these safe channels may need to be reviewed to ensure that they are meeting the needs of all personnel.

## Issue 6: Sexual Harassment & Sexual Assault

The interviews with 27 current serving women identified that Op Respect is a good framework and it makes it clear what is, and is not, appropriate behaviour. Further, there are women who are currently receiving support from SAPRAs (the Sexual Assault Response Team, which was stood up under Op Respect). However, there were also women who felt Op Respect had not addressed all the current issues within the organisation, which was exemplified by the findings within this section.

The interviews with current serving women in 2019 identified that sexual harassment and sexual assault is still a significant issue, however, due to a lack of reporting, the information the organisation is receiving regarding the prevalence of the issue, may suggest the situation is better than it actually is (NB underreporting is a common issue with sexual violence for a number of reasons).

### Sexual Assault

Four different occurrences of sexual assault were discussed during the PhD interviews, and the 2019 interviews revealed nine different counts of sexual assault during the preceding 12 months (July 2018 – June 2019); either to the woman herself, or her friend. More than half of the women had also experienced, or observed, sexual assault in the form of inappropriate touching. All of the incidents discussed by the interviewees were sexual assault of NZ Army women by NZ Army men. Only four of these incidents were reported.

### Sexual Harassment

Multiple stories about sexual harassment were identified during the PhD interviews and more than 20 recent stories from the 2019 interviews. Again, this was sexual harassment of NZ Army women, by NZ Army men, and the majority were not reported. Further, some of the experiences of sexual harassment occurred in front of others indicating that the perpetrators did not attempt to be discreet with their harassment. Multiple women discussed incidents where they were spoken to in a degrading, and sometimes intimidating or sexual manner, by their peers or their superiors. These women did not observe anyone else step in, or reprimand the person committing the sexual harassment.

### Reporting

In the majority of these cases, the women did not report their experiences of sexual harassment or sexual assault. Many women also chose not to seek support from a SAPRA, even through a restricted disclosure channel, as they expressed they did not feel comfortable sharing their experiences with someone they did not know. A common belief by many of the women in this study was that they would not be believed if they reported their experience, so chose not to. It appeared this belief was based on the treatment of other women they observed. In some cases, positive perceptions about the male perpetrator (being good at his job, being a 'nice guy' or having a partner), and negative perceptions about the woman (being perceived as sexually promiscuous, or a poor performer at work), or insufficient evidence would contribute towards the woman not being believed. Further, a number of women commented on their perceptions regarding the MP's ability and resourcing to be able to adequately, and in a timely manner, thoroughly investigate the incidents.

In addition to not being believed, there were various other negative ramifications cited by the women if they were to report, which included: experiencing isolation and bullying, being made to feel they were making too big an issue out of it, or feeling like an administrative burden. This treatment was identified as coming from both peers and senior ranked personnel; primarily men, but also some women. One of the interviewees pointed out a potential issue with NZDF rules around reporting sexual assault; if a victim wants to speak with, or seek support from, another military member about an incident, that person is then obligated to report it through the chain of command, which may not be the best action for the victim.

There was a small number of women of those interviewed in 2019 who specifically noted they had not experienced or observed sexual harassment or sexual assault in their workplaces. The proportion of women in their work environments was higher than most other units; at least 25 – 30% women. Further, there were senior ranked women in those workplaces. The Op Respect report in 2016 acknowledged that a higher proportion of women reduces sexually harmful behaviour. This finding supports the concept of ‘safety in numbers’.

## Impact

The impact of experiencing sexual harassment or sexual assault is significant. Several of the women spoke about ongoing anxiety regarding their incident, and no longer feeling safe. When this behaviour occurs, and people are not necessarily held to account, it also suggests there is a tolerance within the NZ Army, further perpetuating the issue.

## Recommendations

### 1. Acknowledgement of the issue

- It is recommended that the NZ Army takes ownership of this issue, and acknowledge that neither Op Respect nor the wider organisation has resolved all issues relating to sexual harassment or assault, and demonstrate commitment to ensuring Op Respects’ future success.
- Leaders within the NZ Army also need to clearly communicate that sexual harassment and assault is not tolerated, and to reiterate that those who come forward will be treated with compassion and respect. There should not be a sole reliance on Op Respect, one programme of work, to address this in isolation from their leadership responsibilities.
- The NZ Army should also consider encouraging personnel to come forward if they have experienced harmful sexual behaviour (via SAPRAs). The number of disclosures should be monitored to ensure that the NZDF has sufficient resource in place to meet demand as required.  
**Note:** ownership of the issue will be further supported by the Op Respect programme sharing data on harmful behaviour so that leaders have ongoing visibility and awareness of the issue.

