A safe and respectful New Zealand Defence Force: First monitoring report

March 2023

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Executive summary

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) launched Operation Respect in 2016 in response to three separate reviews that had identified harmful sexual behaviour in the armed forces.[1] Operation Respect aimed to prevent harmful behaviour from occurring and ensure that, when it did happen, there were systems and processes to deal with it properly.

The Office of the Auditor-General has committed to assessing how well NZDF is progressing towards achieving Operation Respect's aims of eliminating harmful behaviour and creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all NZDF personnel.

Our work has two main components. We will perform regular performance audits to determine how effectively NZDF is implementing Operation Respect. Our first performance audit focuses on how well NZDF has reset Operation Respect and whether it has been designed and set up effectively to achieve its aims. We present our audit findings in a separate report.[2]

We will also carry out regular monitoring to assess the impact of the actions NZDF takes and, over time, whether they are achieving positive outcomes. This report sets out our initial findings from that monitoring. It is the first report in what will be a series and establishes a baseline for measuring NZDF's progress.

Measuring change

We have developed an outcomes measurement framework that will enable us to assess NZDF's progress towards five outcomes. We intend to report against this framework about every two years. This monitoring report presents our initial assessment against each of the five outcomes.

The five outcomes are the following:

- NZDF personnel feel they can do their jobs in a safe and respectful environment free from harmful behaviour.
- Leaders create an environment where what constitutes harmful behaviour is understood and not tolerated.
- NZDF personnel work in environments where harmful behaviour can be raised and reported, then dealt with safely and fairly.

1 See McGregor, K and Smith, R (2015), *Airforce Culture Review,* Tiaki Consultants; Ministry of Defence (2014), *Maximising Opportunities for Military Women,* New Zealand Government; Ministry of Defence (2015), *Recruit training – assessing the quality of recruit training in the New Zealand Defence Force*, New Zealand Government.

2 Office of the Auditor-General (2023), *New Zealand Defence Force: Resetting efforts to reduce harmful behaviour*, at oag.parliament.nz.

- NZDF personnel can access appropriate support they need to recover and those in the organisation providing support have the capability and the capacity to do so.
- NZDF personnel have a shared understanding of the purpose and value of a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

In our report, harmful behaviour includes both harmful sexual behaviour and discrimination, harassment, and bullying. Harmful sexual behaviour includes unwanted sexual activity and inappropriate sexual behaviour.[3]

This report brings together the qualitative and quantitative data we collected between September 2021 and April 2022.

The main quantitative method we have used is a survey offered to all NZDF personnel (regular forces and civilians).[4] The main qualitative method we have used is a series of in-depth interviews with a cohort of 126 NZDF personnel.

Our overall assessment

NZDF is a unique organisation. Uniformed personnel are trained to work in difficult and sometimes dangerous environments, and to use lethal force. Leaders need to build mentally and physically resilient soldiers, sailors, and aviators who can work together and succeed in these environments. Leaders need to know that personnel will follow commands.

The environments that personnel work in are not always safe. NZDF has a duty to ensure that this is not exacerbated by personnel harming each other. NZDF also has a duty to respond appropriately when harm occurs.

If personnel experience harmful behaviour, it undermines their trust in leaders, peers, and the success of operations. Building a shared understanding of what makes a safe environment and what is and is not appropriate behaviour is an important part of preventing harm. NZDF needs to focus on this if it is to achieve the aims of Operation Respect.

Although the focus of this report is on the prevalence of harmful behaviour and the experience of how it is addressed, most of the people we spoke with felt positively about NZDF and their place in it. As well as reporting some of the negative aspects of people's experience working in NZDF, this report highlights many positive experiences personnel have.

3 We use the term unwanted sexual activity to cover the behaviours that fall within the category of sexual assault. We use the term inappropriate sexual behaviour to cover a range of behaviours that sit outside the category of sexual assault, including mistreatment based on gender or sexuality and sexually suggestive jokes or comments.

4 Regular forces excludes reservists and contractors. The survey was run from 15 February 2022 to 20 March 2022 and 12,492 NZDF personnel were invited to participate. NZDF promoted the survey through several different channels. Personnel were not compelled to complete it. There were 6673 responses (a 53.4% response rate).

Our overall assessment is that most NZDF personnel work in environments that are safe from harm and trust that NZDF will properly deal with harmful behaviour.[5]

The findings set out in this report indicate that safe and inclusive environments are those that have:

- shared behavioural expectations that leaders set out and model;
- accessible leaders who encourage the contributions of all people; and
- leaders who create an environment where people feel comfortable raising issues and who quickly address harmful behaviour when it occurs.

However, a small proportion of NZDF personnel do not have a safe working environment and experience harmful behaviour. Where such behaviour occurs, it creates distress for affected individuals and has wider impacts on the organisation.

Personnel do not yet have a shared understanding of what constitutes harmful behaviour and how having a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment will help achieve the organisation's aims. This makes it harder for people to notice harmful behaviour, raise concerns, and have those concerns taken seriously. The burden of identifying harmful behaviour and speaking up when it occurs still falls disproportionately on those directly affected by it.

Although people from all demographics experience harmful behaviour, women experience it more than men. Women also have less trust that NZDF will deal with harmful behaviour appropriately, often because they have seen situations where NZDF has not done so.

NZDF provides a range of support services for those affected by harmful behaviour. When people access these services, they often feel well supported. However, not all people who need this support access it. Those who experience harmful behaviour often do not feel safe reporting it or have had negative experiences doing so. This means NZDF has not yet created an environment where personnel feel they can raise issues and report harmful behaviour safely.

Our overall assessment is informed by our findings against each outcome, which we summarise below.

5 We use "many", "most", or "often" if something was commonly experienced. We generally use "some" when more than a few people, but not most people, have identified an issue or experience. We use "several" or "a few" when only a small number of people have raised a view or described an experience.

Prevalence of harmful behaviour

Most personnel work in environments where they feel safe and respected, but harmful behaviour still occurs

Most personnel feel safe and respected. The majority of personnel (93.4%) who responded to our survey felt safe from inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour in the workplace.[6] Personnel we spoke to generally felt that, in recent years, there had been a change in what behaviours were seen as appropriate. Physical environments had also been made safer.

However, harmful behaviour still occurred in parts of NZDF and some personnel told us about a range of harmful behaviour that undermined their feelings of safety and inclusion:

- **Unwanted sexual activity:** 78 personnel (1.3%) who responded to our survey indicated that they had experienced unwanted sexual activity in the last 12 months.[7] Women were more likely to experience this behaviour than men (3.1% of women compared to 0.6% of men). Rates were 4.8% for uniformed women and 7.2% for junior uniformed women.
- **Inappropriate sexual behaviour:** 5.5% of personnel who responded to our survey had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months.[8] Women were more likely to experience this behaviour than men (13.4% for women compared to 2.4% for men), and rates were higher for junior uniformed women (24.6%).
- **Bullying, harassment, and discrimination:** 12.6% of personnel who responded to our survey had experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the last 12 months. Civilian personnel were more likely to experience these behaviours than uniformed personnel (17.6% for civilian personnel and 10.7% for uniformed personnel). Rates were higher for women than men (19.7% for women and 9.6% for men).

6 We define a military workplace as anywhere in an NZDF office building, on a base, camp, or ship, including barracks and messes, as well as deployments, temporary duty, training courses, and exercises.

7 Unwanted sexual activity included having anyone at a military workplace in the last 12 months forcing or attempting to force someone into any unwanted sexual activity by threatening, holding them down, or hurting them in some way; subjecting them to a sexual activity that they had not consented to, including through being drugged, intoxicated, or forced in ways other than physical; or touching them in a sexual way against their will, including unwanted touching, grabbing, kissing, or fondling. The last 12 months is the period before personnel completed the survey.

8 Inappropriate sexual behaviour included anyone experiencing one of several behaviours in the last 12 months at a military workplace, including sexually suggestive jokes, comments or discussion of their personal life; unwanted sexual advances; displaying or sharing sexually explicit messages or inappropriate photos or videos; and being insulted or mistreated based on their gender or sexual orientation.

Junior uniformed women are most affected by harmful sexual behaviour

The risk of experiencing harmful behaviour varies by gender, rank, and sexual orientation. Our survey found that women experienced higher rates of all types of harmful behaviour than men. A person's position in NZDF also affected the behaviour they experienced.

Junior uniformed women experienced consistently higher rates of most harmful behaviour types. The different environments junior non-commissioned officers[9] (NCOs) work in compared to junior officers appear to create different risks. Junior women NCOs were more likely to experience unwanted sexual activity (8.7%), and junior women officers were more likely to experience inappropriate sexual behaviour (28.2%).

Senior uniformed women experienced lower rates of harmful sexual behaviour than junior uniformed women but experienced higher rates of bullying, harassment, and discrimination (24.3% compared to 19.0% for junior uniformed women).

Even though women are more likely to experience harmful behaviour, men also experience all forms of harmful behaviour, including unwanted sexual activity.

Civilians experience more bullying, harassment, and discrimination

Civilian personnel were disproportionately affected by bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Civilian women experienced less harmful sexual behaviour than uniformed women but more bullying, harassment, and discrimination (21.7%) than most groups of uniformed women. Some civilian personnel, especially women, felt that NZDF took them less seriously than uniformed personnel.

Aspects of the military environment can create greater risks of harmful sexual behaviour occurring

Uniformed women experienced higher rates of unwanted sexual activity and inappropriate sexual behaviour than civilian women. Aspects of the environment that military personnel work in create greater risks; these include male dominated workplaces, blurred boundaries between work and social life, and hierarchal power structures that concentrate power in the hands of a few.

9 When people join NZDF, they join as either a commissioned officer (often just referred to as officer) or a non-commissioned officer (often referred to as an NCO). Officers hold positions of authority and command roles. NCOs are not commissioned but earn their position of authority by rising through the ranks. NCOs take on leadership positions within their units, but they are of lower rank than commissioned officers.

Team cohesion norms can create risks for harmful behaviour

Strong team cohesion norms appeared to create risks for harmful behaviours occurring. It was common for people we interviewed to feel that behaviour was acceptable as long as others were not visibly offended by it. In some environments, people felt that they must accept harmful behaviour to fit in, and this contributed to normalising that behaviour.

We heard that strong leadership and setting clear behavioural expectations can mitigate these risks.

Raising, reporting, and responding to harmful behaviour

A safe, respectful, and inclusive environment is one where people can raise concerns and trust that they will be acted on appropriately. Organisations need to create mechanisms that enable this.[10]

Getting this right is difficult. However, it is fundamental to supporting people who are affected by harmful behaviour and preventing further harm.

Most NZDF personnel understand how to raise and report harmful behaviour

NZDF has a range of formal and informal ways for raising issues and reporting harmful behaviour. Most NZDF personnel understand how to do this. However, the avenues for reporting unwanted sexual activity are clearer than those for reporting inappropriate sexual behaviour or bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

NZDF has not yet created an environment where personnel feel safe to raise and report harmful behaviour

Most people felt that they worked in environments where it was safe to raise and report harmful behaviour. In our survey:

- 82.9% of respondents said that they would feel safe reporting inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour, irrespective of the rank of the person engaging in the harmful behaviour; and
- 78.1% of respondents said that they would feel safe reporting bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

Although most people said that they felt safe raising and reporting harmful behaviour, most incidents of harmful behaviour were not reported to someone in authority. Personnel who experienced harmful behaviour often did not feel that their work environment made it easy to raise or report harmful behaviour.

10 Office of the Auditor-General (2022), *Putting integrity at the core of how public organisations operate: An integrity framework for the public sector*, at oag.parliament.nz.

Common barriers personnel identified to speaking up about harmful behaviour were a fear of repercussions and lack of trust that anything would happen if they reported it. These barriers were most pronounced when senior personnel engaged in the harmful behaviour. The control that senior personnel had over a person's career, and a lack of visible consequences for those who engaged in harmful behaviour also made personnel who had experienced it reluctant to report.

We heard that a lack of trust in reporting systems was often the result of personnel feeling that NZDF has not dealt with harmful behaviour properly in the past. Some personnel had seen various forms of harmful behaviour misunderstood, ignored, or diminished. As a result, they did not trust that complaints they raised would be dealt with adequately.

There is low satisfaction with how harmful behaviour is dealt with after it is raised and reported

Personnel were satisfied after they raised or reported harmful behaviour if they could access support, get a resolution through the right avenue, and observe a change of behaviour as a result. This occurred for some personnel. However, personnel who experienced harmful behaviour often had low satisfaction with how it was dealt with, which affected their trust in reporting.

Personnel who experienced harmful behaviour were often dissatisfied with how leaders responded to it when it was reported to them. In our survey:

- Slightly more personnel reported being dissatisfied than satisfied with the response from the person in authority after reporting unwanted sexual activity.
- Only 39.1% of survey respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with the response from the person in authority after reporting inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- Only 24.3% of survey respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with the response from the person in authority after reporting bullying, harassment and discrimination.

There was a perception that leaders did not always understand that these behaviours are harmful, and did not always act on them appropriately.

Personnel often described negative experiences with the complaints and disciplinary systems. These processes can be lengthy, and personnel often felt that they were not adequately kept up to date about what to expect or the progress of their case.

Personnel also need to see behaviour change. However, those we talked to said that this did not often happen, even when the matter had been through

the complaints and disciplinary processes. This contributed to a sense that the consequences were not adequate and undermined trust in the system.

Personnel who had experienced harmful behaviour were not always clear about what the expected actions or consequences for different behaviours should be. A lack of transparency contributed to perceptions that NZDF did not deal with harmful behaviour fairly.

Availability of and access to appropriate support

NZDF needs to provide personnel who have experienced harmful behaviour with the right support. There is not a one-size-fits-all approach to providing support. Each person will have distinct needs. When personnel do access support, they often see it as effective. However, not all personnel who need support access it.

There is a range of support services available to NZDF personnel

Personnel, particularly those who experience harmful sexual behaviour, have access to a good range of support options. Although there was a high level of awareness of the main support services available, personnel did not always understand the specifics of the support available or how to access confidential support.

It was also less clear what support pathways were available for people who experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination and whether their needs were met.

There are barriers to personnel accessing support services

Although a range of support options are available, personnel do not always access support when they need it. For example, only 24% of survey respondents who reported experiencing unwanted sexual activity also said they accessed support from a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Advisor (SAPRA).[11]

There might be several reasons for this. When support services were more visible, personnel also felt they were more accessible and trusted. However, some felt that the high workload of some SAPRAs and social workers on camps and bases made accessing this support more difficult.

Personnel do not always want to report what they have experienced to their chain of command. There is a range of alternative and confidential options personnel can access, including outside NZDF. However, not all personnel understood the full range of options available.

11 SAPRAs are experts in the subject of harmful sexual behaviour. They provide practical information, resources, and support on responding to and preventing any form of harmful sexual behaviour.

