MINISTRY OF

FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE



18 August 2010

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For action by 19 August 2010

AFGHANISTAN/DETAINEES: UK HIGH COURT JUDGMENT AND POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOR NEW ZEALAND

Submission:

Issues

Purpose:

We report on the UK High Court judgment on UK detainees in

Afghanistan transferred to Afghan detention facilities; UK concerns about the National Directorate of Security (NDS) detention facility in Kabul; and the possible implications for

New Zealand.

Comments:

None.

Recommended Referrals

Prime Minister

Minister of Defence

For information by 19 August 2010 For information by 19 August 2010

Contacts

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PSR(IC)3

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Minister's Office Comments

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Key Points

- Following a recent UK High Count judgment on UK detainee transfer policies in Afghanistan, we have followed up with UK officials in London and Kabul to seek detailed information on their concerns regarding the Afghan National Directorate of Security (NDS), and options for going forward.
- PSR(R)1 , while there are ongoing challenges in seeking to improve the NDS' practices, there have been some encouraging developments, including the development of a database for tracking detainees, and the appointments of a new Chief of the NDS and new Head of Department 17 (the NDS' investigative body in Kabul).
- The NZDF has not detained any individuals on operations and therefore has no detainees to monitor in Afghan detention facilities.
- The extent of our political and legal options in cases where Afghan authorities have apprehended Afghan prisoners is to seek information about their cases and convey to the Afghan Government our expectation that these persons will be treated in accordance with international and Afghan law.
- Dr Mapp will be raising this issue with his Afghan and international counterparts during his visit to Afghanistan this week, and Defence have been instructed to prepare a detailed review within one month. In addition, we recommend that the New Zealand Embassy in Kabul attend, where possible, the regular meetings with ISAF countries on detainees policy development; that New Zealand seek NATO/ISAF views on the NDS detention facility in Kabul; and that we stay in close touch with

Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- Note the following report on the UK High Court judgment in Yes / No respect of a judicial review challenge to UK detainee transfer policies in Afghanistan; PSR(R)1
- Agree that the New Zealand Embassy in Kabul should attend Yes / No the regular meetings with ISAF countries on detainees policy development; New Zealand should seek NATO/ISAF HQ views on the NDS detention facility in Kabul; and that New Zealand should stay in close touch with PSR(R)1 as thinking on this issue develops.

PSR(IC)3

Deputy Secretary, Multilateral and Legal Affairs Group

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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INCOME WAS

Report

UK High Court judgment

On 25 June 2010 the High Court of England and Wales issued a judgment in respect of a judicial review challenge to UK detainee transfer policies, filed in December 2008. The judgment relates to persons detained directly by UK forces, who UK forces then transfer to Afghan authorities. The Court underlined the obligation to monitor the welfare of persons transferred in those circumstances.

- The judgment sets out disturbing evidence and allegations of widespread and serious mistreatment of prisoners held in Afghan detention facilities including the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission's (AIHRC) 2009 report on "Causes of torture in law enforcement institutions"; UN reports between 2004 and 2009 raising concerns about torture and other inhumane treatment by the Afghan National Directorate of Security (NDS), the lack of a public legal framework for the NDS and limited access to NDS facilities; and NGO concerns. It also sets out the details of UK monitoring of Afghan facilities which has been principally conducted by UK Embassy officials.
- The judgment does not seek to prevent the UK forces from handing detainees over to the Afghan authorities as a general proposition. But it does confirm that a moratorium placed by UK forces in early 2009 on transferring detainees to the NDS facility in Kabul should remain in place.

New Zealand interest

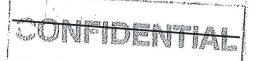
There has been media and political interest in New Zealand over the past few days on the UK High Court ruling and the implications for New Zealand particularly regarding the NZSAS operating in Kabul mentoring and training the Afghan Crisis Response Unit (CRU). NZSAS members have not themselves detained anyone, but there have been occasions during which the NZSAS were "in the vicinity" when the Afghan CRU apprehended Afghan prisoners. While New Zealand's legal obligations on detainees are clear - i.e. they only extend to individuals detained by New Zealand forces (as is the fact that New Zealand personnel have not detained anyone to date) and the New Zealand Government has received written assurances from the Afghan Government regarding detainees, the UK judgment has generated questions about New Zealand's approach to the treatment of Afghan nationals arrested by Afghan authorities and transferred to the NDS facility in Kabul.