### 2. Bystander training

- NZ Army should have bystander training in place that is fit for purpose (NB the SAPRAs are currently developing new bystander intervention training after the recent ‘Mate’ bystander training); this training focuses on sexual violence (harassment/assault) prevention.
- Consideration should be given to developing training (perhaps within existing promotion modules) that also addresses discrimination or bullying. **Note** - Bystander training should not replace regular CO/management conversations around appropriate and inappropriate behaviours. Tacit support for tendentious and sexist humour/attitudes should not be tolerated in a professional Army.

### 3. Appointments, training and appraisals of leaders

- All leaders/managers should be given training on how to receive a disclosure (so they can respond appropriately if they are the first recipient of a disclosure). Those who have been harmed should have their options for support (i.e. SAPRAs) outlined to them, and they should be encouraged to seek support.
- Identify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which can be explicitly utilised within the PDR process to assess personnel on their ability to deal with sexual harassment issues.
- Ensure that leadership courses, at all levels, teach and assess personnel to lead inclusively. This should also form a critical aspect of promotion criteria at all rank levels.



**5. Aim for critical mass of women in teams (at least 30%)**

- Work environments with higher portions of women, and with women in senior positions, have been found in many cases to reduce the prevalence of gender discrimination as well as sexual harassment and sexual assault. It is therefore necessary in certain areas, such as training, to develop strategies to increase the portion of women in certain teams for example, to increase the number of instructors at training establishments such as OCS and TAD. This could be based on a ratio basis rather than a percentage basis.
- Consider also grouping women at OCS, TAD and during Corps Training.

**4. Review current support mechanisms for victims**

- Work with HQ NZDF to review current resourcing provided to SAPRAs and investigate the possibility of integrating them within units. This may help more people to feel comfortable in seeking support from them.
- Ensure that all personnel are familiar with the Restricted disclosure system as outlined in DFO 06/2016, which allows a victim to access support without triggering any further action.

**5. Review current alcohol policies**

- While many of the stories shared by the women cannot be attributed to alcohol, it was a contributing factor in some of these incidents which occurred in social settings where alcohol was available. It is therefore recommended that the NZ Army review its alcohol policies.
- Ensure appropriate awareness of the recently released Stand Alone DFO for OP STAND on the subject of substance abuse and alcohol harm minimisation.

## Issue 7: Maternity Challenges

This topic was presented to the AMB in December 2019. The findings concluded there were a number of challenges for mothers during their pregnancy, parental leave period and post-partum return to work. This section primarily focuses on the physical and mental health challenges for women

### Challenges during pregnancy

#### First trimester declaration

Many of the interviewees commented on their preference to keep their pregnancy private until they had had the 'twelve-week scan'. However, when the women requested to be excused from physical activities, they felt there was no mechanism to avoid announcing their pregnancy to their chain of command much earlier, and were resentful of this. This also indicates that many of them were not aware of their ability to seek a medical waiver for participating in physical activities, which does not require further explanation to their command chain.

#### Negative attitudes

Many of the women spoke about feeling they were an 'inconvenience' while pregnant and some received negative remarks from their managers when they declared that they were pregnant. Several of the women also discussed experiencing health issues during their pregnancy, which required additional medical appointments, and did not feel they received the required support or empathy from their units.

#### Physical activities

Many of the women interviewed commented on the pressure they felt to do physical training (PT) and other physically demanding tasks while pregnant. This included such things as camp piquet, carrying heavy equipment and attending field exercises, where they should have been medically exempt. Several women queried the appropriateness and safety of pregnant women being at the firing range and being exposed to loud noises, as well as being exposed to significant vibrations while being in a bumpy vehicle or aircraft. In some of the cases, the women were not forced to undertake the physical tasks, but did not feel safe or confident to ask if they could be excused from an activity. The women did not want to put themselves or their baby at risk, but expressed they did not feel empowered to remove themselves from potentially unsafe or unsuitable situations.

#### Maternity Uniforms

A lack of suitable maternity uniforms was mentioned by almost all of the women interviewed. The NZ Army issues a maternity version of the SD uniform, however, there were multiple complaints about it. The fabric, cut and fit of the uniform was not comfortable or practical to wear while pregnant. In many cases, the women had to wait more than a month to receive their maternity SD uniform and it did not fit all women throughout their entire pregnancy. Most of the women worked in units where the 'dress of the day' was MCU, so they did not want to stand out further by wearing SDs.