Personnel who had seen leaders not take confidentiality seriously were less likely to trust the support available. They could also feel ongoing stigma about seeking support and feared that accessing it would have negative effects on their careers.

Personnel who access support are often satisfied with it

Personnel who had accessed specialist support services often felt that the right support avenues were available, especially for dealing with instances of harmful sexual behaviour. For example, 86.6% of those who had received support to deal with inappropriate sexual behaviour were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with that support.

Summary trial and court martial processes are difficult for personnel who have experienced harmful behaviour. Being able to access specialist support services and being well-supported by command helped lessen the stress. We heard that SAPRAs provided personnel with support through the summary trial or court martial process and ensured that they had access to other types of support as needed. Personnel also told us they valued the support from social workers, chaplains, and psychologists.

The role of leadership

Leaders set the tone for the camps, bases, and units that they lead. When personnel work in safe, respectful, and inclusive environments, good leadership is generally an important factor.

Although leaders often model appropriate behaviour, we heard they were less equipped to implement activities that prevent harmful behaviour from occurring or to help people to feel safe to raise and report it.

Most leaders model appropriate behaviour

Most personnel told us they felt that harmful behaviour was not tolerated in their work environments. For example, 90.6% of survey respondents felt that their immediate supervisors modelled appropriate behaviour. However, we also heard that some leaders engaged in inappropriate behaviours or did not act on it when they saw it occur. When this happened, it undermined trust.

Leaders do not always set clear behavioural expectations needed to prevent harmful behaviour

Although leaders often modelled positive behaviour, there was less focus on setting clear behavioural expectations, identifying issues in their units that needed addressing, or implementing prevention activities. They were more likely to focus on reacting after events had occurred.

Some leaders felt they were well equipped to implement activities to prevent harmful behaviour. Others wanted to, but they were often not clear about what prevention activities should look like and what they needed to do. We heard that current training did not adequately prepare all leaders to lead or support activities to prevent harmful behaviour.

Specialist support staff, such as SAPRAs and social workers, can assist leaders with prevention. Although they have the capability, we heard they do not always have enough capacity to provide regular support. Leaders and specialist support staff need to work together to implement prevention activities, but the degree to which SAPRAs were involved varied across NZDF.

Leaders are not always following up on reports of harmful behaviour

Power is not evenly distributed in NZDF, and this can make speaking up harder for some people than others. For NZDF to create an environment where incidents of harmful behaviour can be identified, raised, and addressed, personnel need to trust that their leaders will respond to harmful behaviour appropriately.

The extent that NZDF personnel trusted that leaders would respond appropriately to harmful behaviour was generally high, especially for their "1-ups" and "2-ups".[12] Most survey respondents (84.3%) trusted their immediate supervisors to effectively deal with harmful behaviour.

However, some personnel who had experienced harmful behaviour said that those in authority did not always act when it was reported. This affected their trust in leaders. Our survey found that those in authority acted on most reports of unwanted sexual activity, but they acted on reports of inappropriate sexual behaviour and bullying, harassment, and discrimination less often. Only 62.3% of instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour were followed up when reported to someone in authority, and only 51.4% of reported instances of bullying, harassment, and discrimination were followed up when reported to someone in authority.

Leaders need to actively create a work environment where personnel can easily and safely report information about harmful behaviour. To help achieve this, leaders need to be accessible, demonstrate that they are trying to understand what personnel are experiencing, and create safe forums where issues can be raised.

The extent that this was happening varied. This means responsibility for raising or reporting incidents of harmful behaviour still primarily falls on those directly affected by it.

12 These are colloquial terms that members of NZDF use. A person's 1-up is the person immediately above them in the chain of command or management structure, who they directly report to. Their 2-up is the person above their 1-up in the chain of command or management structure.

Leaders need more guidance and specialist support staff need more capacity to support people affected by harmful behaviour

The process of going through the summary trial or court martial process is difficult for personnel who have experienced harmful behaviour. The right type of assistance from specialist support services and leaders can help lessen negative impacts.

Leaders generally felt equipped to respond to, and support people affected by, harmful behaviour. However, there were areas where leaders felt they needed more guidance to properly support both the victim/survivor and accused. For example, guidance on how to ensure that there was appropriate separation between the person who had reported experiencing the harmful behaviour and the person accused of it, while a case was going through formal processes.

It was felt that, in some locations, specialist support staff (including SAPRAs and social workers) needed more capacity to adequately respond to harmful behaviour, support people affected by it, and support leaders with prevention activities.

Shared understanding of a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment

A shared understanding of what constitutes harmful behaviour is critical to reducing it. NZDF personnel also need to have a shared understanding of the value of a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment, including how this enhances the ability of the organisation to achieve its aims.

Although personnel often saw Operation Respect as necessary to reduce sexual harm, there is not yet a shared understanding of why having a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment is core to NZDF's operational effectiveness.

Personnel do not have a shared understanding of what behaviours are harmful

There is a shared understanding of what constitutes unwanted sexual activity. However, there is not a shared understanding of what constitutes inappropriate sexual behaviour or bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

Operation Respect is not yet embedded in people's day-to-day working lives

Operation Respect has high name recognition in NZDF. Almost two-thirds (64.3%) of personnel told us that Operation Respect was visible in their workplace to a great extent or some extent in the 12 months before we collected our data.[13] However, some saw it as a compliance exercise.

13 Data was collected between September 2021 and April 2022.

When leaders prioritise Operation Respect and implement activities designed to reduce harmful behaviour, it sends a message that harmful behaviour is not tolerated. However, there was not enough of this happening. Operation Respect is not yet embedded into people's day-to-day working lives.

Operation Respect is still not widely seen as core to operational effectiveness

Personnel we spoke to believed that Operation Respect had been effective in reducing harmful sexual behaviour in the workplace to some degree. Most survey respondents (81.5%) reported that they felt that it was very effective or effective.

Most people still felt Operation Respect is needed. However, preventing harmful behaviour was still not seen as something that all personnel felt collectively responsible for. Operation Respect is still not widely understood as being core to operational effectiveness.

Looking ahead

Most personnel described a high level of commitment to NZDF and greatly value what the organisation provides. This view often persisted even after personnel had experienced harmful behaviour.

Many people we spoke to worked hard to ensure that NZDF was a place that was safe for all to work in. Through our work, we saw many examples of what a respectful and inclusive environment could look like. In our next monitoring report, we hope to see that more people can work in environments such as these.

We would like to thank all of those in NZDF who contributed to this report, whether it was through helping to set up interviews, promoting the survey, completing the survey, or talking to us about their experiences.

We know that the experiences people shared with us were not always easy to discuss. We hope that this report has fairly recorded the full range of experiences NZDF personnel told us about and is useful to assist in making NZDF a place where all people feel safe from harm, respected and included.

1

About Operation Respect

1.1 The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) launched Operation Respect in 2016 in response to three separate reviews that had identified harmful sexual behaviour in the armed forces. Operation Respect aimed to prevent harmful sexual behaviour from occurring and ensure that, when it did happen, there were systems and processes to deal with it properly.

1.2 In 2017, NZDF broadened the scope of the initiative to also address other sorts of harmful behaviour, including bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Operation Respect was designed to create a safe, respectful, and inclusive working environment for NZDF personnel, and reaffirm appropriate and positive behaviours throughout the organisation.

1.3 The Ministry of Defence commissioned an independent review of NZDF's progress which was completed in 2020. The review found that NZDF had made progress in some areas and that Operation Respect had many positive elements.

1.4 These included creating a Sexual Assault Response Team and a two-track disclosure process.[14] NZDF also introduced Sexual Ethics and Responsible Relationships training throughout the New Zealand Army, the Royal New Zealand Navy, and the Royal New Zealand Air Force (the services).

1.5 However, the 2020 review also found that Operation Respect had lost momentum and needed renewed focus. NZDF did not have a consistent or thorough approach to implementing all aspects of it. People continued to experience bullying, harassment, discrimination, and harmful sexual behaviour and did not always feel able to report this.

1.6 The review found that the culture of military discipline and command made it difficult for people to report harmful behaviour, particularly when it involved more senior personnel. Although team cohesion and comradeship are vital aspects of military life, they can also be obstacles to reporting harmful behaviour because personnel want to fit in.

1.7 The review noted that a "code of silence" prevailed where personnel lacked trust in NZDF's systems and processes to address instances of harm, or they feared repercussions for reporting harmful behaviour. The review noted that these were fundamental organisational and systemic issues that NZDF needs to address to realise Operation Respect's objectives.

14 NZDF created the two-track disclosure process to provide personnel who are victims/survivors of harmful sexual behaviour with a choice about how their report is dealt with, wherever possible. Personnel can choose to make a restricted disclosure or an unrestricted disclosure. Restricted disclosures allow victims/survivors to disclose the incident and receive support without command or the New Zealand Police being notified or a formal investigation being initiated. An unrestricted disclosure triggers notification to the commanding officer and a formal investigation.

The work of the Office of the Auditor-General

1.8 The 2020 review recommended that we audit NZDF's progress in meeting Operation Respect's objectives every two years for the next 20 years. NZDF accepted this recommendation and requested our support in monitoring progress.

1.9 A long-term audit programme allows us to provide independent assurance to Parliament and the public about NZDF's progress. It will also allow us to identify ways NZDF can improve its performance and assist NZDF to create sustainable change.

1.10 We have developed and agreed an initial audit programme with NZDF. The overarching aim of this programme is to determine how well NZDF is progressing towards eliminating harmful behaviour and creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for its people.

The purpose of the monitoring report

1.11 To complement the audit programme, we will regularly collect data to assess the impact of the actions NZDF is taking and, over time, whether it is achieving Operation Respect's overall aims.

1.12 To do this, we have developed an outcomes measurement framework (see paragraph 1.15 and Figure 1). We intend to report against this framework about every two years.

1.13 This report brings together the qualitative and quantitative data we collected between September 2021 and April 2022. This data will establish a baseline from which we can assess changes over time.

Outcomes framework

1.14 The outcomes set out in Figure 1 describe what we expect to see if Operation Respect is making progress towards the overall aim of *Creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where all personnel can live and work free from harm.*

1.15 The five outcomes each have associated impacts that we expect to see and will monitor over time. This report has been structured around these outcomes and impacts.

Figure 1
Outcomes framework

Creating a safe, respectful and inclusive environment where all personnel can live and work free from harm

Outcomes	Impacts
Preventing harmful behaviour NZDF personnel feel they can do their jobs in a safe and respectful environment free from harmful behaviour.	1.1 – NZDF personnel feel that their workplace is free of harmful behaviour. 1.2 – The dignity and privacy of NZDF personnel are respected in the environments they live and work in. 1.3 – Respectful and inclusive behaviours are valued and rewarded in the organisation.
The role of leadership in preventing harmful behaviour Leaders create an environment where what constitutes harmful behaviour is understood and not tolerated.	2.1 – Leaders model respectful and inclusive behaviour. 2.2 – Leaders create an environment where harmful behaviour is not tolerated by setting clear expectations of what is and is not appropriate. 2.3 – Leaders and specialist support staff have the capacity and capability to support prevention activities.
Raising, reporting, and responding to harmful behaviour NZDF personnel work in environments where harmful behaviour can be raised and reported then dealt with safely and fairly.	3.1 – NZDF personnel understand how to raise and report incidents. 3.2 – NZDF personnel feel able to speak up about harmful behaviour. 3.3 – NZDF personnel reporting harmful behaviour are satisfied with the process and do not experience negative repercussions from reporting. 3.4 – NZDF personnel trust that peers will respond to harmful behaviour appropriately. 3.5 – NZDF personnel trust that leaders will respond to harmful behaviour appropriately.
Access to appropriate support NZDF personnel can access appropriate support they need to recover and those in the organisation providing support have the capacity and the capability to do so.	4.1 – NZDF personnel feel able to access support services. 4.2 – NZDF personnel who have experienced harmful behaviour receive the right support in the right way to recover. 4.3 – Leaders and specialist support staff have the capacity and capability to support personnel affected by harmful behaviour.
Shared understanding of a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment NZDF personnel have a shared understanding of the purpose and value of a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.	5.1 – NZDF personnel understand what is and is not appropriate behaviour. 5.2 – NZDF personnel have a shared understanding of what Operation Respect is and what it is intended to address. 5.3 – NZDF personnel believe Operation Respect is an appropriate and effective initiative.

Harmful behaviours in the military workforce

1.16 Harmful behaviours are common in workplaces throughout New Zealand.[15] They cause harm to workers' well-being, reduce productivity, and diminish organisational cohesiveness.

1.17 Studies have identified harmful sexual behaviour as a key challenge for military environments globally.[16] Research carried out in military forces in Canada and the United States of America suggest that the prevalence of sexual assault ranges from 1% to 3% of military personnel and between 4% to 8.4% of female military personnel in any 12-month period.[17]

1.18 In 2018, it was reported that 4.1% of women in the Canadian regular forces experienced sexual assault.[18] The most recent rates in the United States are higher. A 2021 survey found that 8.4% of active-duty women had experienced unwanted sexual contact.[19]

15 Francis, D (2019), *Independent External Review into Bullying and Harassment in the New Zealand Parliamentary Workplace – Final Report;* Shaw, C (2018), *Independent Review of Fire and Emergency New Zealand's workplace policies, procedures and practices to address bullying and harassment*; Francis, D (2020), *Independent External Review: Systems and Processes for the Prevention and Management of Bullying at NZ Police*.

16 Hendrikx, LJ, Williamson, V, and Murphy, D (2021), "Adversity during military service: the impact of military sexual trauma, emotional bullying and physical assault on the mental health and well-being of women veterans", *BMJ military health*, advance online publication; Holland, KJ, Rabelo, VC, and Cortina, L (2016), "See something, do something: Predicting sexual assault bystander intentions in the US military", *American journal of community psychology* 58(1-2), 3-15; Szitanyi, S (2020), *Gender Trouble in the US Military: Challenges to Regimes of Male Privilege*, Cham Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

17 United States Department of Defense (2022), *Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military, Fiscal Year 2021,* Appendix C; Orchowski, LM, Berry-Cabán, CS, Prisock, K, Borsari, B, and Kazemi, DM (2018), "Evaluations of sexual assault prevention programs in military settings: A synthesis of the research literature", *Military medicine* 183; Cotter, A (2019), *Sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force, 2018*.

18 Cotter, A (2019), *Sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force, 2018*.

19 See, for example, Jaycox, LH, Schell, TL, Morral, AR, Street, A, Farris, C, Kilpatrick, D, and Tanielian, T (2015), "Sexual assault findings: Active component", in Schell, TL, Morral, AR, and Gore, KL (Eds.), *Sexual assault and sexual harassment in the US military: Volume 2; Estimates for Department of Defense Service Members from the 2014 RAND Military Workplace Study*, RAND Corporation, table 3.1, page 10; Cotter, A (2019), *Sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force, 2018*, page 4.