NDS facilities and UK moratorium

To help assess the possible implications for New Zealand, we have followed up PSR(R)1

. We have sought detailed information on PSR(R)1 concerns about the NDS facility in Kabul and options for going forward. Defence Minister Dr Mapp will also be raising this issue with his Afghan and international counterparts during his visit to

R (on application of Maya Evans) v Secretary of State for Defence [2010] EWHC 1445 (Admin) Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade





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Afghanistan this week, and Defence have been instructed to prepare a detailed review within one month.

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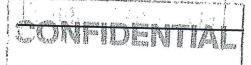
The judgment had found that it was not unlawful for UK forces to continue transferring detainees to NDS facilities in other provinces in which the UK is operating, such as in Helmand and Kandahar. The NDS facility in Lashkar Gar in Helmand remains the one to which the majority of British detainees are transferred.² The High Court has expressed some reservations about transfers to the NDS in Kandahar, however, on the basis of allegations on detainee abuses received by the Canadians.

8 PSR(R)1

9 It is only for transfers to the NDS in Kabul and primarily Department 17 on which the UK has an ongoing moratorium, in place since early 2009.

The concerns over access to detainees had been addressed by February 2009, by which time the relevant UK detainees had been transferred to Poli-Charki prison in Kabul (where convicted prisoners are held and some detainees are transferred by the NDS pre-trial). There has been one exception to the moratorium, with the transfer of one "high-value" UK detainee to NDS in January this year. While the High Court had commented less than positively on this exception, PSR(R)1

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Of the 410 persons detained by UK forces and transferred to the NDS between July 2006 and March 2010, 357 went to Lashkar Gah, 34 to Kandahar and 19 to Kabul.

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The High Court judgment had subsequently held that the moratorium must not be lifted at this time.

Next steps - NDS progress and challenges

11 PSR(R)1

The High Court was not specific about conditions that it would want to see introduced before the moratorium could be lifted. Nor did the Court expressly require the UK Government to report back to it on the conditions it was specifying for the moratorium to be lifted. PSR(R)1

12 PSR(R)1

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(The lack of an adequate system for tracking detainees had been one of the issues raised by the High Court.)

15 PSR(R)1

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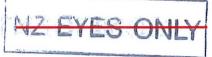
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22 PSR(R)1

New Zealand practice and obligations

23 In terms of possible implications for New Zealand, PSR(R)1

24 PSR(R)1 a number of countries continue to transfer detainees to Department 17. Many of these countries are working with the NDS to facilitate efforts to upgrade systems and practices in the Department. There are regular meetings among ISAF countries involved in transferring detainees in Kabul to coordinate this assistance programme and to share concerns and safeguards. PSR(R)1

On 12 August 2009 an Arrangement came into effect between the Afghan Foreign Ministry and the New Zealand Defence Force concerning the transfer of persons between the NZDF and the Afghan Authorities ("ATD"). The NZDF also complies with ISAF's Directive on Detention Operations and Notification (of 13 April 2010), which requires the NZDF to report to ISAF the detention and transfer of individuals by Afghan National Security Forces or

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partnered forces. ISAF HQ maintains liaison with and monitoring of Afghan facilities.

