

MEDIA RELEASE

15 December 2025

Inspector-General of Defence releases Annual Report

The Inspector-General of Defence (IGD) has today published the annual report for 2025.

The IGD is an independent statutory officer responsible for the oversight of the activities of the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF). The Inspector-General can investigate incidents that occur in the course of NZDF activities, undertake assessments of Defence Force policies or procedures, and receive information and protected disclosures about issues that may warrant independent assessment or investigation.

Mr Brendan Horsley, the current Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security, was appointed as IGD in December 2024 until 30 November 2025. In November 2025, High Court Judge Hon Justice Timothy Brewer ONZM ED was appointed IGD, for an initial five year term. Justice Brewer retired from the Bench on 15 November and took up his appointment on 1 December 2025.

Ms Natalie Pierce, a barrister specialising in domestic and international criminal law, human rights, and national defence and security, was appointed Deputy IGD for an initial three year term and took up her appointment on 10 November 2025.

Mr Horsley's annual report covers the period from 26 January 2025 to 30 June 2025.

In his foreword, he said: "During this time my efforts have primarily focused on establishing the office, ensuring appropriate supporting systems are in place, and recruiting investigative staff.

"I also received extensive and valuable briefings from multiple units within NZDF and the Ministry of Defence. I am most grateful for the efforts of both agencies in supporting the establishment of the office.

"The briefings, and other consultations, helped me to formulate a work programme for the future direction of the office and they have set the tone for engagement between the IGD and NZDF."

The work programme for 2025 – 2026 will include assessment of NZDF's complaints policies and procedures, the implementation of the recommendations of the Manawanui sinking, and the military justice system and its interface with civilian prosecutions.

One area requiring attention is access to records. Mr Horsley confirmed that "[h]aving full, direct access to all defence records in the possession or control of the Defence Force is essential if the office is to fulfil its statutory obligations."

Looking ahead, Mr Horsley emphasised the importance of engagement between the office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security and the office of the IGD.

“I expect the offices will work closely together as the only oversight bodies working predominantly with classified material ... Having both an IGIS and IGD will reinforce the integrity of our national security framework, ensuring independent oversight across a wider scope of government activity.”

The annual report is available on the IGD website: <http://www.igd.govt.nz>

ENDS

Media contact (on behalf of the Inspector-General): Joe Locke, 021 636 416