1.19 Sexual violence can lead to post-traumatic stress, anxiety, and depression. It can reduce workplace effectiveness by damaging the cohesion and morale of units, and it often leads to personnel leaving the armed forces.[20]

1.20 Although harmful behaviour occurs in many organisations, there are several recognised differences between military and civilian workplaces that might protect against or exacerbate harmful behaviour.[21]

1.21 The close quarters that military personnel often live and work in can create more fluid boundaries between people's work and personal lives. In these environments, there can be greater opportunities for harm to occur.[22]

1.22 High levels of alcohol consumption, frequent relocation that removes people from social support, and the level of stress or trauma people might be exposed to are further risk factors.[23]

1.23 Military hierarchies have "top-down" command structures. Although these command structures are necessary for military activities such as combat, they also concentrate power in the hands of a few.[24]

1.24 This concentration creates a greater risk that positions of power are abused and makes it more difficult for people affected by harmful behaviour to speak out.[25]

20 Hendrikx, LJ, Williamson, V, and Murphy, D (2021), "Adversity during military service: the impact of military sexual trauma, emotional bullying and physical assault on the mental health and well-being of women veterans", *BMJ military health,* advance online publication; Szitanyi, S (2020), *Gender trouble in the US military: Challenges to regimes of male privilege,* Cham Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan; Morral, AR, Matthews, M, Cefalu, M, Schell, TL, and Cottrell, L (2021), *Effects of sexual assault and sexual harassment on separation from the US military: Findings from the 2014 RAND Military Workplace Study,* RAND Corporation; Thomsen, CJ, McCone, DR, and Gallus, JA (2018), "Conclusion of the special issue on sexual harassment and sexual assault in the US military: What have we learned, and where do we go from here?", *Military psychology* 30(3), pages 282-293.

21 Zedlacher, E and Koeszegi, ST (2021), "Workplace bullying in military organizations: Bullying Inc?", in P D'Cruz (Ed.), *Special topics and particular occupations, professions and sectors*, pages 435-464.

22 Coetzee, R, Atkins, S, and Gould, M (2012), "Bullying and the UK armed forces", *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps* 158(2), pages 115-119.

23 Zamorski, M and Wiens-Kincaid, M (2013), "Cross-sectional prevalence survey of intimate partner violence perpetration and victimization in Canadian military personnel", *BMC public health* 13, 1019; Stander, VA and Thomsen, CJ (2016), "Sexual harassment and assault in the US military: A review of policy and research trends", *Military medicine* 181, pages 20-27; Castro, CA, Kintzle, S, Schuyler, AC, Lucas, CL, and Warner, CH (2015), "Sexual assault in the military", *Current psychiatry reports*, 17(7), page 54; Stuart, J and Szeszeran, N (2021), "Bullying in the military: A review of the research on predictors and outcomes of bullying victimization and perpetration", *Military behavioral health* 9(3), pages 255-266; Stothard, C and Drobnjak, M (2021), "Improving team learning in military teams: learning-oriented leadership and psychological equality", *The learning organization* 28(3), pages 242-256.

24 Zedlacher, E, and Koeszegi, ST (2021), "Workplace bullying in military organizations: Bullying Inc?", in P D'Cruz (Ed.), *Special topics and particular occupations, professions and sectors*, pages 435-464.

25 Coetzee, R, Atkins, S and Gould, M (2012), "Bullying and the UK armed forces", *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps* 158(2), pages 115-119; Stuart, J and Szeszeran, N (2021), "Bullying in the military: A review of the research on predictors and outcomes of bullying victimization and perpetration", *Military behavioral health* 9(3), pages 255-266.

Hierarchical structures also have the potential to be protective – for example, leaders have considerable power to set and reinforce norms for appropriate behaviour.

1.25 Militaries have been and continue to be male dominated. In these environments, there is a risk that contributions from women are less likely to be valued, and there is a greater acceptance of discriminatory attitudes towards women.[26]

1.26 This can create an environment where demeaning, sexualised, and discriminatory language is normalised and where personnel do not recognise harm when it occurs or accept it as part of the working culture.[27]

1.27 Military life is usually organised around close-knit teams and units premised on shared values and group cohesion.[28] This can protect against harmful behaviour when it encourages people to support each other and to feel responsible for each other's safety and well-being. However, it can also create "codes of silence" where group members do not wish to disrupt the coherence of the unit or team by speaking out against harmful behaviour.[29]

Methodology

1.28 For our monitoring, we used both qualitative and quantitative methods to understand the progress that NZDF is making towards Operation Respect's overall aim.

1.29 We used a quantitative approach to understand the prevalence of harmful behaviour and the views of NZDF personnel on how NZDF addresses it. The main quantitative method we used is a survey that we invited NZDF personnel (regular forces and civilians) to complete.

1.30 We also used a qualitative approach to better understand people's experiences working at NZDF and how particular units or teams are working to prevent and address harmful behaviour.

26 Castro, CA, Kintzle, S, Schuyler, AC, Lucas, CL, and Warner, CH (2015), "Sexual assault in the military", *Current psychiatry reports* 17(7), page 54.

27 Holland, KJ, Rabelo, VC, and Cortina, L (2016), "See something, do something: Predicting sexual assault bystander intentions in the US military", *American journal of community psychology* 58(1-2), 3-15; Szitanyi, S (2020), *Gender trouble in the US military: Challenges to regimes of male privilege*, Cham Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

28 Mjelde FV, Smith K, Lunde P, and Espevik R (2016), "Military teams: A demand for resilience", *Work* 54(2), pages 283-294; Ramthun, AJ and Matkin, GS (2014), "Leading dangerously: A case study of military teams and shared leadership in dangerous environments", *Journal of leadership and organizational studies* 21(3), pages 244-256.

29 Sadler, AG, Cheney, AM, Mengeling, MA, Booth, BM, Torner, JC, and Young, LB (2021), "Servicemen's perceptions of male sexual assault and barriers to reporting during Active Component and Reserve/National Guard military service", *Journal of interpersonal violence* 36(7-8), NP3596-NP3623; Zedlacher, E, and Koeszegi, ST (2021), "Workplace bullying in military organizations: Bullying Inc?", in P D'Cruz (Ed.), *Special topics and particular occupations, professions and sectors*, pages 435-464.

1.31 The main qualitative method we used was a series of in-depth interviews. We interviewed a cohort of NZDF personnel that was designed to be broadly representative.

1.32 We intend to repeat the survey and interviews with the same cohort members about every two years to measure NZDF's progress against Operation Respect's aims.[30]

The survey

1.33 We designed the survey in consultation with NZDF. We distributed it electronically and in hard copy with NZDF's assistance.

1.34 Information on the front of the survey emphasised that participation was voluntary. There was also information about how personnel who have experienced harmful behaviour could access support within NZDF and externally. Two research specialists and a psychologist peer-reviewed the survey to make sure that it complied with best practice in survey design and protected the well-being of participants.

1.35 We sent the survey to all NZDF personnel, except for contractors and reservists.[31] The period available for completing the survey was 15 February 2022 to 20 March 2022. We emailed reminders halfway through that period to maximise the response rate.

1.36 We kept the raw data collected in the survey confidential to the Office of the Auditor-General project team. NZDF did not access the survey data. Respondents did not provide their names when completing the survey.

1.37 Information was provided at the start of the survey about how we would manage confidentiality of the data.

1.38 The survey asked respondents to provide information about whether they had experienced or witnessed harmful behaviour in the last 12 months. NZDF does not currently collect this information in a detailed way.

1.39 We also asked what action had been taken in response to harmful behaviour and what respondents' views were on the adequacy of support for those experiencing and reporting harmful behaviour.

30 Members of the cohort have been informed that we will come back to them when we do future work. Personnel can choose whether they wish to be interviewed again. As turnover occurs, we will top up the cohort so that we continue to get a range of personnel. We will continue to evaluate the continuity of the sample and provide transparency about this in future reports.

31 Reservists are paid part-time members of NZDF. They are required to complete a minimum of 20 days' annual service.

1.40 Our survey focused on questions about the experiences of harmful behaviours and reporting of harmful behaviours. To manage the survey's overall length, we were not able to ask questions on every impact area. There were also questions on how safe respondents feel at work and their understanding and perception of Operation Respect. Some of these questions are also included in NZDF's annual Pulse survey.

1.41 We received a total of 6673 responses to the survey. This represents 53.4% of NZDF personnel (see Figure 2) as at January 2022 (total regular forces and civilians: 12,493).

1.42 The response rate for our survey compared well to similar surveys run in other jurisdictions. The *Sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force, 2018* survey had an overall response rate of 44%,[32] and the 2018 United States military workplace and gender relations survey of active-duty members had an 18% response rate.[33]

Figure 2
Response rates to our survey

	Women	Men	Total respondents
Royal New Zealand Navy	42.3%	42.2%	43.2%
New Zealand Army	45.3%	43.0%	44.3%
Royal New Zealand Air Force	67.8%	60.9%	63.7%
Civilian personnel	59.4%	58.0%	59.6%
Total	**54.5%**	**49.4%**	**53.4%**

Note: Of the survey respondents, 5.1% specified their gender as another gender or did not specify their gender, and 3.1% did not specify service or whether they were civilian. Percentages were calculated from NZDF personnel levels as at January 2022.

1.43 There was a lower response rate from the Navy and the Army than from civilian personnel and the Air Force. The groups with the lowest response rates were junior Navy NCOs (21.9%) and junior Army NCOs (30.8%). Junior NCOs in the Air Force had 53.9% response. Junior officer response rates were higher, at 50.7% for the Navy, 59.7% for the Army, and 59.6% for the Air Force.

1.44 This means that the results for junior NCOs are less representative of the Navy and the Army. However, overall, there were still enough respondents from each group to provide useful insights.

32 Cotter, A (2019), *Sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force, 2018*.

33 Breslin, R, Davis, L, Hylton, K, Hill, A, Klauberg, W, Petusky, M, and Klahr, A (2019), *2018 workplace and gender relations survey of active duty members: Overview report*.

1.45 The survey asked respondents to identify their service, rank, ethnicity, gender, and length of service. Respondents were also asked to identify other demographics such as age range, disability status, and sexual orientation. The survey allowed participants to skip questions, and answers were filtered so that those who reported certain behaviours or incidents were directed to follow-up questions. Therefore, the total number of responses for each question can be less than the total number of survey respondents.

1.46 Women respondents made up about 26% of the total responses. This broadly aligns with the proportion of regular force and civilian women employed by NZDF (about 25.5% of NZDF regular force and civilian personnel are women).[34]

1.47 Because we sent the survey to all NZDF personnel rather than to a sample, there are no margins of error or levels of confidence provided for the survey results.

1.48 The survey is subject to the same limitations as any other voluntary survey. Although respondents were invited to complete the survey and NZDF promoted it through several different channels, personnel were not compelled to complete it. In surveys of this type, there is always a risk that those with a particular interest in the area are more likely to complete it.

1.49 However, given the overall response rate, the response rates for subgroups, and the fact that a wide range of personnel had completed the survey, we consider the results likely to be broadly representative. The survey was carried out at the same time as the Navy culture survey. This might have had some effect on the response rate of Navy personnel. However, it was broadly similar to the response rate from Army personnel.

1.50 The survey was managed through a survey software application. A total of 149 questionnaires included no responses to questions other than demographic ones. We excluded these from our analysis.

1.51 We present most of the survey data in tables by service and by gender. We have given breakdowns or statistics by rank and other factors when they highlight important differences. When presenting the tables, we have considered which breakdown gives the most useful information.

1.52 For gender, we give breakdowns for women and men. In the survey, respondents could select for gender:

- women/wāhine;
- men/tāne;
- another gender/he ira kē anō; or
- prefer not to say.

34 A small number of respondents reported their gender as "another gender". It is not possible to report whether this aligns with demographics in NZDF because NZDF does not collect this information.

1.53 It has not been possible to provide breakdowns for those who identify as another gender or those who preferred not to specify their gender. This is to ensure confidentiality for the small number of respondents who selected those options.

1.54 Those who identified as another gender or those who preferred not to specify their gender are however included in the counts and percentages for all respondents.

1.55 Survey respondents could indicate that they were civilian personnel or personnel from the New Zealand Army, the Royal New Zealand Air Force, or the Royal New Zealand Navy. Some respondents did not select a service. These respondents are included in the counts and percentages of all respondents.

1.56 Questions about unwanted sexual activity and inappropriate sexual behaviour can have a small number of respondents because the number of people who experience these behaviours is small. Although we have, in general, included this information, it is important to be cautious when considering statistics where the counts are small as there is a risk that results can be distorted by the views of a small number of people.

1.57 We have not provided breakdowns when the number of respondents is fewer than five. This is to protect the confidentiality of these respondents as there is a risk that the information presented could be used to identify these individuals. This has meant that it is not always possible to categorise results by men and women, or other demographics.

1.58 The survey also had a series of open-ended questions. We analysed the responses to these and incorporated them into the analysis we present in this report alongside the findings from the interviews we carried out (which we discuss below).

Cohort interviews

1.59 We selected NZDF cohort participants from each of the services and also included civilian personnel. While the selection was intended to be random, this was not practical in all locations. We received the assistance of key personnel from camps and bases in selecting personnel who would be available when we were visiting. We selected people from most camps and bases to participate in the cohort interviews. We made sure to include a range of ranks, trades, and demographics

in the sample.[35] A wide variety of perspectives and experiences were reflected in these interviews.

1.60 We carried out confidential interviews at camps, bases, and Defence House between September 2021 and March 2022. We conducted some interviews through Microsoft Teams or by phone when access was difficult because of Covid-19 or other restrictions. NZDF personnel we interviewed referred four additional participants to us for interviews.

1.61 In most instances, personnel were invited to participate ahead of time and were always provided with an information sheet advising them that their participation was voluntary.[36] A member of the audit team also verbally briefed them immediately before the interview, reminding them that participation was voluntary and asking them whether they wished to continue.

1.62 All participants signed a consent form and were advised that they could seek help from both within NZDF and externally if needed. Information was provided about available support options and this information was tailored to each location visited by the audit team. We provided information about external support helplines, the contact details of the Human Rights Commission, and contact details of NZDF Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Advisors (SAPRAs) and social workers.