- The concept of operations is that the Afghan authorities will arrest and detain persons of interest subsequent to an arrest warrant issued by the Afghan Attorney General. Only in exceptional circumstances is detention by NZDF personnel contemplated. The NZDF has not detained any individuals on operations, and therefore has no detainees to monitor in Afghan detention facilities. The New Zealand Government has, however, reserved the right to have access to and monitor any detainee it does transfer to Afghan authorities.
- There is an important distinction between detainee (defined as people arrested by foreign forces) issues and cases where Afghan authorities have apprehended Afghan nationals. We need to avoid the impression that New Zealand is assuming legal responsibility for these persons for two reasons: (i) New Zealand does not have any legal obligation with respect to Afghan nationals arrested by Afghan authorities; and (ii) New Zealand has no ability to "ensure" their appropriate treatment. We have not received any assurances to cover this situation from Afghanistan.
- In particular, New Zealand does not have the legal right to require specific death penalty assurances in cases where Afghan authorities have arrested Afghan nationals; and if we sought them, Afghanistan would be under no obligation to give them, and would be unlikely to do so for political/sovereignty reasons.
- 29 There would be further risks to seeking formal assurances for such cases. PSR(R)1

The arrest by Afghan forces is the best scenario for mitigating detainee issues and is preferred PSR(R)1 There may also be some risk to the existing assurances New Zealand has received on the transfer of detainees, particularly given the sensitivities in Afghanistan politics on assurances to foreign states (especially regarding the death penalty). Maintaining the viability of the Arrangement on detainees is essential for the continued deployment of the NZSAS.

Next steps for New Zealand

- 30 There may be a perception that New Zealand has a moral/political obligation with respect to Afghan nationals arrested by Afghan authorities for example when the NZSAS have supported the Afghan CRU on operations. The extent of our political and legal options available to New Zealand in such cases is to seek information about their cases and convey to the Afghan Government our expectation that these persons will be treated in accordance with international and Afghan law.
- 31 Dr Mapp's visit to Afghanistan this week during which he is scheduled to meet PSR(R)1

Afghan and international actors – will provide further opportunity to obtain information on this issue. As noted above, Defence is also preparing a detailed review.

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Page 8

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- 32 In addition, we recommend that the New Zealand Embassy in Kabul attend, where possible, the regular meetings with ISAF countries on detainees policy development.
- We also recommend taking up the offer PSR(R)1 to remain in close touch as PSR(R)1 thinking on this issue develops.
- We suggest it would also be useful to follow up with ISAF Headquarters in Kabul to seek NATO/ISAF HQ's views on the NDS facility in Kabul. PSR(R)1

It would be helpful to clarify ISAF's position on the

NDS facility.

Implications for New Zealand: summary

- 35 The UK High Court judgment is a reminder that the actions of UK (and therefore New Zealand and other) forces in Afghanistan are potentially subject to judicial review in domestic courts. In the course of such a review, the court is liable to consider a range of information from different sources (including the UN and 'civil society'), some of which may be troubling and difficult. New Zealand forces and agencies must be mindful of the possibility of such review, and conduct themselves on the basis that their practices and decisions are potentially subject to legal challenge.
- 36 To date, the scope for New Zealand actions to be challenged successfully is very limited given (a) no New Zealand transferred detainees and (b) the existence of an explicit detainee transfer arrangement with the Afghan Government. The risk of challenge can be minimised (but not eliminated) by so far as possible continuing to ensure that Afghan authorities are responsible for arrests/detentions, rather than New Zealand forces. The risk of challenge can further be managed by complying with the best practice of partners (e.g. through liaison with ISAF HQ), by learning from their experiences (including the UK), and ensuring full adherence to our detainee transfer arrangement.

Consultation with external agencies (if required)

The New Zealand Defence Force has been consulted on the contents of this submission.

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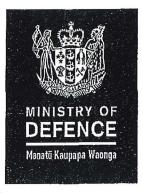
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Signed / Referred

Date:___/__/

15 February 20)11			
Minister of Foreign Affairs Minister of Defence		For action by 16 February 2011 For action by 16 February 2011		
AFGHANISTAN - NEW ZEALAND MONITORING OF DETAINEE				
Submission: Purpose:	Issues Following the NZSAS's de and his transfer into U approval of a letter setting sets out a proposed detain	JS custody, this out the terms of	submission that transfer.	seeks
Comments:	PSR(R)1			
Recommende Prime Minister Attorney-Gener Contacts Hamish Cooper	al Director, Internation			y 2011
Carl Reaich	Disarmament Division Acting Director, Leg		PSR(IC)3 (w	k)
Minister's Off	ice Comments			

Key Points

- NZSAS personnel, acting on the instructions of ISAF, detained a mid-level Taliban commander in Afghanistan on 30 January 2011. The individual is being held in a US detention facility in Bagram.
- PSR(R)1

A draft letter of transfer is attached, for urgent approval.

