



# SAPPERS TO THE RESCUE AFTER SOUTH WESTLAND FLOOD



**Army engineers have helped rebuild South Westland's Waiho Bridge, which was washed away by floodwater caused by heavy rain in late March.**

Eighteen personnel from the 2nd Engineer Regiment worked with the New Zealand Transport Agency and engineering and construction company Downer New Zealand to replace the bridge. The engineers were deployed for the duration of the project.

"It is great to contribute our professional expertise to support government agencies responding to communities that need our assistance," said Lieutenant Colonel Terry McDonald, Commanding Officer of 2nd Engineer Regiment.

The Transport Agency's contracted Bailey bridge installation expert Downer requested the NZDF's support for the reconstruction of the seven-span Bailey bridge that crosses Waiho River.

A Bailey bridge is a type of portable, pre-fabricated truss bridge developed by the British for military use during the Second World War.

The new 170-metre Waiho Bridge is one of the longest Bailey bridges Army engineers had been involved in building since the Second World War.

Transport Agency System Manager Pete Connors said getting the NZDF's help to assemble the spans on the bridge ensured it was ready to be launched from the south side of the Waiho River as soon as possible.

"We know how important a link it is in the South Island and for the businesses in South Westland and the Army engineers played a vital part in the restoration of a key piece of infrastructure."

Westland authorities said the Waiho Bridge provided vital access to the region and its loss had adversely affected tourism on the West Coast and in South Westland.