Some of the women were able to modify their MCU during maternity, but this was not standardised. While this was preferable to wearing the SD maternity uniform, many of these women had to write minutes requesting special permission to do this and some women were denied. Several of the women experienced severe swelling in their feet and ankles, especially during the last trimester of their pregnancy and found SD shoes and boots to

cause them considerable pain. Many of the women also wanted to be able to wear maternity exercise clothing that was appropriate for their pregnant body shape and size<sup>3</sup>.

### **Medical downgrade and Required Fitness Level (RFL) non-current**

Many women also discussed the impact of not being RFL current, or being medically downgraded, as a result of their pregnancy. For example, some of the women were removed from, or not nominated for, promotion courses, significantly impacting their career progression and remuneration. Other women had difficulties transferring between RF and Reserve Forces as a result of this.

## **Challenges relating to childbirth and parental leave**

### **Waiouru**

Waiouru is a 90 minute drive from the nearest hospital and many of the women who were posted to Waiouru during the later stages of their pregnancy expressed their fears and concerns due to the lack of maternity services in Waiouru. Some also found it difficult to gain approval to be located closer to a hospital during the latter part of their pregnancy, in response to either medical issues or potential winter road closures.

### **Parental Leave**

Several mothers spoke about appreciating having members of their unit reach out to them during parental leave. However, some mothers felt they were isolated during this period. Several mothers spoke about having the feeling of being forgotten about while they were on parental leave. In some cases, the women's PDRs were not completed due to them being on parental leave for a portion of the reporting period, which could potentially have affected their career development. There were also several examples shared where the mother was pressured (or in some cases, directed) to return from maternity leave earlier than she wanted (and within the 12 month legal entitlement period).

## **Challenges returning to work post-partum**

One of the most significant challenges identified by the women was the physical requirements following their return to work post-partum. In many cases, the women had not participated in unit PT for well over a year (including their pregnancy and maternity leave period). Their bodies had endured significant changes and, in some cases, trauma. However, many of the women were expected to return to unit PT as soon as they returned to work.

### **Every pregnancy, childbirth and post-partum experience is different**

One of the most repeated discussion points by the women interviewed, was the variance in experiences of pregnancy, childbirth and post-partum, and the impact this has on regaining fitness. At one end of the spectrum were the women who were healthy and physically active during their pregnancy. They had a relatively non-complicated birth and spoke about having an 'easy' baby who was healthy and generally slept and fed well. These mothers had support from the father, as well as other family members and friends. They shed the 'baby weight' quickly and were back into exercise within a few months of giving birth. These mothers had no trouble passing their Required Fitness Level (RFL) and Combat Fitness Test (CFT) within 12 months of having their baby. Eight of the 34 mothers, roughly a quarter, could be assigned to this category and were considered as the mothers who

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<sup>3</sup> Further investigation shows that the P23 Scale of Entitlement 106 Maternity Wear allows for MCU/SD adjustment, at crown expense, and no restrictions exist with respect to this.

were able to 'bounce back'. In some cases, there were mothers who 'bounced back' after the birth of one of their babies, but not the other(s).

At the other end of the spectrum were mothers who had significant health issues during their pregnancy. They were not able to maintain physical activity during the pregnancy and some gained a lot of weight. Many of the women experienced a range of birth complications and some suffered significant injuries (to their vagina or to their stomach) during childbirth. A data analyst from the NZ Ministry of Health explained that approximately 31% of births in NZ each year are medically coded as having some sort of complication, including lacerations and haemorrhaging. Many of the women spoke about ongoing injuries related to childbirth such as: vaginal prolapse, pelvic floor pain, incontinence, infected stomach and back pain. Conversations with four pelvic floor specialist physiotherapists across New Zealand indicated that pelvic floor issues occur following 30 – 40% of all childbirths (sometimes even if the delivery is a C-section).

Many of the mothers discussed the challenges with having limited support. In some cases the father or partner was deployed or regularly away on exercise. Some of the babies were more 'difficult' than others; eg. had health issues, difficulty feeding and trouble sleeping. These factors caused additional fatigue for these mothers, and exercise during maternity leave did not occur. Three of the mothers were diagnosed with post-natal depression and several others spoke about it. 26 of the 34 mothers, just over three quarters, were somewhere towards this end of the spectrum; where returning to unit PT post-partum was challenging. Many of the women commented on the challenges associated with returning to their 'pre-baby' fitness levels after childbirth.