- Having detained the individual, New Zealand is now subject to an ongoing obligation to monitor his treatment pending his release, or him being brought before competent Afghan judicial authorities.
- This submission sets out a proposed monitoring regime, and seeks direction as to how that monitoring ought to be undertaken.

Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- Note that NZSAS troops acting on the instructions of ISAF Yes / No captured a mid-level Taliban commander, known as Musa Khan, on 30 January 2011;
- Note that Musa Khan is currently detained in the Battlefield Yes / No Detention Facility at Bagram Air Field, but is scheduled to be transferred to the Detention Facility in Bagram, under US control;
- 3 Approve the attached draft transfer letter, PSR(R)1 Yes / No
- 4 Agree that the Government commit to the monitoring of Yes / No Musa Khan's detention, until he is either released or brought before competent Afghan judicial authorities;
- 5 **Agree** that the minimal, credible monitoring regime will Yes/No involve:
 - New Zealand receiving appropriate assurances from the receiving forces that the detainee will not be subject to ill-treatment;
 - New Zealand authorities being confident, having taken all available means to obtain relevant information, that ill-treatment is not occurring in institutions to which the detainee is or could be transferred;
 - New Zealand exercising rights of access to, and monitoring of the detainee;

- 6 Agree that a designated New Zealand representative Yes/No conduct regular monitoring visits, initially by travelling to the detention facility every month, with the frequency to be adjusted if conditions are found to be acceptable;
- 7 **Direct** that oversight of this monitoring regime rest with the Yes/No New Zealand Ambassador, but that the monitoring and support functions be undertaken by an appropriately qualified NZDF officer based in Kabul;
- 8 PSR(R)1 Yes/No
- 9 **Note** that, subject to Ministers' advice on the above options, Yes/No officials will further develop the appropriate protocols for monitoring the detainee, including the funding and resource implications for the responsible agencies.

PSR(IC)3

for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

R. R. JONES Lieutenant General Chief of Defence Force

J. MCKINNON
Secretary of Defence

Report

On 30 January 2011 an element of the NZSAS in Afghanistan was tasked by ISAF to apprehend a mid-level Taliban commander, known as Musa Khan. The operation was conducted by the NZSAS independently, due to the limited time window available and the unavailability of a prosecutor from the Afghan Interior Ministry — a necessary precondition for the deployment of the NZSAS's partner unit, the Crisis Response Unit (CRU).

- Musa Khan was detained by the NZSAS in the vicinity of Bagram Air Field at approximately 1500 hours. The individual was then inspected by the NZSAS doctor. As New Zealand does not operate a detention facility in Afghanistan, and lacks the capacity to establish such a facility, Musa Khan was transferred to the US-operated Battlefield Detention Facility at Bagram Air Field at approximately 1900 hours on the day of his capture. This transfer was authorised by the Chief of Defence Force in accordance with the NZDF Individual Guidance for the Detention of Non-ISAF Personnel, which has previously been considered by Ministers.
- 3 PSR(R)1
- 4 PSR(R)1

The transfer will need to occur very shortly. US DFIB authorities require a formal legal transfer of the individual from New Zealand to US custody, via an exchange of letters. This is required by 16 February, or the US could be in breach of their regulations in holding the detainee and may have to release him.

NZDF have received assurances in writing PSR(R)1 that the individual will be treated humanely and in accordance with international law. An NZDF representative has also carried out an inspection of the DFIB facilities. To date Musa Khan has not been visited by any New Zealand representative and this is now an urgent requirement. A senior NZDF representative, accompanied by an NZSAS doctor, will make a preliminary visit this week.