1.63 The interviews took between 30 and 90 minutes. Two members of the audit team interviewed participants.

35 When people join NZDF, they join as either a commissioned officer (often just referred to as officer) or a non-commissioned officer (often referred to as NCO) with a specific trade. New Zealand military ranks are largely based on the United Kingdom's military ranks. The three services have their own rank structure, with rank equivalency between services.
Uniformed personnel (both officers and NCOs) work in a range of trades. These are areas of specialisation such as engineering, combat, medical support, hospitality, and communications. Personnel select their trade when they enlist, and, although it is possible to change trades, personnel generally remain in the same trade throughout their career.
Officers hold positions of authority and command roles. They are granted this authority through commission, which is a document of appointment signed by the monarch. All officers attend Officer Training School. An officer in the Navy or Air Force starts training in a specific officer role from the outset. For example, in the Navy, an officer might start as a Warfare Officer or, in the Air Force, in a pilot role. However, in the Army, initial officer training as an Army officer must be completed before moving into one of the specialist roles. These are Combat, Engineering, Intelligence, Communications, and Logistics.
NCOs are not commissioned but earn their position of authority by rising through the ranks. NCOs take on leadership positions within their units, but they are of lower rank than commissioned officers. All NCOs complete basic military training then further training in their specialisation, such as infantry or logistics. As they are promoted through the ranks, they take on leadership roles, and senior NCOs form a vital link between junior NCOs and officers. They often provide advice and guidance to junior officers. Both officers and NCOs go through formal promotion processes to rise in rank.

36 There were some instances where personnel who were scheduled to be interviewed could no longer attend and personnel assisting us found replacements at short notice.

1.64 The interviews were semi-structured and informed by a set of key questions of interest to our work. The interviews were not recorded, but a member of the audit team took detailed notes which were kept confidential.

1.65 We carried out a total of 126 cohort interviews. Interviews were held with members throughout the services and with civilian personnel and represent a range of ranks. Figure 3 provides the breakdown.

Figure 3
Cohort interview participants (by service and gender)

	Men	Women	Total respondents
Royal New Zealand Navy	18	17	35
New Zealand Army	22	23	45
Royal New Zealand Air Force	12	13	25
Civilian personnel	10	11	21
Total	**62**	**64**	**126**

Note: The gender of cohort interviewees presented above is the gender that NZDF has recorded for these personnel. NZDF does not record genders other than male and female.

1.66 The cohort was designed to over-represent women in each of the services. This was to inform our understanding of differential experiences of harmful behaviour based on gender. We treat the data derived from the interviews qualitatively – that is, we do not offer them as "counts" of harmful behaviour.

1.67 Qualitative interviews depend on a relationship of trust between interviewers and interviewees. Our interviewers asked general questions, and it was up to the participant to determine what information they provided.

1.68 Although we took every step to facilitate trust, including obtaining informed consent and ensuring a gender balance of interviewers where possible, there might have been occasions where interviewees did not feel comfortable discussing their experiences.

1.69 We coded the interview notes to facilitate thematic analysis. We developed high-level themes for the outcomes and impact areas.

1.70 The assessment of each impact draws on survey results and cohort interviews except for impact areas 2.3 and 4.3. These assessments primarily draw on interviews we carried out with specialist support staff (SAPRAs, chaplains, social workers, and psychologists) and senior officers on camps and bases.

1.71 This is because the focus of these impacts is on the capacity and capability of specialist support staff and leaders to carry out prevention, response, and other

support activities on camps and bases. We were specifically interested in the perspectives of the people that hold these roles.

How we used the different data sources

1.72 We have used the quantitative and qualitative data to make an assessment against each outcome and impact area.

1.73 We have used the quantitative data to show prevalence of knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours throughout NZDF. Although quantitative data provides a high-level picture of prevalence of harmful behaviour throughout the organisation, it cannot explain why people have certain views or beliefs in any detail or what they think contributes to harmful behaviour occurring (or not occurring).

1.74 For example, it does not explain why people do or do not see Operation Respect as effective, what contexts they do or do not feel safe raising harmful behaviour in, or what did or did not make them feel supported when they experienced harm.

1.75 Therefore, we use the qualitative data to gain insight into why people have certain attitudes or engage in certain behaviours, and in what contexts. We use these insights to help understand what we have seen in the survey – for example, on why there might be similarities or differences between different groups (such as gender and rank).

1.76 However, the purpose of our qualitative analysis is not to demonstrate prevalence of different attitudes and behaviours. It is based on a small number of interviews (relative to the size of the organisation), which means that what we highlight in the analysis is not representative and should not be generalised.

1.77 We do give some indication of the frequency with which we heard people express views – for example, we use "many", "most", or "often" if we want to signal that something was commonly experienced. Other times, we will say "some", which we generally use when more than a few people, but not most people, identified an issue or experience. We use "several" or "a few" when only a small number of people raised a view or described an experience.

Key definitions

1.78 We cover three types of harmful behaviour in this report. They are:

- unwanted sexual activity;
- inappropriate sexual behaviour; and
- bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

1.79 Unwanted sexual activity and inappropriate sexual behaviours are forms of sexual harm. Sexual harm can be any form of physical, verbal, visual, or online activity with a sexual element that is unwanted or occurs without the active consent of those involved. There is a spectrum of behaviour from serious physical violence such as sexual assault through to non-criminal but still harmful behaviours such as sexualised comments.

1.80 We use the term unwanted sexual activity to cover the behaviours that fall within the category of sexual assault, including:

- touching someone against their will in a sexual way, including unwanted touching, grabbing, kissing, or fondling;
- forcing or attempting to force someone into any unwanted sexual activity by threatening them, holding them down, or hurting them; and
- subjecting someone to a sexual activity they did not consent to, including through being drugged, intoxicated, or forced in ways other than physically.

1.81 We use the term inappropriate sexual behaviour to cover a range of behaviours that sit outside the category of sexual assault, including mistreatment based on gender or sexuality, sexually suggestive jokes, comments, or gossip, displaying or sharing sexually explicit messages or images, and unwanted sexual advances.

1.82 We use the term harmful sexual behaviour when we refer to any behaviour along the sexual harm spectrum, including both inappropriate sexual behaviour and unwanted sexual activity.

1.83 We use the term bullying, harassment, and discrimination to describe any repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person or people in the workplace. This includes repeated or unwanted behaviours directed towards a person or people that are likely to lead to physical or psychological harm.[37] Bullying, harassment, and discrimination can include a range of behaviours, such as undermining someone's credibility, performance, or confidence, excluding, or humiliating someone, or verbally or physically threatening someone.

1.84 We use the term harmful behaviour when we refer collectively to behaviours falling in any of the above groups.

37 Our survey said that this behaviour can include:
- being repeatedly unfairly blamed for something;
- being repeatedly ignored, excluded, or ridiculed;
- being threatened;
- being pushed or shoved;
- constant and unreasonable criticism of someone's work;
- repeatedly having someone's views ignored or undervalued;
- being given impossible tasks that set someone up to fail; and
- spreading gossip and rumours about someone.

Context

1.85 We asked survey respondents and personnel we interviewed to describe their experiences in the last 12 months. We recognise that this covers a period of time when NZDF was heavily committed to Operation Protect, which formed an integral part of the Government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.86 Therefore, we acknowledge that this data does not reflect a period of "business as usual" for NZDF. Many activities, such as training and deployments (outside the Managed Isolation Facilities used to hold those returning from overseas) were curtailed or did not take place.

1.87 Opportunities for socialising, participating in sport and other activities, and working alongside others in usual ways were also limited. This might have limited opportunities for some harmful behaviours to occur.

1.88 One of our key observations has been that personnel observe and experience harmful behaviour differently according to their role and place in the organisation. A junior officer in an infantry unit, for example, will have a different experience to a junior NCO working in a ship's galley. Trades and units have their own cultures that are different to each other. Some parts of NZDF appear to have more risk factors for harmful behaviour occurring. These differences also highlight the difficulty in generalising about the incidence of harm in NZDF.

1.89 Although the focus of our audit was on the prevalence of harmful behaviour and people's experiences of how NZDF addresses it, we also recognise that most of the people we spoke with felt very positively about NZDF and their place in it.

1.90 Most people felt that NZDF offered opportunities that they could not get elsewhere and were proud to be part of the organisation. Most also felt loyal and protective towards those they worked with, including their leaders and supervisors.

1.91 Even when personnel had experienced harmful behaviours directly or indirectly, this did not always mean that they felt negatively about NZDF as an organisation. As well as looking at some negative aspects of people's experience working in NZDF, this report also highlights many positive experiences personnel have.

1.92 In some instances, the loyalty and commitment that people displayed might have created a barrier to understanding how prevalent harmful behaviour is in NZDF. In interviews, participants sometimes described incidents that suggested harmful behaviour (such as bullying, humiliation, or being singled out for additional tasks) but they did not universally acknowledge this behaviour as harmful. Some felt that this was both a normal and necessary aspect of military life, even if they did not like it.

1.93 However, this does not minimise the incidence of harmful behaviour in NZDF. The over-riding message of both the survey and the interviews is that harm can and does happen and that, when it does happen, it affects both the individuals concerned and those in their units and teams.

Structure of the report

1.94 This report is structured according to the outcomes and impact areas described in paragraph 1.15 and Figure 1:

- Part 2 discusses preventing harmful behaviour;
- Part 3 discusses the role of leadership in preventing harmful behaviour;
- Part 4 discusses raising, reporting, and responding to harmful behaviour;
- Part 5 discusses access to appropriate support; and
- Part 6 discusses whether there is a shared understanding of a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

1.95 Each Part describes the outcome and a set of impacts that we consider are markers of progress. The data that we present in this report provides a baseline. Future monitoring reports will present progress against this baseline.

1.96 However, it is important to emphasise that we collected the data in this report in 2021 and 2022. Operation Respect began in 2016, and, although it was modified to include further dimensions of harmful workplace behaviour in 2017, it is likely that earlier activity had already generated some progress towards a safer working environment.

1.97 This monitoring report should not be interpreted as the starting point, and future reports will provide an indication of progress only since we collected the baseline data.

2 Preventing harmful behaviour

2.1 To work in a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment, personnel need to be treated with respect. They also need to feel that their organisation values and rewards respectful and inclusive behaviours.

2.2 People can be exposed to a range of harmful behaviours that undermine feelings of safety and inclusion. This can involve physical violence, such as unwanted sexual activity, and other behaviours, such as inappropriate sexual behaviour and bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

2.3 This Part sets out the data we have collected that describes the experiences of personnel working at NZDF, including how safe and respected they feel and whether the environment they work in is conducive to preventing harmful behaviour.

The outcome and impacts we expect to see over time

2.4 The outcome we are assessing in this Part is "NZDF personnel feel they can do their jobs in a safe and respectful environment free from harmful behaviour".

2.5 We identified three impacts that we expect to see if NZDF is likely to achieve this outcome:

- NZDF personnel feel that their workplace is free of harmful behaviour.
- The dignity and privacy of NZDF personnel are respected in the environments they live and work in.
- Respectful and inclusive behaviours are valued and rewarded in the organisation.

Our assessment of progress

2.6 Our overall assessment is that most personnel feel safe and respected. Personnel we spoke to generally feel that, in recent years, there has been a change in what behaviours are seen as acceptable. Physical environments have also been made safer.

2.7 However, harmful behaviour still occurs in parts of the organisation, especially for women, and there are not yet enough ways to formally recognise and reward respectful and inclusive behaviour.

2.8 Our assessment of this outcome is based on findings from the three impacts described in paragraph 2.5.

Impact area 1: NZDF personnel feel that their workplace is free of harmful behaviour

2.9 For impact area 1, we looked at how prevalent different forms of harmful behaviour are in NZDF and how this affects feelings of safety for personnel.

2.10 In the sections that follow, we set out what we learned from survey respondents and interviewees who had experienced:

- harmful sexual behaviour (including unwanted sexual activity and inappropriate sexual behaviour); and
- bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

Main findings for impact area 1

2.11 Most (93.4%) personnel who responded to our survey felt safe from inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour in the workplace. However, personnel work in a huge variety of environments. These environments ranged from safe and respectful to those where personnel experienced frequent harassment and abuse that undermined their feelings of safety and inclusion.

2.12 Personnel in interviews highlighted some common factors they felt created an environment where harmful behaviour was less likely to occur or become entrenched. These included:

- leaders who create clear expectations about appropriate behaviour and respond to harmful behaviour when it occurs; and
- leaders who value contributions from personnel and ensure they feel safe to challenge ideas and raise issues.

2.13 Many personnel worked in environments like this. However, some personnel worked in environments where they had experienced harmful behaviours. Results from our survey indicated:

- Unwanted sexual activity: 78 personnel (1.3%) who responded to our survey had experienced unwanted sexual activity in the last 12 months. Women were more likely to experience this behaviour than men (3.1% of women compared to 0.6% of men). Rates were 4.8% for uniformed women and 7.2% for junior uniformed women.
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour: 5.5% of personnel who responded to our survey had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months. Women were more likely to experience this behaviour than men (13.4% for women compared to 2.4% for men), and rates were highest for junior uniformed women (24.6%).

- Bullying, harassment, and discrimination: 12.6% of personnel who responded to our survey had experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the last 12 months. Civilian personnel were more likely to experience these behaviours than uniformed personnel (17.6% for civilian personnel and 10.7% for uniformed personnel). Rates were higher for women than men (19.7% for women and 9.6% for men).

2.14 Gender, rank, and sexual orientation were the biggest determinants of what put personnel at more risk of experiencing harmful behaviour. Women experienced higher rates of all types of harmful behaviour than men. However, a person's position in NZDF also affected the behaviour they experienced.

2.15 Junior uniformed women experienced consistently higher rates of most harmful behaviour types. The different environments junior NCOs work in compared to junior officers created different risks. Junior women NCOs were more likely to experience unwanted sexual activity (8.7%), and junior women officers were more likely to experience inappropriate sexual behaviour (28.2%).

2.16 Senior uniformed women experienced lower rates of harmful sexual behaviour than junior uniformed women, but senior women officers experienced higher rates of bullying, harassment, and discrimination (24.3%). Even though women were more likely to experience harmful behaviour, men also experienced all forms of harmful behaviour, including unwanted sexual activity.

2.17 Bullying, harassment, and discrimination were the most common harmful behaviours NZDF personnel experienced. Civilian women experienced less harmful sexual behaviour than uniformed women but were more at risk of bullying, harassment, and discrimination (21.7%) than most groups of uniformed women. Some civilian women felt that the organisation took them less seriously than uniformed personnel.

2.18 Results of our work align with what many other researchers have found. Aspects of the environments that military personnel work in – such as male-dominated environments, blurred boundaries between work and social life, and hierarchal power structures that concentrate power in the hands of a few – create greater risks for harmful sexual behaviour to occur.[38] In our survey more uniformed women reported that they experienced unwanted sexual activity and inappropriate sexual behaviour than civilian women. However, strong leadership with clear behavioural expectations can mitigate these risks.

38 Zedlacher, E, and Koeszegi, ST (2021), "Workplace bullying in military organizations: Bullying Inc?", in P. D'Cruz (Ed.), *Special Topics and Particular Occupations, Professions and Sectors*, pages 435–464; Castro, C. A., Kintzle, S, Schuyler, AC, Lucas, CL, and Warner, CH (2015) "Sexual assault in the military", *Current psychiatry reports* 17(7), 54; Souder III, W (2017), *Risk factors for sexual violence in the military: An analysis of sexual assault and sexual harassment incidents and reporting*, Naval Postgraduate School Monterey United States; Matthews, M, Morral, AR, Schell, TL, Cefalu, M, Snoke, J, and Briggs, RJ (2021), *Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the US Army: Where Cases Are Highest and Why,* RAND Corporation.