### **Pelvic floor and vaginal injuries**

More than a third of the women specifically spoke about pelvic floor and vaginal injuries as a result of childbirth. This percentage is in line with the comments from the pelvic floor specialist physiotherapists. The women found it difficult to discuss this with their managers and the PTIs (who were often male) as it is a personal and private topic. For some of the women, their body looked as though it had returned to 'normal' because they had lost the 'baby weight'. They therefore struggled to explain why they were not able to conduct all physical activities.

### **Returning to PT**

There were 11 women, (approximately one third of those interviewed) who spoke positively about their managers for allowing them to return to PT at their own pace. Of these women, some of them sought out special assistance from PTIs and physiotherapists to 'recondition' or 'rehabilitate' their body, before returning to unit PT. They found this valuable and were grateful for this support. In general, these women were in units where there were a greater number of mothers, or they were ranked SNCO or above. These women acknowledged these factors as benefiting them.

The majority of the women interviewed, however, felt pressured to return to PT before they were physically ready. Many did not have access to, or knowledge regarding, advice and assistance for 'reconditioning' or 'rehabilitating' their post-partum body. A number of women were instructed to complete an RFL or CFT during their first week of returning from parental leave which in some cases was less than 12 months after giving birth. Several of the women felt their inability to adequately perform these physical activities soon after returning from parental leave then became the focus of their performance appraisals.

Only a quarter of those mothers interviewed found that their bodies 'bounced back' within 12 months of giving birth. The other three quarters had challenges. Yet, the women felt that the expected 'norm' in the NZ Army was for all mothers to 'bounce back'. In many cases, the fact that some mothers did 'bounce back' made it even harder for the women who did not as they then felt that they were held to that standard.

Due to the different experiences of pregnancy, childbirth and post-partum, the women interviewed had different experiences of returning to PT. Some were able to run, but not do press-ups, while other women struggled with

pack marching or firing at the range in the prone position. In some cases, the women's managers suggested that mothers were taking advantage, and just picking and choosing what they *wanted* to do, as opposed to what they were *able* to do. There appeared to be a lack of understanding by some managers regarding why some mothers could do some activities, but not others.

## Breastfeeding

There were multiple positive comments from the women about the breast-feeding policy. However, not all of the women knew about this policy, and not all managers allowed it. Many of the mothers discussed a need for more breast-feeding rooms at each camp, as well as a wider understanding of the policy by all managers.

## Medical downgrade and Required Fitness Level non-current

As identified above whilst during pregnancy, many women also discussed the impact of not being RFL current, or being medically downgraded, as a result of having a baby, upon their return to work. Some of the women were removed from, or not nominated for, promotion courses, significantly impacting their career progression and remuneration. Because of this, a number of women discussed their reluctance or fear, to discuss maternity related health issues with military medical staff, in case it then impacted their medical grading and career progression. As a result, several women shared that they have personally paid for private medical treatment, to subvert this.

## Lack of knowledge

Many of the women commented on their lack of clarity, and their manager's lack of understanding, around the rules and policies in place. Most of the women did not know, for example, when they were required to pass an RFL following childbirth. Uncertainty also existed regarding what pregnant women were and were not exempt from. Some of the women interviewed were also unaware of their leave entitlement, or the other parent's entitlement, to attend medical appointments related to pregnancy. This indicates that there is a lack of general understanding of NZ Army policy, which can lead to inconsistent or incomplete application of such policy. Many of the women commented on the exacerbation of this issue for junior ranked personnel, who do not always have regular access to DIXS, or knowledge of where to find policies on the intranet.

During the interviews it was revealed that there are already personnel within the NZ Army trying to address these issues. Some PTIs have undertaken courses for working with pregnant and post-partum women. NZ Army personnel have written defence papers on this topic. There are physiotherapists contracted to the NZ Army that are pelvic floor specialists and have requested permission to help mothers in this area. Some of these issues have already been raised at various forums (such as AMPLIFY), but have not yet been addressed. What is needed, however, is direction at the highest level, allocation of resources, and a mechanism to standardise and implement the recommendations below, to provide longevity of solutions.

## Impact

The impact of these issues is discussed in detail throughout this section. If women conduct physical activity that is not appropriate for their body during their pregnancy and when they return post-partum, it can put the women, and their unborn baby, at risk. It can also cause unnecessary pain, stress and injuries. If the NZ Army wants to remove barriers to recruitment and retention of women it is recommended that it work towards better supporting mothers both during and post pregnancy.