Obligation under international law

- New Zealand has a positive obligation under international law to ensure that no person under its effective control is subjected to torture, or cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment. One implication of this obligation is that New Zealand would incur State responsibility if it transferred a detainee which its forces had captured to the authorities of another State which, in the circumstances, it knew or ought to have known would mistreat that detainee.
- 7 In a recent case challenging the detainee transfer arrangements of UK forces operating in Afghanistan, the High Court of England and Wales placed significant weight on two aspects of the British detainee transfer arrangements,

in finding that they were lawful. The first was that the British Government obtained a written assurance from the receiving Government that the detainee would not be mistreated. The second was that British authorities monitored on an ongoing basis the circumstances in which the detainee was detained.

- On 2 November 2010, Crown Counsel provided advice in respect of the prospective transfer of detainees captured by New Zealand forces to Afghan authorities, as part of a review of the implications of the Government's commitment of NZSAS personnel in support of the CRU. It was advised that, as a consequence of New Zealand's obligations under international law, if the transfer of such detainees were to occur:
 - a. New Zealand must receive appropriate assurances from the responsible Afghan authorities that ill-treatment would not occur;
 - New Zealand authorities must be confident, having taken all available means to obtain relevant information, that ill-treatment was not now occurring in institutions to which the detainee would be transferred or might be transferred; and
 - c. New Zealand must continue to monitor the treatment of such detainees.
- This advice reflected the view held by both the NZDF and MFAT, which led to the negotiation of a detainee transfer arrangement (known as the "ATD") between the NZDF and Afghan Foreign Ministry, which entered into force on 12 August 2009. NZDF also complies with ISAF's Directive on Detention Operations and Notification of 13 April 2010. In the ATD, the New Zealand Government reserves the right to have access to and monitor any detainee it transfers to the Afghan authorities.
- Prior to 30 January 2011, NZSAS personnel had not detained anyone during their current operation in Afghanistan. Detention is only contemplated in exceptional circumstances. NZDF personnel have been in the vicinity when Afghan National Security Forces have apprehended individuals, but in such instances New Zealand does not have jurisdiction over the individuals who are then transferred to Afghan custody. To date, no monitoring has therefore been carried out by New Zealand in Afghanistan.

Immediate next step

New Zealand does not currently have any transfer of detainee arrangements with US forces. While the contexts of a transfer to US authorities and a transfer to Afghan authorities are clearly different, the applicable principles are the same. NZDF has prepared the attached draft letter which, if approved, would govern the transfer of the present detainee to US custody. As noted above, the transfer needs to occur very shortly. This letter, while not a formal transfer arrangement, is based on similar documentation PSR(R)1

The letter deals with the key

provisions found in a transfer arrangement, such as the right to monitoring and

¹ R (on the application of Evans) v Secretary of State for Defence [2010] EWHC 1445.

inspection, the duration of the transfer, and assurances PSR(R)1 as to how the detainee will be treated.

Officials consider that the draft letter is a sufficient basis upon which to conclude the legal transfer of the detainee, and upon which to found an ongoing right to monitoring by the New Zealand Government. PSR(R)1

It is proposed that the senior NZDF officer in Kabul sign on New Zealand's behalf.

Proposed monitoring regime

The New Zealand Government will need to decide whether, and how, to undertake monitoring of Musa Khan, following this transfer.

Is monitoring essential?

- New Zealand could take the view that the transfer of an insurgent into the custody of US forces does not warrant ongoing monitoring. That is on the basis that the person will be treated in accordance with applicable US rules and procedures. However, officials consider that such an approach would be inconsistent with both New Zealand's international obligations and with previous statements by Ministers, as well as the approaches taken by all key coalition partners PSR(R)1
- It would expose New Zealand to legal risk, in terms of adverse findings in international bodies (and, conceivably, domestic courts). It may also damage New Zealand's international reputation, as a long-standing supporter of international humanitarian law and of international human rights standards.