2.19 Harmful sexual behaviours exist on a continuum. Unwanted sexual activity sits at the most serious end. Although only a small proportion of respondents to our survey experienced unwanted sexual activity, rates for junior uniformed women were five times the rate they were for all personnel.

2.20 Personnel we interviewed told us that knowing of cases happening to others influenced their own perceptions of safety. This meant that when unwanted sexual activity did occur, impacts were felt more widely than just those directly affected.

2.21 Inappropriate sexual behaviour encompasses a range of behaviours that can create harm for those affected by them. Research shows that environments where inappropriate sexual behaviour is common can contribute to higher rates of unwanted sexual activity.[39]

2.22 Although inappropriate sexual behaviour was experienced frequently in some work environments, the negative impacts were not always well understood. This made it more difficult to identify this behaviour and address it.

2.23 Strong team cohesion norms also appeared to create risks for harmful behaviours occurring. In interviews personnel often talked about feeling that harmful behaviour was acceptable as long as others were not visibly offended by it. This places the responsibility for defining what is acceptable on those affected by harmful behaviour. In some environments, people felt that they must accept harmful behaviour to fit in, and this contributed to normalising that behaviour.

Detailed findings for impact area 1

Harmful sexual behaviour

Most personnel felt reasonably safe from harmful sexual behaviour, but women felt less safe

2.24 We asked survey respondents whether they felt safe from inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour in their workplace (see Figure 4).

39 Thomsen, CJ, McCone, DR, and Gallus, JA (2018), "Conclusion of the special issue on sexual harassment and sexual assault in the US military: What have we learned, and where do we go from here?", *Military psychology* 30(3), pages 282-293.

Figure 4
Perception of safety from inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour in the workplace in the last 12 months

Statement	Sentiment	All	Women	Men
I feel safe from inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour in my workplace	Strongly agree	60.9%	48.0%	66.1%
	Agree	32.5%	40.3%	29.8%
	Neutral	4.5%	7.2%	3.1%
	Disagree	1.3%	3.0%	0.6%
	Strongly disagree	0.7%	1.5%	0.3%
	Total respondents	**6076**	**1622**	**4332**

Note: Total of women and men respondents will not add up to total respondents because some survey respondents did not specify gender and some respondents identified as another gender. Percentages might not add to 100% due to rounding.

2.25 Most (93.4%) of the survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they felt safe from harmful sexual behaviour in their workplace. However:

- women felt less safe, 88.3% strongly agreed or agreed with the statement compared to 95.9% of men;
- civilian women felt safer, 92.0% of civilian women strongly agreed or agreed with the statement compared to 85.2% of uniformed women; and
- junior uniformed women were less likely to feel safe – 80.1% strongly agreed or agreed with the statement.

2.26 These survey results align with what we heard in our interviews. Most personnel we spoke to told us they felt safe from harmful sexual behaviour. Many personnel spoke about how harmful sexual behaviour had declined in recent years. However, some personnel, particularly junior women, told us they felt unsafe.

2.27 In our interviews, many women told us they had experienced some form of harmful sexual behaviour (often sexualised comments or jokes). For many women we interviewed, this kind of behaviour was infrequent. They did not feel that it was embedded in their units or teams nor was it part of their everyday lives.

2.28 However, a small number of women we interviewed had experienced frequent and serious harmful sexual behaviour. This included unwanted sexual activity, repeated unwanted sexual attention, touching or physical contact (such as hugs) from superiors, receiving sexually explicit messages or images, or frequent sexualised or derogatory comments about women made by peers or superiors that were not dealt with.

2.29 These behaviours sometimes occurred as part of patterns of behaviour coming from an individual or a unit or team. These behaviours had a significant negative effect on the work life of the women affected and undermined their feelings of safety and inclusion.

2.30 We set out the detailed findings for the prevalence of the unwanted sexual activity and inappropriate sexual behaviour below. We also draw attention to what personnel felt enabled their environments to feel safe and inclusive where relevant.

Unwanted sexual activity

2.31 Unwanted sexual activity is the most serious form of harmful sexual behaviour. It includes a range of behaviours that fall in the category of sexual assault. In our survey, we defined it as including:[40]

- being touched in a sexual way without consent, including unwanted touching, grabbing, kissing, or fondling;
- forcing or attempting to force someone into any unwanted sexual activity by threatening them, holding them down, or hurting them in some way; and
- being subject to a sexual activity that they did not consent to, including through being drugged, intoxicated, or forced in ways other than physically.

Who does unwanted sexual activity affect?

Most personnel did not experience unwanted sexual activity, but when it did happen it disproportionately affected women

2.32 We asked survey respondents whether they had experienced unwanted sexual activity in the workplace in the last 12 months (see Figure 5).

Figure 5
Experience of unwanted sexual activity in the workplace in the last 12 months

Statement	Service	All	Women	Men	Total respondents
Experienced unwanted sexual activity	All	1.3%	3.1%	0.6%	6006
	Navy	1.0%	2.0%	-	947
	Army	1.3%	5.5%	0.5%	1907
	Air Force	2.2%	6.3%	1.1%	1490
	Civilian	0.7%	1.0%	-	1653
	Total respondents	**6006**	**1604**	**4286**	

Note: If the number of respondents is fewer than five, the percentage is not calculated, and the breakdown is not provided. Total respondents by service and for civilians will not add up to total respondents and totals by gender will also not add to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service, some did not specify gender, and some respondents identified as another gender.

40 This definition was informed by definitions in similar surveys, such as that completed in the Canadian Armed Forces. See Cotter, A (2019), *Sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force, 2018*.

2.33 Most (98.7%) survey respondents said that they had not experienced unwanted sexual activity in the last 12 months. A total of 78 (1.3%) respondents reported that they had. Of these respondents:

- 49 were women; and
- 27 were men.

Most personnel who experienced unwanted sexual activity were junior uniformed women

2.34 Uniformed women were more likely to experience unwanted sexual activity. Our survey results also found that:

- although 3.1% of women respondents reported unwanted sexual activity, the rate for uniformed women was higher at 4.8%; and
- rates of unwanted sexual activity were higher for women in the Air Force (6.3%) and the Army (5.5%) than in the Navy (2.0%) or for civilian women (1.0%).

2.35 Junior women reported higher rates of unwanted sexual activity than more senior women. The majority of women reporting unwanted sexual activity were junior NCOs. In our survey:

- 8.7% of junior women NCOs and 3.6% of junior women officers said that they had experienced unwanted sexual activity; and
- 1.6% of senior women (NCOs and officers) said that they had experienced unwanted sexual activity. In interviews, some senior uniformed women said that they felt their rank and age protected them from this type of behaviour.

The impacts of unwanted sexual activity are wider than just those directly affected

2.36 Although most personnel we interviewed had not experienced unwanted sexual activity in the last 12 months, many, particularly women, knew of someone who had.

2.37 In interviews we heard that knowledge of unwanted sexual activity occurring influenced some respondents' perceptions of safety in the organisation and their trust in reporting systems. This suggests that although the percentage of personnel reporting unwanted sexual activity is low, a larger number of people are affected by it – both directly and indirectly.

What types of unwanted sexual activity do personnel experience?

Personnel were most likely to experience unwanted touching, grabbing, kissing, or fondling and sometimes experienced these behaviours in high concentrations

2.38 We asked survey respondents who said that they had experienced unwanted sexual activity what form this had taken. Just over two-thirds (67.9%) indicated that it had involved touching, grabbing, kissing, or fondling.

2.39 NZDF personnel who had experienced unwanted sexual activity sometimes experienced it more than once. More than half (55.3%) of those who reported experiencing unwanted touching, grabbing, kissing, or fondling had experienced it at least twice in the previous year.

2.40 A small number of respondents said that they had experienced unwanted sexual activity that involved physical force or non-physical coercion. Some of these respondents had experienced this kind of unwanted sexual activity more than once in the previous 12 months.

2.41 We also asked those who had experienced unwanted sexual activity whether they had experienced any before February 2021 (prior to the period we asked about in other survey questions). About 60% (60.6%) of those who answered this question had. For women, it was higher, at 71.7%.

What contexts do personnel experience unwanted sexual activity in?

Most unwanted sexual activity reported took place at a camp or base

2.42 Personnel work in a range of locations, including camps or bases, ships or aircraft, training courses, on field exercises, and overseas on deployment.

2.43 We asked survey respondents who reported experiencing unwanted sexual activity in the last 12 months where this had taken place (see Figure 6) and 52 of the 78 personnel who reported experiencing unwanted sexual activity answered this question.

Figure 6
Location of reported unwanted sexual activity in the last 12 months

Locations	Percentage
Base or camp	71.2%
On a training course	11.5%
Off base or camp	11.5%
On a ship at sea or in port or on an aircraft	9.6%
During field exercises	-
During an outside New Zealand posting	-
Other location	-
Total respondents	**52**

Note: Survey respondents could choose more than one location where unwanted sexual activity had taken place, so percentages will not add to 100%. If the number of respondents is fewer than five, the percentage is not calculated and the breakdown is not provided.

2.44 Most reported unwanted sexual activity had taken place at a camp or base. This could include in barracks, camp or base housing, the mess, another camp or base building, or Defence Headquarters. Although incidents of unwanted sexual activity mostly occurred on bases, they also occurred on training courses, field postings, overseas postings, and off-base.

Alcohol and drugs can exacerbate the risk of unwanted sexual activity occurring

2.45 Research on the effects of alcohol use on the perpetration of unwanted sexual activity is still evolving. However, some evidence suggests that alcohol consumption can indirectly increase the risk of sexual assault occurring.[41]

2.46 Personnel who had experienced unwanted sexual activity often believed that the responsible person's alcohol or drug use was a factor. In incidents of reported unwanted sexual activity, over half (56.8%) of survey respondents said that the incident was related to the person or people's alcohol or drug use. This did not vary significantly by gender. This does not demonstrate a causal link between alcohol use and the increased risk of sexual assault, but it does indicate that they often occur together.

2.47 Unwanted sexual activity is not caused by a victim/survivor's alcohol or drug use. In some instances, unwanted sexual activity occurs in cases where personnel have been unable to consent because of alcohol or drug use. Nearly 30% (29.0%) of survey respondents who had experienced unwanted sexual activity said that the behaviour had occurred after they had been drugged, intoxicated, or forced in ways other than physically.

41 United States Department of Defense (2021), *Hard truths and the duty to change: Recommendations from the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military*; Farris, C and Hepner KA (2014), *Targeting alcohol misuse: A promising strategy for reducing military sexual assaults?*, RAND Corporation.

Most unwanted sexual activity was carried out by men

2.48 We also asked survey respondents who had experienced unwanted sexual activity about the gender of the person responsible.

2.49 Nearly all of the women who had experienced unwanted sexual activity said that the person responsible was a man. For men who had experienced unwanted sexual activity, the person responsible for the assault was also male in most incidents.

2.50 Unwanted sexual activity was more commonly carried out by someone of the same rank. Nearly half (48.1%) of respondents who said that they had experienced unwanted sexual activity said that the behaviour came from a person of the same rank or level as them.

2.51 However, nearly 30% (28.8%) said that they had experienced unwanted sexual activity from someone of a higher rank, and 15.4% said that they had experienced it from one of their subordinates or someone of a lower rank.

2.52 A small number of women we interviewed told us that they had experienced unwanted sexual activity. A few of these women experienced these types of behaviours from men senior to them. In these instances, the women felt that the men who engaged in the harmful behaviour had abused their position of authority.

2.53 In some instances, unwanted sexual activity occurred as part of a continuing or escalating pattern of abuse. Several women we interviewed said that those who had engaged in the harmful behaviour were known for similar behaviour in the past. Their behaviour had not been properly addressed and, in some situations, had increased in severity.

2.54 We heard considerable frustration from personnel who felt that behaviour should have been addressed earlier because it would have likely prevented the harm they had experienced.

Inappropriate sexual behaviour

2.55 In our survey, we defined inappropriate sexual behaviour as behaviour that includes mistreatment based on gender or sexuality, sexually suggestive jokes, comments, or gossip, displaying or sharing sexually explicit messages or images, unwanted sexual advances, and unwanted physical attention.[42]

42 Although most of these behaviours (except for indecent exposure and some behaviours involving sexually explicit images and videos) are not criminal, they can negatively affect individuals experiencing or witnessing them, including negatively affecting their mental health. These behaviours can also increase the risk of affected individuals leaving the organisation. See Morral, AR, Matthews, M, Cefalu, M, Schell, TL, and Cottrell,C (2021), *Effects of sexual assault and sexual harassment on separation from the US military: Findings from the 2014 RAND Military Workplace Study*, RAND Corporation.

2.56 We set out below what survey respondents and interviewees told us about these incidents and we discuss who this behaviour affects, what behaviours they experience, and what contexts they experience it in.

Who does inappropriate sexual behaviour affect?

Most personnel had not experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months, but slightly more than one in seven women had

2.57 We asked survey respondents to indicate whether they had experienced or witnessed any inappropriate sexual behaviour in the workplace in the last 12 months (see Figure 7).

Figure 7
Experience and witnessing of inappropriate sexual behaviour in the workplace in the last 12 months

Statement	Gender	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian	Total respondents
Experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour	All	5.5%	6.3%	5.1%	7.5%	3.4%	
	Women	13.4%	15.5%	19.5%	22.4%	6.4%	1611
	Men	2.4%	3.1%	2.4%	3.1%	1.0%	4317
Witnessed inappropriate sexual behaviour	All	12.2%	14.6%	12.1%	15.5%	8.0%	
	Women	14.6%	16.7%	19.9%	20.6%	9.1%	1611
	Men	11.0%	13.2%	10.4%	13.7%	7.1%	4317
No experience of or witnessing inappropriate sexual behaviour	All	83.8%	80.6%	84.1%	79.3%	89.3%	
	Women	75.7%	71.1%	66.1%	64.5%	86.0%	1611
	Men	87.2%	84.7%	87.7%	84.0%	92.1%	4317
Total respondents		**6042**	**949**	**1928**	**1495**	**1661**	

Note: Respondents could indicate that they both experienced and witnessed inappropriate sexual behaviour. Percentages of experienced, witnessed, and not experienced will not add to 100%. Total respondents by service and for civilians will not add up to total respondents and totals by gender will also not add to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service, some did not specify gender, and some respondents identified as another gender.

2.58 Most survey respondents (83.8%) said that they had not witnessed or experienced any form of inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months.

2.59 The survey results showed that the proportion of civilians who reported experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour was lower than for the services. In addition:

- 89.3% of civilian personnel said that they had not experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months; and

- 79.3% of Air Force personnel, 80.6% of Navy personnel, and 84.1% of Army personnel said that they had not experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months.