## Recommendations

1. **Mechanism to protect the privacy of expectant mothers during first trimester**
  - Women should be made aware of their ability to discuss their pregnancy with medical staff and be provided the appropriate medical certificate to excuse them from physical activity, without needing to declare their pregnancy to their manager during the first trimester. The ability for

pregnant women to do this via their local Defence Health Centre needs to be better understood by all personnel within the NZ Army.

## **2. Physical training maternity specialist**

- As a standard process, every pregnant woman should be referred to a physical trainer or medical professional, such as a physiotherapist, who specifically specialises in maternity care exercise. In consultation with the woman, the specialist should provide her with a tailored exercise programme that is appropriate for her body and her pregnancy. Some women will be able to participate in unit PT, while others will not. Pregnant women should have regular appointments with this specialist throughout their pregnancy to re-assess their health, and modify their exercise programme as appropriate.
- When the mother returns to work, it should be routine to again see the specialist to be medically and physically evaluated. In consultation with the mother, the specialist should provide her with a tailored exercise programme that is appropriate for her body and her post-partum recovery. Some women will be able to return to unit PT immediately, while others will need to participate in a rehabilitation / reconditioning programme first. The specialist should determine when each mother is ready to conduct an RFL or CFT.
- This specialist should also be available to mothers during their maternity leave, if they wish to start exercising. However, mothers should not be pressured to utilise this service, as not all mothers are willing or able to focus on their return to fitness during maternity leave.

## **3. Breast-feeding rooms**

- It is recommended that the availability of breastfeeding rooms be assessed, and where necessary more rooms provided at each camp and that all personnel be made aware of their location.
- In addition, Leaders and Managers should be made aware of the breastfeeding policy and should be supportive of breastfeeding mothers' choice to breastfeed and not pass comment on this choice (beyond support).

## **4. Maternity uniforms**

- Have a functional camouflage maternity uniform designed, ensuring that women are consulted throughout the design process.
- Ensure these uniforms are issued as 'routine' for all pregnant women and that larger sizes are available later into their pregnancy, if needed.<sup>4</sup>
- Provide maternity exercise wear for women. It may be easier to allocate a set budget for each pregnancy and allow women to purchase exercise wear themselves, that is appropriate for their body.
- Allow pregnant women to wear alternate footwear if they experience feet swelling. NB the newly issued shoes to be worn with camouflage uniforms in camp may now meet this need.

## **5. Remove unnecessary barriers to career progression**

- Ensure that where a woman is medically downgraded, or not RFL current, due to pregnancy or childbirth, she is not precluded from promotion, remuneration, or courses that are primarily class-based. The current G4 RFL grade should be currently meeting this requirement, however this may need to be investigated to ensure that the G4 RFL and medical downgrade policies are being applied correctly in these circumstances.
- Ensure that pregnant women are given meaningful work to do, if they are not able (due to their pregnancy) to undertake their previous activities.
- Ensure that teams with vacancies due to pregnancies or parental leave are not left to "wear the hurt", rather have a plan to ensure the work within teams is managed/covered.

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<sup>4</sup> Policy currently allows for females to wear civilian clothing, at own expense and thus choice throughout a pregnancy albeit that a CO must grant this approval.

**6. Education**

- Education is needed, at all levels, regarding the policies to support pregnant women, mothers and their partners; during pregnancy, during parental leave and upon return to work.
- Further understanding is required about the impact of loud noises and significant vibrations, to unborn babies. Once this knowledge is obtained, clear policies should then be set, and strictly adhered to, in order to ensure the safety of pregnant women and their unborn babies.
- It is important to demonstrate to all personnel why such policies are needed; pregnant and post-partum women do have different requirements and the organisation needs to better value and support mothers. It is important the messaging does not suggest that mothers then get a 'free ride'.
- Create a handbook for expectant parents and managers of expectant parents. The handbook should also provide education around realistic timeframes for mothers to return to full-fitness (only a quarter of the mothers' bodies in this report 'bounced back' within 12 months of giving birth). It should also be easily and readily accessible to all personnel (hardcopy and DIXS).
- It is important to ensure that the policies are appropriate for all forms of families; personnel that adopt, foster, surrogate, or are caregivers for children.

**7. Maternity leave period**

- Prior to proceeding on parental leave, managers and service members should agree on a communication plan for the period of parental leave (opt in by default).
- Some parents would prefer to completely 'switch off' from work and have no communication during their parental leave. Some parents would appreciate having the unit 'check in' on them during their parental leave.