What monitoring involves

- Officials consider that New Zealand is under an international law obligation to monitor the well-being of the detainee until he is either released or placed before a competent Afghan judicial authority. In accordance with this obligation and in line with our PSR(R)1 partners' approaches, monitoring should take the form of periodic visits by a competent New Zealand representative. That representative would visit the detention facility in which Musa Khan is held. During the visit, the official would meet with the detainee and inspect the conditions in which he is held.
- The representative would need to receive appropriate guidance from a suitably qualified advisor about the objectives of the monitoring, how it should practically be undertaken, and appropriate follow up processes. Such processes would include how to respond if any instance of ill-treatment is identified or if rights of access are withdrawn.
- The experience of New Zealand's key^{PSR(R)1} partners is that detainee monitoring is a burdensome one. Not only is it time consuming, and often for an indeterminate period, it must be done conscientiously (which may involve raising difficult issues with the authorities who are responsible for the detainee).

18 PSR(R)1

- While this is to date the first and only New Zealand-transferred detainee in Afghanistan, the resource implications nonetheless need to be carefully considered. The monitoring regime decided upon for this individual will set a precedent for any future cases. Depending on when Musa Khan is released or placed before Afghan judicial authorities, it could also commit agencies for the duration of New Zealand's engagement in Afghanistan, and possibly beyond then.
- In line with Crown Counsel's advice, it is proposed that the minimal, credible monitoring regime in these circumstances would be as follows:
 - a. New Zealand must receive appropriate assurances from the receiving forces that the detainee will not be subject to ill-treatment;
 - b. New Zealand authorities must be confident, having taken all available means to obtain relevant information, that ill-treatment is not occurring in institutions to which the detainee is or could be transferred.
 - c. New Zealand must exercise rights of access to, and monitoring of, the detainee.
- Monitoring visits would have to be conducted regularly, and in person, by the designated New Zealand representative responsible for monitoring. It is proposed that this would involve that person travelling to the detention facility every month for several months. If the detainee's conditions are acceptable, the frequency of such visits could be adjusted for example, to every two months, and later on to every quarter. Time would have to be found for travelling to and from the facility, for preparing for visits, for any necessary follow-up and for reporting.

Who should conduct monitoring visits?

- NZDF considers that, to ensure maximum credibility for the monitoring regime, it should be undertaken by the New Zealand Embassy in Kabul. If the Government discontinues resident representation in Kabul, the New Zealand Ambassador in Iran, accredited to Afghanistan, would assume that responsibility. NZDF considers that such an arrangement would minimise any risk of any allegations of a conflict of interest arising from NZDF personnel both having detained the person and then monitored the conditions of his detention.
- While understanding the rationale behind such an approach, MFAT notes that tasking the New Zealand Embassy with that function would be an

onerous commitment, which the Embassy is not equipped to discharge. Most importantly, such a monitoring regime would detract from the Embassy's core diplomatic tasks. Already, as a sole-person post, the Embassy in Kabul undertakes a demanding programme and tasking will increase as Bamyan begins the formal transition process this year. Similarly, once the resident New Zealand Ambassador in Afghanistan is withdrawn, tasking the accredited Ambassador in Tehran with monitoring would be difficult, not least logistically. MFAT therefore invites Ministers to consider whether monitoring ought to remain a NZDF responsibility.

Given the NZDF and MFAT's respective concerns about either option, a proposed compromise is that the New Zealand Embassy in Kabul takes overall oversight and responsibility, but that the physical monitoring is undertaken by an appropriately qualified NZDF legal officer based in Kabul. A bid will be made to embed this legal officer in ISAF Headquarters, PSR(R)1

In addition to the ISAF HQ role, the NZDF officer would carry out the regular inspections of Musa Khan, would report to the New Zealand Ambassador, and would generally provide all necessary and appropriate logistical support. The legal officer would also provide advice, as required to all New Zealand forces in Afghanistan.

Follow-up

Subject to Ministers' advice on the monitoring options outlined above, MFAT will explore with NZDF the funding and resource implications for agencies and the appropriate protocols for monitoring the detainee will be further developed.

Consultation with external agencies (if required)

This submission has been prepared jointly with the New Zealand Defence Force and in consultation with the Ministry of Defence.