2.60 Women experienced higher rates of inappropriate sexual behaviour than men. Junior uniformed women were most affected.

2.61 The survey results showed that in the last 12 months:

- 24.3% of women had experienced or witnessed some form of inappropriate sexual behaviour;
- uniformed women (19.5%) experienced higher rates of inappropriate sexual behaviour than civilian women (6.4%);
- fewer senior uniformed women (15.8% of senior women officers and 10.4% of senior women NCOs) reported experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour compared to junior uniformed women (24.6%); and
- more junior women officers (28.2%) experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour compared to junior NCOs (22.9%);
- 2.4% of men, or 103 men said that they had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour.

Women witnessed more inappropriate sexual behaviour than men

2.62 Even when women had not experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour directly, they were more likely than men to have witnessed it. Our survey results showed that women witnessed more harmful behaviour than men (14.6% compared to 11%) and that 22.2% of junior uniformed women had witnessed inappropriate sexual behaviour compared to 14.2% of junior uniformed men.

2.63 We heard the lower rates of inappropriate behaviour witnessed by men might be influenced by a combination of seeing or hearing less of it and having different views of what they consider inappropriate behaviour.

2.64 For example, we heard in our interviews that women were more likely to speak to other women (such as female colleagues or superiors) when they experienced harmful behaviour. It was also evident from interviews that men more commonly described behaviour that could be considered inappropriate as appropriate.

Personnel who identified as bisexual, homosexual, or another sexual identity were more at risk of inappropriate sexual behaviour

2.65 Those who identified as bisexual, homosexual, or another sexual identity experienced higher rates of inappropriate sexual behaviour (16.2%) compared to those who identified as heterosexual (4.8%). We discuss bullying, harassment, and discrimination based on sexual orientation in paragraph 2.182.

There was wide variation across teams and services in the amount of inappropriate behaviour experienced by women

2.66 Women in the Air Force and the Army were slightly more likely to have experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour than women in the Navy. In our survey:

- nearly a quarter of women in the Air Force (22.4%), almost one-fifth of women in the Army (19.5%), and 15.5% of women in the Navy reported experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months; and
- two-thirds of women in the Army (66.1%), two-thirds of women in the Air Force (64.5%), and 71.1% of women in the Navy said that they had not witnessed or experienced these behaviours in the last 12 months.

2.67 In interviews, women from all services described experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour. Within a service there were differences between units and teams as to the amount of inappropriate behaviour experienced. The climate within their unit or team seemed to be a major factor in whether they experienced harmful behaviour.

What types of inappropriate sexual behaviours do personnel experience?

The most common behaviours experienced were sexually suggestive jokes or comments

2.68 We asked survey respondents who reported that they had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour to identify what those behaviours were (see Figure 8).

Figure 8
Types of inappropriate sexual behaviour experienced in the workplace in the last 12 months

Behaviour	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
Sexually suggestive jokes or comments, including comments about your or someone else's appearance or body	75.9%	85.0%	72.7%	77.0%	72.4%
Inappropriate discussion or gossip about your sex life, or someone else's sex life	62.2%	70.0%	61.6%	68.1%	45.6%
Unwanted sexual attention such as calls, suggestive looks, or gestures	42.9%	38.3%	47.5%	42.5%	42.1%
Being mistreated or excluded because of your gender	42.2%	50.0%	41.2%	41.4%	36.8%

Behaviour	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
Comments that you are either not good at a particular job or should be prevented from having a particular job because of your gender	34.7%	41.4%	35.7%	33.3%	29.8%
Unwelcome physical contact, such as hugs or shoulder rubs or getting too close	32.8%	33.9%	30.6%	37.5%	27.6%
Displaying or sharing sexually explicit messages or images, or directing others to view sexually explicit materials online	14.8%	20.3%	13.3%	15.9%	8.6%
Repeated requests from the same person for dates or sexual relationships	12.5%	8.6%	18.4%	11.6%	8.6%
Being mistreated or excluded because of your sexual orientation	9.2%	-	12.2%	10.8%	-
Indecent exposure or inappropriate display of body parts	8.2%	-	9.2%	11.6%	-
Taking and posting inappropriate or sexually suggestive photos or videos of any NZDF members without consent	3.9%	-	-	4.4%	-
Total respondents	**333**	**60**	**99**	**113**	**58**

Note: Respondents could select more than one behaviour, so percentages will add to more than 100%. Total respondents by service and for civilians will not add up to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service or whether they are a civilian. If the number of respondents is fewer than five, then the percentage is not calculated and the breakdown is not provided. Respondents were also asked if they had been mistreated or excluded because they were trans, if they had been offered workplace benefits for engaging in sexual activity, or if they had been mistreated for not engaging in sexual activity. Because the number of respondents to these questions was fewer than five, the percentages are not provided.

2.69 For those who said that they had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months, the most common behaviours experienced were sexually suggestive jokes or comments and inappropriate discussion or gossip about their sex lives.

2.70 This was similar for those who had witnessed inappropriate sexual behaviour. We asked survey respondents who reported that they had witnessed inappropriate sexual behaviour to identify what those behaviours were (see Figure 9).

Figure 9
Types of inappropriate sexual behaviour witnessed in the workplace in the last 12 months

Behaviour	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
Sexually suggestive jokes or comments, or discussion of someone's personal life	83.8%	88.3%	80.1%	86.9%	80.9%
Displaying or sharing sexually explicit messages, photos, or videos	18.5%	21.9%	17.8%	20.9%	12.2%
Inappropriate physical contact	23.2%	27.0%	23.0%	22.6%	20.6%
Someone being mistreated or excluded because of their gender	32.4%	33.6%	33.0%	32.3%	30.5%
Someone being mistreated or excluded because of their sexual orientation	11.4%	8.1%	13.0%	13.1%	9.2%
Someone being mistreated or excluded because they are trans	3.3%	-	3.0%	3.5%	5.3%
Total respondents	**732**	**137**	**232**	**230**	**132**

Note: Respondents could select more than one behaviour so percentages will add to more than 100%. If the number of respondents is fewer than five, the percentage has not been calculated and the breakdown is not provided. Totals of respondents by service and for civilians will not add up to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service or whether they were a civilian.

2.71 About 84% (83.8%) of respondents who reported witnessing inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months had heard sexually suggestive jokes or discussion of someone's personal life.

2.72 Both men and women respondents said that they had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour. The types of behaviours men and women experienced were similar except that women reported being mistreated or excluded because of their gender more commonly than men did. We discuss this further in paragraphs 2.90-2.102.

Sexually suggestive jokes or comments were common behaviours but not everyone agreed on the impact they have

2.73 Some respondents to the survey and personnel we interviewed thought that sexually suggestive jokes and comments were common and that they are not always seen as harmful. Some felt constrained in objecting to sexually suggestive jokes or banter.

2.74 Three-quarters (75.9%) of survey respondents who said that they had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour said that this behaviour came in the form of sexually suggestive jokes or comments, including comments about their or someone else's appearance or body (see Figure 8).

2.75 This was also the most talked about type of behaviour in interviews. Personnel talked to us a lot about the "banter" that happened in work environments. In some contexts, people were making jokes and having discussions that were not sexually suggestive, which would not generally be considered harmful.

2.76 However, it also appeared that a lot of what personnel described as "banter" had a sexually suggestive or derogatory element that was potentially harmful. This included comments about women's appearances, jokes about sexual consent and the relationship status and sexual orientation of peers, and sexual innuendo from peers and those more senior.

2.77 Where these comments were occasional and called out, they were often not seen as harmful. However, others talked about working in environments where these behaviours were common and the frustration they caused. We heard that when this behaviour is minimised and seen as normal, including by senior personnel, it can sometimes be difficult to articulate its harmful impact or have complaints about it taken seriously.

2.78 It was common for both men and women to state that these behaviours are not necessarily inappropriate if they are not directed at any one individual or are said in the "right context".

2.79 When personnel talked about the "right context", they often meant in front of people they knew would not get offended. For example, some junior and senior men talked about not saying certain things in front of women who they knew would be offended. Several senior men talked about how, in the company of men of a similar rank, they would make comments that they would not make in front of junior personnel.

2.80 Some men spoke about having women in their teams who act like "one of the boys", which they felt sent a signal that what was being said was not a problem.

Some women we spoke to agreed and said that they were not offended and did not see a problem with sexualised comments or jokes. The men making these comments were often their trusted peers. However, other women talked about finding it hard to know what someone's intention was and feeling as if it was not "just a joke".

2.81 It appeared that the ability of personnel to raise concerns about these behaviours in some areas is constrained. We heard from some junior uniformed women about the importance of fitting in with the men in their unit and not being seen as different. Some told us that, when they hear a comment that bothers them, they must be careful about how they raise their concerns. They did not want to be thought of as someone who cannot "take a joke" and risk being isolated as a result.

2.82 From our interviews, it was evident that, although many units and teams have a healthy culture, some teams and units appear to require people to accept a certain level of inappropriate behaviour to fit in.

Inappropriate discussion or gossip about people's personal and sex lives was common but not always understood as harmful

2.83 Inappropriate discussion or gossip about personal lives had a harmful impact on some we spoke to. It included starting rumours or asking intrusive questions about peers' personal relationships and sexual activities.

2.84 In our interviews, those who told us about experiencing gossip were almost exclusively women. It happened to women in units that were both male-dominated and more gender balanced.

2.85 In a few instances, women described incidents where rumours were started about them and male peers in their teams. This was difficult for them because male peers often form the basis of their friendship groups. They felt that they had to be wary about how these friendships will be perceived.

2.86 Most men we interviewed had some awareness of forms of harmful sexual behaviour. However, we rarely heard from men that they were aware of gossip occurring or that they understood the impact of it. In our conversations with women, those who had been subject to gossip often did not describe it as inappropriate sexual behaviour.

2.87 This could indicate that inappropriate discussion or gossip about people's personal lives is not well understood as a form of harmful sexual behaviour.

2.88 In many of the incidents described to us, women said that the person responsible for starting or continuing the gossip about them was someone more senior than

them. This caused additional stress because they worried about how it would affect their careers.

2.89 Several personnel also told us that when peers or superiors engaged in gossip, it caused them to lose trust in those people. We heard that this lack of trust could affect operational effectiveness because it harmed both the individuals involved and the wider operation of the team.

Some women, especially junior women officers, reported being mistreated or excluded based on their gender

2.90 Many of the women we interviewed told us that they were treated equally in their teams, respected, trusted, and given opportunities to advance and succeed. Women with more positive experiences (and junior women in particular) often described an environment where they felt that their contributions were valued.

2.91 They described how patient and supportive 1-ups, who let personnel make mistakes and invested time in coaching, were important features of a positive environment.

2.92 However, some personnel felt mistreated or excluded based on their gender. Our survey results showed that about half (50.2%) of the women who had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour said that they were mistreated or excluded because of their gender (compared to 22% of men).

2.93 Our survey results also showed that 42% of women who had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour said that they received comments that they are not good enough or should be prevented from having a particular job because of their gender. This compares to 17% of men who said that they had received these types of comments.

2.94 In our interviews, some women told us that they had experienced mistreatment and exclusion based on their gender. This included:

- having their competency challenged because they are women and being told they will only succeed because of quotas;
- derogatory comments about women getting pregnant and leaving the organisation; and
- feeling excluded after returning to work from parental leave.

2.95 Some women we spoke with felt that they were working in a "boys club" and were less sure that they could succeed in the organisation. Some similar comments were made in the survey.

2.96 Some women indicated that, even when inappropriate comments were not directed specifically at them, they felt additional pressure to prove themselves. A few women said that they had learnt not to express too much emotion so they would fit in. Some still found their work environment isolating even when they had good relationships with their peers.

2.97 Our survey results indicate that junior women officers experienced higher numbers of incidents involving mistreatment and exclusion because of their gender. Of the 46 junior women officers who said that they had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour, 62.2% said that they had experienced mistreatment and exclusion because of their gender compared to 50.2% of women overall.

2.98 In our interviews, some junior women officers described challenges with being taken seriously by some senior NCO men. These men were of lower rank but had status and influence because they had been in the organisation for a long time.

2.99 The experiences of junior women officers we spoke to differed. Some had experienced frequent and varying forms of harassment from senior personnel, while others felt very well respected and supported. Personnel who had positive experiences often attributed it to working with supportive senior personnel and good mentoring from their 1-ups.

2.100 There were also some differences between the services. We heard from women in the Army who felt mistreated or excluded because of their fitness and physical ability. Some women said that they or other women had struggled to regain their fitness after returning from parental leave. We were told that their male superiors did not understand this or support them, and they felt that they were not valued or included.

2.101 Navy personnel told us that issues were more pronounced in some of the more traditionally male-dominated trades. Several women in these trades told us that they had been criticised and had their competence questioned because they were women (this also occurred in other trades).

2.102 In the Air Force, some women commented more generally on there being a "boys club" that excluded them and experiences of sexist comments from senior men.

A small number of men described mistreatment and exclusion based on their gender

2.103 In our interviews, a small number of men told us that they had experienced mistreatment or exclusion because of their gender. This was generally related to perceptions that women now receive more opportunities than men.

2.104 Those who mentioned this felt that it constitutes a form of discrimination and that men are disciplined more harshly. These are the types of views that some women said contributed to the additional pressures they face.

2.105 On the other hand, some men we spoke to were more aware of the additional pressures placed on women. They had heard or witnessed discussions about quotas and women being questioned about whether they were good enough.

2.106 Some men we spoke to felt that having more women creates a better team dynamic. They also understood that some of the ways units and teams operate would probably need to change to make NZDF a more inclusive workplace for women.

2.107 Conversely, others we spoke to (including some women) felt that focusing on diversity and inclusion risks lowering standards and could hinder capability. Having more women was not perceived as a problem in itself, but it was seen as secondary to increasing capability (rather than a potential contributor to enhancing capability).

Unwanted physical contact and sexual attention had a negative impact on those who experienced it

2.108 In the survey, personnel described experiencing unwelcome physical contact, unwanted sexual attention, and repeated requests for dates or sexual relationships. These behaviours were not as common as sexually suggestive jokes or comments, or discussion and gossip about personal lives, but they had a clear negative impact for those who experienced them.

2.109 For those who said that they had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months, 42.9% experienced unwanted sexual attention and about a third (32.8%) reported experiencing unwelcome physical contact (see Figure 8). Nearly 10% (8.2%) said that they had experienced indecent exposure, and 12.5% said that they had had repeated requests for dates or sexual relationships.

2.110 In our interviews, we heard from a small number of personnel who had experienced or witnessed these behaviours. Although we largely heard this from women (both uniformed and civilian), we also heard about some instances where these behaviours affected men.

