



Cabinet

CAB Min (09) 5/3A

Minute of Decision

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Afghanistan: New Zealand's Contributions Beyond September 2009

Portfolios: Foreign Affairs / Defence

On 16 February 2009, following reference from the Cabinet External Relations and Defence Committee (ERD), Cabinet:

Background

- 1 noted that New Zealand's engagement in Afghanistan began as a gesture of solidarity with the United States of America (US) after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, and has been transformed subsequently into a broader commitment involving international organisations, including the United Nations (UN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and a substantial number of countries with which New Zealand is allied or enjoys close relations;
- 2 noted that, despite some improvements in Afghanistan since early success against Al Qa'ida and the Taleban in 2001, the overall situation remains of major concern and requires an ongoing and substantial international programme of security and development assistance to the government of Afghanistan;
- 3 noted:
 - 3.1 the continuous involvement of New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel and assets in Afghanistan since December 2001, with the focus on the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Bamyan Province [CAB Min (02) 23/2; CAB Min (02) 30/20; CAB Min (03) 19/12; CAB Min (04) 8/5 and CAB Min (04) 41/31; CAB Min (05) 40/1; CAB Min (06) 12/15; and CAB Min (07) 8/3];
 - 3.2 that in November 2007, the previous government agreed to the continued deployment of military, police, and intelligence personnel in Afghanistan for one year to 30 September 2009 [CAB Min (07) 42/13];

4 noted that New Zealand's contributions in Afghanistan since 2001, through both military and development assistance, total more than \$160.0 million;

5 noted New Zealand's International Aid and Development Agency's (NZAID) current three-year (2009-2011) \$21.0 million programme of assistance to Afghanistan;

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- 6 **noted** that New Zealand's security and development efforts in Afghanistan are intended to be transitional, assisting the government of Afghanistan to be able to wield effective authority and good governance throughout the country;
- 7 **noted** that the political and security environment for the New Zealand effort in Afghanistan remains of concern, with threat environments ranging currently from MEDIUM to HIGH;

Extension of New Zealand contribution in Afghanistan

- 8 **noted** that, based on the current level of international deployments and the re-rolling of combat support units, the New Zealand security effort in Afghanistan, with particular reference to the PRT in Bamyan Province, remains sustainable until November 2010, but that beyond September 2009 the PRT deployment will increasingly impact on the NZDF's other commitments such as:
- 8.1 training;
 - 8.2 combat support core skills;
 - 8.3 the Defence Sustainability Initiative and Defence Long-Term Development Plan projects;
 - 8.4 other deployed missions and contingency support operations;
- 9 **agreed** to the continuation of New Zealand's current security effort in Afghanistan, for one year from 1 October 2009 until 30 September 2010 at an estimated cost of \$41.443 million, comprising the following elements:
- 9.1 deployment of the PRT of up to 140 NZDF personnel, based mainly in Bamyan province with associated support staff at Bagram airbase and in Kabul;
 - 9.2 deployment of up to five NZDF personnel to maintain the New Zealand facilities at ^{PSR(R)1, PSR(R)2} **Replace with "name of base."**
 - 9.3 attachment of up to five personnel to various operational headquarters in Afghanistan;
 - 9.4 provision of one military advisor to the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan;
 - 9.5 attachment of up to two medical specialists to the Multi-national Medical Unit in Kandahar;
 - 9.6 attachment of two NZDF non-commissioned officers working with the United Kingdom providing command and leadership training to the Afghan National Army;
- 10 **agreed** to the continued provision of intelligence support by the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) to deployed NZDF elements for one year, from 1 October 2009 until 30 September 2010, at a total additional cost (in Vote Communications Security and Intelligence) of \$ ^{PSR(R)2, PSR(R)3})

Replace with: "NZSIS personnel to assist the wider in-country intelligence support effort."

- 11 agreed to the continued contribution of **PSR(R) 2 & 3** until 30 September 2010, at a total additional cost (in Vote Security Intelligence) of **\$PSR(R)2&3**
- 12 agreed to the continued attachment of three Police trainers to a European Union policing programme and involved in training and mentoring the Afghan National Police in Bamyán province for one year, from 1 October 2009 until 30 September 2010, at a cost of up to \$1.0 million to be funded by NZAID;
- 13 approved the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the decisions in paragraphs 10 and 11 to extend provision of intelligence support by the GCSB and the NZSIS in Afghanistan for one year to September 2010, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and debt:

	Sm – increase/(decrease)				
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 & Outyears
Vote Communications Security and Intelligence Minister Responsible for the GCSB Expenses or Capital Expenditure incurred by an Intelligence and Security Department: Communications Security and Intelligence					
	PSR(R)2 & 3				
Vote Security Intelligence Minister in Charge of the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service Expenses or Capital Expenditure incurred by an Intelligence and Security Department: Security Intelligence					
	PSR(R)2 & 3				
Total Operating					

- 14 noted that the changes to appropriations above will be charged against the 2009 Budget allocation;

Provincial Reconstruction Team issues

- 15 noted that, because of deteriorating security conditions, the NZDF has taken steps within the current mandate to mitigate ongoing risks but that a separate paper will be submitted shortly to ERD seeking approval to raise the current authorisation for personnel deployed to the PRT above 140;
- 16 noted that the options listed above both directly support the PRT and also contribute to other important areas such as co-ordination and capacity building, support for the UN and assistance to New Zealand's security partners, thus greatly enhancing New Zealand's overall profile and reflecting the multifaceted nature of operations in Afghanistan;
- 17 noted the potential need for additional finance to cover infrastructure and capability costs associated with the extension of the Bamyán PRT beyond September 2009;

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- 18 noted that urban encroachment on the PRT base during the next two-to-three years may force New Zealand to consider substantial rebuilding or even relocation of the base which, if or when it becomes necessary, will incur significant additional costs;

Defence funding issues

- 19 noted that the current level of appropriation and future baseline funding will be inadequate to fully support the marginal costs of all future NZDF deployments beyond 2009/10;
- 20 noted that defence funding issues relating to operationally deployed forces will be addressed in an upcoming paper to ERD;
- 21 noted that, with the exception of the redeployment of the New Zealand Special Air Service, the NZDF has limited capacity at present to consider additional options beyond the current mix of commitments;

Next steps

- 22 noted that the Singapore Armed Forces units will again co-locate with the New Zealand PRT, subject to conclusion of suitable arrangements between Singapore and New Zealand, and with the NATO/International Security Assistance Force;
- 23 noted that the Memorandum of Understanding with **PSR(R)1 & 2** covering **PSR(R)1, PSR(R)2** was extended in April 2008 and will need to be renewed by April 2009;
- 24 agreed that a review of New Zealand's commitment to Afghanistan beyond September 2010 be undertaken to examine more deeply the needs and opportunities for change, taking account of:
- 24.1 developments in Bamyán Province and other parts of Afghanistan;
 - 24.2 moves towards Afghanistan and the re-balancing of military and non-military effort by other international contributors;
 - 24.3 the policies of the new US Administration and its expectations of partners;
 - 24.4 addressing options for smaller, more focussed military contributions beyond the PRT commitment, and international benefits derived from ongoing engagement;
- 25 noted that the findings of the review, including the financial implications of recommended options, will be reported to relevant Ministers by mid-2009.

Replace with: "name of country and base."

Rebecca Kitteridge

Secretary of the Cabinet

Reference: CAB (09) 40; ERD Min (09) 1/2

Secretary's note: This minute replaces ERD Min (09) 1/2. Cabinet added new paragraphs 13 and 14.

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