**8. Co-design - Include women in the development and implementation**

- It is important that the development and implementation of any policies regarding pregnancy and maternity include women. The recommendations in this section include the ideas, suggestions and recommendations made by the women, during the interviews.

# Issue 8: Logistical Challenges for Parents

## Findings

### Parenting Responsibilities

Many of the women interviewed felt the NZ Army relies on its members who have children to have a partner that can take care of the child(ren) when they are away for work. This model may have been achievable in a previous era where mothers traditionally stayed home to take care of children in a two parent family. This is often no longer the case, and many mothers are also in paid employment and it is not realistic for military mothers, nor inclusive of same sex couples.

For the majority of the NZ Army mothers in this research, the other parent was also in the NZ Army. In these situations, several of the mothers felt they were expected to be the primary caregiver, even when both parents were in the military. There were cases when the father's manager would consistently deny him sick leave to care for his unwell child, thereby forcing the mother to take leave. At times, they also felt their partner's career was considered more important than their own, with some instances where managers were overt about this.

### Levels of support

Some of the women interviewed received more support from their managers and were appreciative of this. It was however, common in these cases for that work environment to include a higher portion of mothers compared to other units. The women in these situations felt that their managers were more empathetic towards their situation, perhaps because they better understood the challenges of being a working mother.

### Being away from home

Many of the mothers accepted that being away from home, at times, was a requirement of serving in the NZ Army. The women were frustrated, however, when they were sent away at short notice, or when their partner was also away. This made it extremely difficult for them to organise alternate arrangements for their children. There were a significant number of stories shared where both parents were sent away at the same time. There were also instances where some mothers were required to be in the field when they were still breastfeeding, or when their baby was very young; in some cases this occurred when the mother was posted unaccompanied from the other parent. Several of the mothers did not want to spend long periods of time away from their children and felt that the NZ Army could do more to accommodate this.

It should also be noted, however, that not all mothers want the same thing. While many of the mothers interviewed would have preferred more time with their children, this was not every mother's desire. However, some of these mothers felt that they were scrutinised or judged for wanting to attend promotion courses or deployments that required time away from their children. This therefore suggests that there is a desire for autonomy rather than having 'blanket policies' that may not suit all mothers.

There were occasions where mothers would not be considered for an overseas deployment because they had expressed their concern when they were sent into the field at short notice. The interviewed women explained that organising childcare for a fixed period overseas deployment (with several months' notice) was often easier than making arrangements with two days' notice for a two-week field exercise when the father was already away. These mothers therefore resented not being considered for deployments in these circumstances. Several mothers also discussed situations where they had taken time off work to look after sick children (for example), but were then excluded from any 'fun' activities such as adventure training or sporting trips.



## Postings

Many of the women discussed the challenges of finding midwives and childcare centres at short notice in a new posting location. There were multiple stories of pregnant women and mothers being posted to different cities with less than two months-notice. This made it extremely difficult for them to find alternate midwife and childcare arrangements. Further, multiple mothers were posted separately from their partner, the other parent. For nine of these women, this separation occurred during the last trimester of their pregnancy (and for several, this was just weeks before their due date).

Many women also spent the bulk of their parental leave period not knowing what role, or what city, they would be posted to when they returned to work. This meant they could not make plans for childcare. Several of these women discussed the additional layer of anxiety this created for them during their maternity leave period. Almost every mother who has served, or is currently serving, in Waiouru also discussed the challenges with childcare in this particular location. Specifically, the lack of availability and long waiting lists, due to high demand creates pressure on families posted to Waiouru.

## Flexible Working Arrangements

Several women were very appreciative of being able to utilise flexible, or reduced hours, working arrangements to help manage their childcare commitments. These women expressed their gratitude, and talked about the increased loyalty and commitment they felt towards the NZ Army as a result. However, many of the women interviewed in 2019 had had their applications for flexible working declined. Therefore it would appear that there are various interpretations of the policies, by different commanders.

Additionally, some of the women discussed that reduced hours did not correlate to a reduced workload. They felt considerable strain trying to achieve a full work load in a reduced number of hours. Further to this, utilising flexi-hours to drop their children at school or childcare in the mornings often meant they missed unit PT at 0800h. Their managers then expected them to manage their own fitness in their own time. This, however, was not realistic for many of the mothers due to childcare commitments.