2.111 For women, these behaviours mostly took the form of unwanted physical contact and unwanted sexual attention, including being hugged, having their hair touched, and men sitting too close or being physically imposing. In most instances, this came from more senior personnel, which created stress and discomfort for the women experiencing it.

2.112 Some personnel felt that senior men do not understand the impact that these behaviours could have. Invasion of personal space, for example, made women uncomfortable. However, they felt explaining why this behaviour made them uncomfortable was difficult because others might see this behaviour as harmless.

2.113 Several women noted that often the men who engage in inappropriate behaviour are known to have done this in the past. Several women said they relied on warnings from other women to know which men to avoid and that contributed to a feeling that, to some degree, NZDF accepted this behaviour.

2.114 Several women also talked about receiving unwanted attention virtually – for example, through inappropriate comments on social media or being sent sexually explicit images. We heard that, in some instances, this was part of a pattern to "groom" young women, where men started off with behaviours that progressively became worse if they were not addressed.

Many of those who reported experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour reported that they experienced it at least once a week

2.115 As we mentioned in paragraphs 2.28-2.30, the frequency that personnel experience inappropriate sexual behaviours can affect how harmful they are.

2.116 We asked survey respondents who reported experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour about how frequently it happened (see Figure 10).

Figure 10
Frequency of experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour in the workplace in the last 12 months

Sexually suggestive jokes or comments, unwanted sexual attention, inappropriate discussions, or gossip Total respondents = 286					
More than once a week	About once a week	A few times a month	About once a month	Every few months	About once a year
8.4%	10.5%	25.2%	12.2%	33.2%	10.5%
Displaying or sharing sexually explicit messages or images, directing others to view sexually explicit materials, or taking or posting inappropriate or sexually suggestive videos or photos of NZDF members without consent Total respondents = 56					
More than once a week	About once a week	A few times a month	About once a month	Every few months	About once a year
8.9%	16.1%	23.2%	12.5%	21.4%	17.9%
Indecent exposure, unwelcome physical contact, or repeated requests from the same person for dates or sexual relationships Total respondents = 123					
More than once a week	About once a week	A few times a month	About once a month	Every few months	About once a year
5.7%	9.8%	21.1%	9.8%	24.4%	29.3%
Mistreatment or exclusion because of gender, sexual orientation, or because you are trans, or comments you are not good at a particular job because of your gender Total respondents = 163					
More than once a week	About once a week	A few times a month	About once a month	Every few months	About once a year
9.2%	9.8%	18.4%	17.8%	34.4%	10.4%

Note: Percentages across the frequencies (that is, across the rows) will, subject to rounding, add to 100%. Percentages will not add to 100% for the different behaviours (that is, down the columns) because respondents could experience more than one type of inappropriate sexual behaviour.

2.117 More than half of personnel who had experienced these behaviours reported experiencing each behaviour type once a month or less. However, a notable proportion of personnel reported experiencing these behaviours more frequently.

2.118 Our survey results indicate:

- nearly one-fifth (18.9%) of respondents who reported experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour reported experiencing sexually suggestive jokes or comments or inappropriate gossip about once a week or more; and
- a quarter (25.2%) reported experiencing sexually suggestive jokes or comments or inappropriate gossip a few times a month.

2.119 These proportions were similar for the other behaviour types.

2.120 In our interviews, some women told us that they had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviours frequently. They felt these behaviours were seen as a normal and accepted as part of their work environment. This had a negative impact on them and, in some instances, led them to consider whether they wanted to remain in their jobs.

What contexts do personnel experience inappropriate sexual behaviours in?

Clear expectations and enough oversight protected against harmful behaviours

2.121 Many personnel we spoke to said that they felt that their workplaces are largely free from harmful behaviour. They described some common features that contribute to an environment where harmful behaviour is less likely to occur.

2.122 When leaders responded to harmful behaviour quickly, personnel in the unit or team had more positive perceptions about how this kind of behaviour was addressed. Leaders who responded quickly also contributed to preventing further harm. We also heard about the importance of leaders setting clear expectations about appropriate behaviour. We discuss this in more detail in Part 3.

2.123 We also heard about other environments where there was no shared understanding of what is appropriate behaviour. We heard about instances where personnel were reluctant to say anything about behaviour they were uncomfortable with because it did not feel serious enough or because they feared negative repercussions.

2.124 Although personnel were often aware of the "traffic light" system that is used to classify behaviours, there was no shared understanding about the appropriateness of some behaviours.

2.125 It was evident from our interviews that this created an environment where the person affected by the behaviour felt it was up to them to state whether it was appropriate, which we heard can be a difficult thing to do.

2.126 Having a shared understanding of what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, that leadership frequently reinforced, helped to reduce the burden of speaking up on the person who was affected by the inappropriate behaviour. We heard that it was also helpful if personnel develop the understanding and language together as a team.

Inappropriate sexual behaviour occurred in both work and social contexts

2.127 Personnel we spoke to described experiencing or witnessing inappropriate behaviour in a range of environments, including workplaces, deployments on ships and aircraft, during training and field exercises, bars on camps and bases, barracks, and online.

2.128 We were told that these behaviours happened more commonly in workplaces than they did in social or living settings such as sports games, bars on camps and bases, and barracks (although these did still occur). This might have been influenced by the restriction of activities such as inter-service sports activities and socialising at bars caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. We also heard that NZDF had put effort into reducing harmful behaviour in sports in recent years.

2.129 We heard that, where these behaviours occurred in social situations, alcohol was sometimes a contributing factor. This was particularly the case in situations such as shore leave (when Navy personnel take leave from the ship they are on).

2.130 Some people said inappropriate behaviour can be more difficult to challenge when it occurs in a social setting. Although there might be clear expectations about how to behave at work, this is not always the case in social environments.

2.131 The line between "work life" and "social life" in NZDF is less clear than in many other organisations. In many military environments, personnel live, work, and socialise together. This creates the risk of harmful behaviour occurring in both work and social situations. For example, we heard that there are specific risks on ships where personnel live and work together for long periods because the boundaries between professional and personal relationships can blur.

Inappropriate sexual behaviours were more common in male-dominated units

2.132 Inappropriate behaviours occurred in a range of different work environments. However, women who work in male-dominated units or teams were more likely to report experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour than female-dominated or more mixed units or teams.

2.133 Nearly one-fifth (19.1%) of women who work in male-dominated units reported experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months. This compared to 4.0% of women who work in female-dominated units and 9.5% of women who work in units with about 50% women.

2.134 In our interviews, we sometimes heard that more gender-balanced units or units that had more women leaders provided some protection against inappropriate sexual behaviour. An increased number of women creates "power in numbers" that helps to set expectations of what is appropriate and call out behaviour that is inappropriate.

2.135 However, this appeared to depend to a large extent on the attitudes and behaviours of senior personnel in the unit. Even in units with an increasing number of women, harmful behaviour could continue if the leadership still consisted of personnel with derogatory attitudes towards women.

2.136 We heard that, in some more traditionally male-dominated areas, there are men who still have very limited experience working with women and are less aware of what constitutes appropriate behaviour. This can make it a challenge for women who join these units.

2.137 However, in our interviews it was also clear that, despite the higher risks male-dominated units present, women generally felt safe when working in a male-dominated unit or team.

2.138 Women in these units often described having good relationships with their male colleagues. Some told us that their male peers had looked out for or supported them when they experienced harmful behaviour from personnel outside the unit.

2.139 Some women thought that harmful behaviour was more likely to involve personnel outside their unit. However, some of these women also talked about how they had to carefully consider their response to incidents of harmful behaviour (such as inappropriate comments) to avoid the risk of being isolated from others in their unit.

2.140 It was evident that, even where their relationships with male peers are generally positive, there is an extra burden for women that their male peers generally do not experience.

Inappropriate sexual behaviour perpetrated by superiors had serious impacts

2.141 In our interviews, we heard about inappropriate harmful behaviour coming from peers, superiors, and, to a lesser extent, more junior personnel. We observed that harmful behaviour had a serious impact when it came from those in positions of power.

2.142 In both our interviews and survey results, we were told that personnel experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour from someone of higher rank or who had more influence in the organisation. This took many forms, including unwanted attention, sexualised comments, discussions about women not being equipped for their roles, and sending inappropriate messages through text messaging or social media.

2.143 For junior NCOs, this behaviour often came from senior NCOs they worked with. For junior officers, it often came from senior NCOs (who they outranked but who had influence in the organisation) and senior officers.

2.144 When men in more senior positions engaged in harmful behaviour, it was seen to set the tone for what is considered appropriate behaviour in the unit. We heard concern from some that this sent a message to junior men that this behaviour is acceptable.

2.145 Some women talked about this behaviour occurring but said that someone more senior had quickly addressed it. This lessened the negative effects and was seen to contribute to preventing similar behaviour occurring.

2.146 However, we were also told of instances when the behaviour was not checked because the person who committed the harmful behaviour held a senior position. This enabled the behaviour to continue, which, in some instances, negatively affected several women. This created a perception that there was a "boys club" where men in positions of power would protect each other.

Civilian women also experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour, especially in environments with a mix of uniformed and civilian personnel

2.147 In the survey, fewer civilian women reported experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour than uniformed women (see Figure 7).

2.148 We interviewed some civilian women who had experienced or witnessed inappropriate sexual behaviour in a range of environments, including in NZDF office buildings and on various camps and bases. However, it mostly occurred where there was a mix of uniformed and civilian personnel.

2.149 In these situations, the civilian women were often working in male-dominated environments where they felt more personnel had negative views about women. Therefore, the types of environments civilian women worked in appeared to affect their experiences of inappropriate sexual behaviour.

It was felt that harmful behaviour from some civilian men can be difficult to address

2.150 NZDF employs a large number of civilian personnel who work in headquarters and on camps and bases. In our interviews, we heard about instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour from civilian men in camps and bases.

2.151 These civilian men were sometimes ex-uniformed men who had returned to NZDF after time elsewhere. Some personnel we interviewed felt that some of these men had outdated views that did not reflect NZDF's values. We heard about instances where these men expressed derogatory views towards women and behaved inappropriately towards them. We heard that the specialist positions they held in the organisation could sometimes make this behaviour hard to address (see paragraph 4.102).

Inappropriate sexual behaviour sometimes occurred during initial training but was often acted on quickly

2.152 Initial training presents risks for harmful behaviour occurring because of the power difference between instructors and recruits.[43] In our interviews, we heard about incidents of inappropriate sexual behaviour occurring during initial training.

2.153 This included harmful behaviour between recruits and by instructors involving recruits. The harmful behaviour that we heard instructors were involved in included sexualised comments and unwanted physical contact. We heard that it was particularly hard to raise concerns about this behaviour because of the power that instructors have over recruits.

2.154 In most but not all situations, we heard that these types of behaviours were acted on quickly when they came to the attention of more senior personnel and that command set clear expectations with instructors about what behaviour was appropriate. This sent a message that inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated.

The isolation of personnel in some areas appeared to create risks

2.155 Working in environments that are more physically or socially isolated can increase the risk of harmful behaviour occurring.

2.156 We observed that some women who had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour worked in environments where they were the only woman or worked mostly with those more senior or junior in rank.

2.157 Isolation of a unit or team from the command structure can also create a risk that harmful behaviour persists because it is less visible to superiors. In our interviews, people told us about instances where units developed patterns of harmful behaviour that remained undetected for some time because their command chains were physically located on another camp or base.

Bullying, harassment, and discrimination

2.158 In our survey, we defined workplace bullying, harassment, and discrimination as repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person or people in the workplace. This includes repeated or unwanted behaviours that are likely to lead to physical or psychological harm. It can include undermining a person's credibility, performance, or confidence, excluding or humiliating a person, and verbally or physically threatening a person.

2.159 There are many different forms of harassment, including sexual harassment, racial harassment, and harassment based on sexual orientation.

43 We use the phrase "initial training" to describe the various training pathways that new recruits to the military carry out. Initial training is slightly different for each service, with different terminology used for the different courses that are required.

2.160 Results from our survey and interviews showed that most personnel described their working environments as free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Environments where there were clear expectations set by leaders, and where personnel felt valued for their contributions and opinions, were seen as safe, respectful, and inclusive.

2.161 However, bullying, harassment, and discrimination did occur. Civilian personnel and women were disproportionately affected.

2.162 Bullying, harassment, and discrimination occurred in civilian teams at headquarters, in mixed civilian and military teams on camps or bases, and in military units.

2.163 Examples of bullying, harassment, and discrimination that we were told about included:

- superiors in military and civilian environments subjecting personnel to constant belittling treatment, exclusion, or excessive criticism of their work;
- singling out or excluding personnel who did not fit team norms or could not do particular tasks to a perceived sufficient level in military units (such as fitness-related tasks);
- bullying by instructors during initial training; and
- subjecting personnel to harassment and discrimination because of their gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

2.164 In the following paragraphs, we describe what people told us about these incidents of bullying, harassment, and discrimination. We discuss who is affected by this behaviour, the behaviours they experienced, and the contexts they experienced it in.

Most personnel feel reasonably safe from bullying, harassment, and discrimination, but women feel less safe

2.165 We asked survey respondents whether they felt safe from bullying, harassment, and discrimination in their workplace (see Figure 11).

Figure 11
Perception of safety from bullying, harassment, or discrimination in the workplace in the last 12 months

Statement	Sentiment	All	Women	Men
I feel safe from bullying, harassment, and discrimination in my workplace	Strongly agree	44.6%	33.1%	49.3%
	Agree	37.0%	38.5%	36.7%
	Neutral	9.5%	14.4%	7.6%
	Disagree	6.0%	9.7%	4.5%
	Strongly disagree	2.9%	4.5%	2.0%
	Total respondents	**6064**	**1615**	**4327**

Note: Totals of women and men respondents will not add up to total respondents because some survey respondents did not specify gender and some respondents identified as another gender. Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

2.166 Although the perception of safety was not as high as for inappropriate sexual behaviour, 81.6% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safe from bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the workplace. However, our survey results also indicated that:

- women felt less safe, with only 71.6% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement compared to 86.0% of men; and
- civilian women were less likely to feel safe from this behaviour, with only 67.9% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement.

Who does bullying, harassment, and discrimination affect?

Women are disproportionately affected by bullying, harassment, and discrimination, especially civilian women and senior women officers

2.167 We asked survey respondents whether they had experienced or witnessed bullying, harassment, or discrimination in the workplace during the last 12 months (see Figure 12).

