

YOU ASKED FOR IT!

Ideas from personnel have guided work on a number of NZDF support packages. Some of the suggestions made at a series of workshops last year have already been delivered; for example, a range of discounts and a discount card are now available. But there are plenty of other services offered by NZDF that you may or may not be aware of.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

You asked for more help with home ownership, professional financial and budgeting advice and more flexibility with superannuation schemes.

We've ramped up our work on the financial support and advice available to help you and your families make good financial decisions.

WE HAVE:

- joined forces with the Commission for Financial Capability to improve your financial know-how. A programme is being rolled out to all camps and bases;
- engaged Milestone Direct Ltd to provide you and your families with professional financial advice and mortgage brokering services at no-cost or reduced cost;
- introduced FlexiSaver and NZDF KiwiSaver schemes to help you get into your first home. The NZDF KiwiSaver has low fees and also comes with an additional CDF contribution of \$3,000 over seven years;
- provided additional tools to assist with your financial planning.

BUT DID YOU KNOW:

- you can access government employee special banking rates with Westpac and special home loan rates with ANZ;
- the NZDF Superannuation Scheme (Cats A, B and C) allows members to withdraw their funds to purchase their first home.

FIND OUT MORE:

Check out the Force Financial Hub on the ILP.

FAMILY SUPPORT

You asked for more support to build resilience in individuals and families, and to build a sense of community and social connection. So we've:

- set up an integrated wellness programme that takes a preventative, early-intervention approach to all aspects of personal health and wellness – physical, mental, spiritual and social;
- established better support for families with enhancements to parental leave introduced this year. We are working on a new breast-feeding in the workplace policy to be delivered early in 2017.

BUT DID YOU KNOW:

- a range of discounts from well-known businesses throughout New Zealand are available to NZDF personnel and their families. Have a look at the Force4Families page on the ILP;
- flexible working arrangements are available to help people balance personal obligations and interests with work commitments. To find out more, look at the HR Toolkit on the front page of the ILP.

FIND OUT MORE:

The Force4Families site on the ILP has plenty of useful information on support for families.

POSTING

You asked for more planning around the frequency and timing of postings, more support and information around relocation, transport, travel home, storage and family.

WE HAVE:

- scheduled a comprehensive review of posting policies. This will start with a review of DFO5 chapters 3 to 6 (travel and removal expenses).

BUT DID YOU KNOW:

- DSSG have produced an information booklet on the posting process;
- your Career Manager and local HR Advisor can provide additional information and advice;
- the NZDF contributes to the cost of posting.

FIND OUT MORE:

- the HR Toolkit on the front page of the ILP has information on posting entitlements including the Posting Booklet;
- the Force4Families site has information on postings and on camps and bases as well.



NZDF SENDS ENGINEERS TO SINAI

by Luz Baguioro, Public Affairs Manager – Joint Forces New Zealand

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) sent 33 engineers to Egypt's Sinai Peninsula for a six-month stint in mid-January to build a fence that will help improve security for international peacekeepers.

Major General (MAJGEN) Tim Gall, the Commander Joint Forces New Zealand, said engineers from the New Zealand Army's 2nd Engineer Regiment would be building a fence around the Multinational Force & Observers' (MFO) South Camp.

"The security fence will improve physical protection at South Camp, where our personnel and troops from other contributing nations that make up the MFO's Force are now based," MAJGEN Gall said.

The MFO is an international organisation with peacekeeping responsibilities in the Sinai Peninsula.

The NZDF has been contributing a transport section, a training and advisory team, and a number of key staff positions to the MFO since it was established in 1982. The New Zealand Government recently extended the NZDF's contribution to the MFO mission to July 2018.

At present, 26 NZDF members form part of the MFO's Force comprised of around 1700 personnel from 11 other countries.

After operating at North Camp for over 30 years, the



LT Tom Gilbert

mission's headquarters and a number of troops from the 12 nations that make up the MFO's Force moved to South Camp in mid-2016 due to the deteriorating security situation in North Sinai.

The MFO is building new facilities to accommodate the influx into South Camp and had requested assistance with some of the infrastructure improvements.

Leading the NZDF engineering contingent – which comprises combat engineers, carpenters, plumbers, maintenance fitters and electricians – is Lieutenant (LT) Tom Gilbert, a 23-year-old Army engineer.

"It is a massive honour to lead NZDF personnel on operations overseas. A position of leadership comes with a unique set of challenges that I very much look forward to. Every officer aspires to lead soldiers on operations and few get this opportunity," said LT Gilbert, who was a Troop Commander in the Army's 2nd Field Squadron until late last year.

"I am very humbled to be chosen to lead the contingent. It is my last year of troop command so this deployment is the perfect way to finish my term as troop commander."



SPR Brendan James

One of the Army combat engineers who form part of the contingent is Sapper Brendan James, who enlisted in the Army to fulfil a childhood dream to follow in his father's footsteps.

"I'm excited and am looking forward to doing my job overseas. Getting this opportunity will allow me to gain new skills and build on the ones I already have," the 21-year-old combat engineer said before the contingent deployed.

"Having been selected to go on this deployment after being in the Army for only two years is a massive boost to my confidence and shows that my superiors also have confidence in me," said SPR James, who was the former house captain of Karamea Area School on the West Coast.

During their six-month deployment, the engineering contingent will get to experience Sinai's colder winter temperatures and its hot and dry weather during the summer months.

"The heat will take a bit to adjust to but I'm sure we will get through that," SPR James said.