## Rank

The challenges identified in this report occurred for women across all rank brackets. However, many women felt these challenges were intensified for junior ranked personnel. Examples were also given where some women had purposefully delayed having children until after completing key promotion courses so that they would be in more senior positions by the time that they started a family.

## Impact

The majority of the mothers expressed a desire for more autonomy over their career. As discussed throughout this section, having clarity over what role they would be doing, what hours they would need to work, what periods of time they would need to be away from home and where they would be physically located, would significantly improve their ability to manage and organise their family responsibilities alongside their work responsibilities.

The interviews in 2019 identified a number of parents who are seriously considering, or actively planning, to leave the NZ Army in the next 12 months, specifically due to the competing needs of the NZ Army and their families. In almost all of these cases, the personnel do not want to leave the NZ Army, as they love their job and the organisation; however, they believe that their situation as NZ Army parents has become untenable. In many of the cases, alternate approaches to managing these parents could help to prevent this attrition.

## Recommendations

### 1. Consult parents

- Before any changes to policy are made to address the challenges in this section, it is important to get perspectives from fathers and civilian partners with children. This would provide a broader understanding of the issue.
- Further, co-design of any solutions should occur – with parents being involved in the development and implementation of these.

### 2. Review current posting system

- Significant culture change can often take longer than a two to three-year posting, and any gains in culture change can easily be reversed with a new command chain. If commanders knew they could be in a role for longer, they may feel less pressure to focus primarily on outputs for that period, and give more attention to culture change.
- The length of postings and time in posting locations should therefore be reviewed to provide greater stability of home and family life. This would benefit all personnel in the NZ Army, not just parents, by providing more autonomy, stability and control over their own career and location.

### 3. Collaboration when planning exercises, postings, deployments and courses.

- It is recommended that it become routine practice for dual-military parents and their managers, to plan course, exercise and deployment schedules together. This may not avoid every conflict of timetable, but it would provide both parents a better understanding of schedules, provide greater autonomy, and achieve better 'buy in' from all four parties.
- It is also recommended that DACM gain greater oversight of the postings of junior personnel which are approved at unit level, particularly where posting may adversely affect dual military couples or families.

### 4. Job sharing and parental leave cover

- In addition to flexible working opportunities, investigate the ability to develop job sharing options that would allow personnel to work reduced hours, correlating to a reduced workload.
- In addition to this, it may be useful to create short term secondment opportunities to cover personnel on parental leave. This would help to alleviate the 'burden' some commanders' feel when they lose a staff member for a period of parental leave.

### 5. Waiouru childcare

- Review current childcare facilities in Waiouru, and if necessary provide additional funding and resourcing to increase its capacity.
- Childcare facilities and capacity at all camp locations may also need to be reviewed and assessed at the same time to ensure adequate access and capacity for all parents.

### 6. Give parents the option to be 'ring-fenced' when their baby is young

- Provide a specified period of time for parents with young babies (perhaps 18 months or younger) to have the option of being ring-fenced from participating in activities that require them to be away from home. This should be done in consultation with the parent, however, as this will not suit all personnel.

### 7. Education of policies

- Education is needed at all levels regarding the policies to support parents; during pregnancy, during parental leave and upon return to work. It is important to demonstrate to all personnel why such policies are needed: parents have additional responsibilities and the organisation needs to better value and support parents. It is important the messaging does not suggest that parents then get a 'free ride'.

## Conclusion

This report has raised a number of issues relating to women's participation within the NZ Army and the challenges they face. Addressing these issues will make a significant contribution towards removing the barriers to recruitment and retention of women in the NZ Army, and it is considered that this will also benefit all personnel. There are numerous recommendations in this report that are easy to implement in the short term, while others may be longer term goals. The proportion of women in the NZ Army has remained static at around 13% for the past two decades. If the issues in this report are not addressed, this situation may continue or worsen in the future. It is therefore recommended that the NZ Army seek to actively address the issues identified.

## Support

For any NZ Army members who feel that they require support with any of the issues raised within this report, the following avenues are available:

- Employee Assistance Programme: 0800 NZDF4U
  - All members of the NZDF, including Regular Force, Civilians, Reserve Force, families and veterans can contact EAP. A health professional (outside of the NZDF) will assess what the nature of the issue is and discuss support options about any issue someone may want help with. This can include anything from general stress/depression/anxiety, relationship troubles, financial worries, post-deployment problems, to transitioning out of NZDF. The health professional will help direct towards the best support for the member.
- The Chaplaincy Service and NZDF Social Workers are available as a support service.
- Local Human Resource Advisor (HRA) are experts in discrimination and bullying related issues.
- Sexual Assault Response Team: 0800 693 324
  - SAPRAs are subject matter experts in the field of sexual violence. SAPRAs provide advice and information to all NZDF personnel on sexual violence prevention strategies and best practice for the response to cases of sexual violence. This includes advice, information and support for victims/survivors, command and bystanders.

Any member of the NZDF who has been affected by harmful or unwanted sexual behaviour can also, at any time, contact the NZ Police or ring 111 in an emergency.

### ANNEX:

#### A. Sources of Data

# Annex A: Sources of Data

## Issue 1

- PhD data: Interviews in 2018 with 20 ex-serving RF NZ Army women officers across a range of corps. Their service was this century, and the median length was ten years.
- PhD data: Eight recruiting videos used by the NZ Army during the 1990s and 2000s (this was the period of time prior to the women interviewed for the PhD enlisting).
- Six versions of the NZ Army 'We Want You' video used during 2018 / 2019.
- NZ Army career website as at March 2019, and again checked in December 2019:  
<https://www.defencecareers.mil.nz/army/careers/>
- NZ Army career website, 'browse roles' section, as at December 2019:  
<https://www.defencecareers.mil.nz/army/careers/browse-roles/>

## Issue 2

- PhD data: Interviews in 2018 with 20 ex-serving RF NZ Army women officers across a range of corps. Their service was this century, and the median length was ten years.
- Secondary data: a relayed conversation from April 2019, with a group of RF women soldiers and officers, discussing uniforms and equipment.

## Issue 3

- PhD data: Interviews in 2018 with 20 ex-serving RF NZ Army women officers across a range of corps. Their service was this century, and the median length was ten years.
- Excerpt from course report for the July - October 2019 Grade 2 Staff and Tactics Course.
- Excerpt from candidate report for the November 2019 Officer Evaluation Board.
- Interviews with 27 current serving RF women in June 2019 (after presenting this topic to the AMB in April). The women were from a range of corps, trades and camp locations; primarily ranked Captain, or Sergeant and below. Interviews with these women did not focus on this topic; the interviews were conducted to understand the 2019 situation for the following five sections of this report. However, some of their comments related to authentic leadership, and are therefore, included in this section.

## Issue 4

- PhD data: Interviews in 2018 with 20 ex-serving RF NZ Army women officers across a range of corps. Their service was this century, and the median length was ten years.
- Interviews with 27 current serving RF women in June 2019. The women were from a range of corps, trades and camp locations; primarily ranked Captain, or Sergeant and below.

## Issue 5

- PhD data: Interviews in 2018 with 20 ex-serving RF NZ Army women officers across a range of corps. Their service was this century, and the median length was ten years.

- Interviews with 27 current serving RF women in June 2019. They were from a range of corps, trades and camp locations; primarily ranked Captain, or Sergeant and below.

## Issue 6

- PhD data: Interviews in 2018 with 20 ex-serving RF NZ Army women officers across a range of corps. Their service was this century, and the median length was ten years.
- Interviews with 27 current serving RF women in June 2019. They were from a range of corps, trades and camp locations; primarily ranked Captain, or Sergeant and below.

## Issue 7

Total of 34 insights from mothers who are serving (28), or were serving (6).

- PhD data: Interviews in 2018 with 20 ex-serving RF NZ Army women officers across a range of corps. Their service was this century, and the median length was ten years. Six were mothers while serving.
- Interviews with 27 current serving RF women in June 2019. They were from a range of corps, trades and camp locations; primarily ranked Captain, or Sergeant and below. 11 were mothers while serving.
- Interviews with an additional 17 current serving RF officer and soldier mothers during September to November 2019. The majority of these mothers have children under three and they were from a range of corps, trades and camp locations.
- Informal conversation with Ministry of Health data analyst in October 2019.
- Informal conversations with four pelvic floor specialist physiotherapists across NZ, in 2019.

## Issue 8

Total of 34 insights from mothers who are serving (28), or were serving (6).

- PhD data: Interviews in 2018 with 20 ex-serving RF NZ Army women officers across a range of corps. Their service was this century, and the median length was ten years. Six were mothers while serving.
- Interviews with 27 current serving RF women in June 2019. They were from a range of corps, trades and camp locations; primarily ranked Captain, or Sergeant and below. 11 were mothers while serving.
- Interviews with an additional 17 current serving RF officer and soldier mothers during September to November 2019. The majority of these mothers have children under three and they were from a range of corps, trades and camp locations.