Figure 12
Experience and witnessing of bullying, harassment, or discrimination in the workplace in the last 12 months

Statement	Gender	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
Experienced bullying, harassment, or discriminatory behaviour	All	12.6%	11.7%	10.6%	10.0%	17.6%
	Men	9.6%	9.4%	8.6%	7.4%	13.7%
	Women	19.7%	16.8%	19.8%	17.8%	21.7%
Witnessed bullying, harassment, or discriminatory behaviour	All	16.0%	20.3%	14.1%	16.2%	15.5%
	Men	14.3%	18.2%	12.7%	14.1%	14.2%
	Women	20.1%	26.1%	21.2%	23.6%	16.1%
Did not experience or witness bullying, harassment, or discrimination	All	74.6%	71.8%	77.8%	76.5%	71.0%
	Men	78.6%	75.9%	80.6%	80.1%	75.5%
	Women	64.6%	60.8%	63.9%	64.1%	66.5%
Total respondents		**5983**	**951**	**1903**	**1480**	**1638**

Note: Respondents could experience and witness bullying, harassment, and discrimination so percentages of experienced, witnessed, and not experienced will not add to 100%. Total respondents by service and for civilians will not add up to total respondents and totals by gender will also not add to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service, some did not specify gender, and some respondents identified as another gender.

2.168 Three-quarters (74.6%) of survey respondents said that they had not experienced or witnessed bullying, harassment, or discrimination in the last 12 months. About 13% (12.6%) of survey respondents said that they had experienced bullying, harassment, or discrimination.

2.169 In our survey:

- almost a fifth of women (19.7%) reported experiencing bullying, harassment, and discrimination;
- a high proportion of senior women officers (24.3%) experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the last 12 months – this was three times more than senior men officers (7.3%), and the rates were the highest for senior women army officers;
- junior women officers almost were twice as likely to experience bullying, harassment, and discrimination as junior men officers (21.3% compared to 11.3%) – these rates were higher than for junior women NCOs (17.9%); and
- although men reported experiencing bullying, harassment, and discrimination to a lesser extent than women, 9.6% of men still reported experiencing bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the last 12 months.

2.170 The bullying, harassment, and discrimination that women experienced was often gender-based. For example, in our interviews, we heard about women being subject to assumptions that they will not perform as well as men in their roles, being belittled and picked on by superiors because they were women, being passed over for promotion courses and deployments, and experiencing sexualised or discriminatory comments from peers and superiors in the workplace.

2.171 In some environments, it was observed that although bullying, harassment, and discrimination affected multiple personnel in the unit or team, women were the most targeted.

2.172 In our survey, women were more likely than men to say they were ignored, excluded, or undervalued. Of those who reported experiencing bullying, harassment, and discrimination, 76.7% of women reported having their views ignored or undervalued compared to 67.7% of men. Conversely, men were more likely to experience verbal or physical bullying (45.5% for men compared to 36.3% for women).

2.173 These results suggest that, in some environments, women (particularly women in positions of authority) experience discriminatory attitudes. Although rank protects senior women officers from sexual harm, the risk of experiencing bullying, harassment, and discrimination increases.

2.174 The opposite is true for men officers, whose risk of experiencing bullying, harassment, and discrimination diminishes as their rank increases.

Civilian personnel experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination at greater rates than uniformed personnel

2.175 Although uniformed personnel are more at risk of experiencing harmful sexual behaviour, civilian personnel are more at risk of experiencing bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

2.176 The percentage of uniformed personnel who reported experiencing bullying, harassment, and discrimination was 10.7%. For civilian personnel, it was 17.6%.

2.177 Civilian women experienced higher rates of bullying, harassment, and discrimination than uniformed women (21.7% compared to 16.8% in the Navy, 19.8% in the Army, and 17.8% in the Air Force). Some of the civilian women we spoke with who had experienced these behaviours described it as gender-based.

2.178 Even if the behaviour affected both men and women, civilian women told us they experienced some element of sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination. Examples included women receiving inappropriate comments on their clothing or being shouted down and undermined in meetings when men were not subject to the same treatment.

2.179 Civilian women told us they experienced bullying in both mixed civilian and military environments and largely civilian environments. The bullying in civilian environments had a less overtly gendered element and came from both male and female managers.

2.180 The extent that civilian women felt that their status in a military organisation was a factor in their experience differed. Some felt that it had little impact, whereas others felt that they are taken less seriously or looked down on because they are civilian personnel. We interviewed civilian men who described experiencing the same dynamic, although less commonly.

2.181 We heard that leadership matters in this respect. Leaders of joint civilian and military teams can create a more inclusive environment when they emphasise the value of the different perspectives that both civilian and military personnel bring.

Bullying, harassment, and discrimination based on sexual orientation, ethnicity, and disability also occurred

2.182 Of the survey respondents who identified as bisexual, homosexual, or another sexual identity, 17.0% said that they had experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination. This was compared to 11.6% for personnel who identified as heterosexual. In our interviews, we heard instances of personnel being harassed because of their sexual orientation. This ranged from one-off comments and jokes to repeated harassment and threats of physical violence.

2.183 The survey results showed some differences in experiences of bullying, harassment, and discrimination for different ethnic groups. Rates were similar for those who identified as Māori, Pacific Peoples, or European. However, rates were higher for some other ethnic groups, especially for women in those ethnic groups (numbers are too small to report by each group).

2.184 Survey responses and interviews described numerous instances of bullying or harassment based on ethnicity. Some personnel described feeling discriminated against, harassed, excluded, or isolated because of their ethnicity. We heard that, in some areas, it was common for personnel to make derogatory jokes or comments about particular ethnic groups. Personnel did not always see these behaviours as harmful.

2.185 Those who identified as disabled also reported experiencing a high rate of bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Of the 67 respondents who identified as disabled, 32.9% reported experiencing bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

What types of bullying, harassment, and discrimination do personnel experience?

Being ignored, excluded, or undervalued were the most common behaviours personnel experienced

2.186 We asked those personnel who reported experiencing bullying, harassment, and discrimination (see Figure 13) about the types of behaviours that they had experienced.

Figure 13
Types of bullying, harassment, and discrimination experienced in the workplace in the last 12 months

	Behaviour	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
Exclusion and humiliation	Being ignored or excluded	61.7%	62.7%	61.1%	52.7%	66.4%
	Being humiliated, insulted, or teased	50.1%	53.6%	55.8%	51.0%	44.2%
	Spreading of gossip and rumours about you	44.3%	55.6%	53.3%	38.4%	37.0%
Undermined credibility, performance or confidence	Constant and unreasonable criticism of your work	49.3%	53.2%	48.7%	40.5%	52.7%
	Repeatedly having your views ignored or undervalued	71.7%	68.5%	70.0%	65.5%	77.8%
	Being given impossible tasks that set you up to fail	30.7%	29.7%	33.7%	23.0%	33.3%

	Behaviour	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
Verbal or physical bullying	Verbal abuse (such as shouting)	27.8%	34.5%	25.9%	24.5%	27.8%
	Threats of violence or physical abuse, or actual abuse	6.6%	8.0%	10.8%	5.4%	4.2%
	Physical violence such as someone pushing or shoving you	2.7%	-	6.1%	-	-
	Invasion of privacy	22.7%	23.9%	30.1%	20.3%	18.3%
Total respondents		**753**	**111**	**202**	**148**	**287**

Note: Respondents could choose more than one behaviour, so percentages will not add to 100%. If the number of respondents is fewer than five, the percentage is not calculated, and the breakdown is not provided. Totals by service and for civilians will not add up to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service or whether they are a civilian.

2.187 Being excluded or humiliated were the most common types of behaviours experienced. Of the 12.6% of personnel reporting that they had been subject to bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the last 12 months, 83.9% said that they had experienced behaviours in the category of exclusion and humiliation (see Figure 13).

2.188 Having credibility, performance, or confidence undermined was the next most common type of bullying behaviour experienced, with 79.3% of personnel reporting behaviours in this category.

2.189 Verbal and physical bullying were the least common types of bullying, harassment, and discrimination experienced. However, more than a quarter (27.8%) of respondents who had experienced bullying reported that they had experienced verbal abuse such as shouting.

2.190 These patterns were also reflected in the behaviours personnel witnessed (see Figure 14).

Figure 14
Types of bullying, harassment, and discrimination witnessed in the workplace in the last 12 months

Behaviour	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
People being ignored or excluded	77.6%	81.6%	80.0%	74.6%	74.4%
Verbal abuse, including humiliation and ridicule	64.0%	68.6%	63.8%	65.1%	59.0%
Physical threats or gestures	15.3%	19.0%	23.2%	9.4%	8.7%
Physical violence, such as someone shoving or pushing	8.9%	9.0%	14.2%	6.9%	4.8%
Total respondents	**958**	**193**	**268**	**240**	**253**

Note: Respondents could choose more than one behaviour, so percentages will not add to 100%. Totals by service and for civilians will not add up to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service or whether they are a civilian.

2.191 Of the 16.0% of respondents who said that they had witnessed bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the last 12 months, more than three-quarters (77.6%) said that they had witnessed personnel being ignored or excluded.

2.192 In interviews and survey comments, personnel described experiencing bullying in a range of forms and contexts. Many of the comments from survey respondents described bullying in the form of belittling, mocking, excluding, threatening, or intimidating others, or spreading gossip or rumours about them.

2.193 We heard that these experiences can undermine the overall cohesiveness of teams and units, with individuals feeling that they have been singled out and deliberately targeted for unfair treatment.

Hazing and initiations do not seem to be as common or harmful as in the past

2.194 In militaries, hazing and initiations can be a form of bullying. In our survey, the definition of hazing was "an activity expected of someone joining or participating in their unit or a sports team that humiliated, degraded, or endangered them". The examples of this behaviour that we gave included having to drink large amounts of alcohol, acting as a personal servant, or performing sex acts.

2.195 Of the 753 personnel who said in our survey that they had experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination, 39 (5.2%) said that they had taken part in the type of activity we defined as hazing.

2.196 Some personnel we interviewed said that, although they knew that hazing and initiations had been common in the past (especially in the Navy), these had reduced in frequency and seriousness in recent years. Some hazing activities still

involved drinking alcohol, but personnel who talked about hazing generally felt that there was no pressure to participate. Personnel felt that clear messaging that hazing was not acceptable had influenced this, especially in the Navy.

Bullying, harassment, and discrimination were often experienced frequently

2.197 The results of our survey indicated that when personnel experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination, they often experienced these behaviours at least once a week.

2.198 Of the survey respondents who said that they had experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination:

- about a third (31.3%) said that they were excluded, ignored, or humiliated once a week or more, and a quarter (26.2%) said that they were excluded or humiliated several times a month;
- more than a third (39.5%) said that they had their credibility, performance, or confidence undermined once a week or more, and another quarter (28.0%) of these respondents said that they were subject to these behaviours a few times a month; and
- about a quarter of respondents (23.1%) who had experienced verbal or physical bullying said that they experienced this sort of behaviour once a week or more, and another quarter (24.1%) said that they experienced it several times a month.

What contexts do personnel experience bullying, harassment, and discrimination in?

Aspects of the military environment appeared to create specific risks for bullying, harassment, and discrimination

2.199 Personnel we interviewed experienced a wide range of bullying behaviours. Many of these might also be found in a standard professional workplace. However, we also heard about bullying that is unique to the different services or that elements of the military environment are likely to exacerbate.

2.200 We heard from Army personnel about the risks of bullying in "high performance" units (such as combat corps) that involves excessive criticism or exclusion when they cannot meet performance requirements (such as fitness requirements or other tasks).

2.201 We heard from Navy personnel about the risks that being on board ships for extended periods presents for bullying. Living and working aboard a ship, particularly on frigates that are deployed for long periods, can exacerbate stress.

2.202 We also heard about some working environments where a more aggressive leadership style was common (described as a "do what I say" approach). In these environments, some described feeling that they were blamed for anything that went wrong and were dissuaded from raising any issues they were experiencing.

When personnel experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination from their superiors they were not always sure whether it was inappropriate

2.203 Many of the personnel we spoke to who had experienced or witnessed bullying, harassment, and discrimination said that it came from those more senior than them. This was the case for uniformed and civilian personnel, and the personnel responsible were a mix of men and women, and civilian and uniformed personnel.

2.204 The uniformed personnel we interviewed did not have a clear or shared understanding of what was appropriate behaviour from their superiors compared with what could be considered bullying behaviour.

2.205 We heard of some instances where personnel witnessed or experienced aggressive and demeaning behaviour from superiors that made them feel uncomfortable. However, they were unsure whether this behaviour was bullying or the usual way for orders to be given. This was reflected in survey comments, where some personnel described feeling as if bullying behaviours were excused as necessary for discipline.

2.206 Although some personnel felt uncomfortable with the behaviour that they had experienced, such as yelling and swearing at subordinates, other personnel expressed concerns about what they saw as a "weakening" of the defence force by changing the way personnel are treated.

2.207 These diverse views reflected a broader difference in understanding among personnel about what constituted a "respectful" environment. Some personnel believed that a safe and respectful environment is one where their voices are heard and where they can question decisions. However, others felt that this was leading to less respect for command and seniority.

2.208 This tension was more noticeable in personnel from the Navy and the Army we interviewed. Navy personnel talked more about the move in recent decades away from superiors regularly engaging in physical and verbal harassment of those more junior to them.

2.209 However, we did hear that, in some environments, a style of leadership designed to "toughen people up" or "break people" continues.

There was no shared idea of what is bullying rather than banter

2.210 Many of the personnel we interviewed highly valued comradeship and team cohesion, which were commonly understood as core to operational effectiveness. However, strong team cohesion can increase risks of bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

2.211 Personnel we spoke to talked about how "banter" is common in their work environments. Although it was not always clear what constituted banter, it appeared to include joking, making fun of peers, and giving nicknames. Personnel acknowledged that the line between what is banter and what is bullying is not always clear.

2.212 As with sexualised comments and jokes, personnel often felt that banter is acceptable as long as it not directed at anyone specifically, or if it is directed at an individual, that person is not visibly offended. Others we spoke to told us that it can be difficult to determine whether jokes directed at them are intended in a light-hearted or malicious way and that this reduces trust between people.

2.213 We heard about instances of personnel being bullied because they do not fit the norms of the unit or team. This was, in some instances, related to their performance, for example, making fun of a team member because they were not seen as a good soldier. Several personnel in the Army talked about people who were targeted or excluded if they were not "pulling their weight" and that this was seen as acceptable.

2.214 We heard more generally about civilian and uniformed personnel sometimes being excluded if they did not fit into the team – for example, if they were not as social, had a different personality type, or were in other ways different from their team members.

2.215 In these instances, it did not appear that personnel were consciously trying to exclude others. However, as one person told us, in these situations the individual is expected to change to fit to the team rather than the team becoming more inclusive.

Personnel experienced bullying during initial training

2.216 Personnel we spoke to generally felt proud of having gone through initial training and appreciated the physicality and challenge it provided. Most personnel agreed that it should remain challenging. Many also told us they felt that you can still make good soldiers, sailors, and aviators without harsh treatment. Conversely, others felt that without it they would be "weaker" as a force.

2.217 We spoke to some personnel who had recently been through initial training. Most had a positive experience. They had found the training challenging but felt that they had been treated respectfully throughout.

2.218 We also heard from some junior personnel who had felt bullied during their initial training. This behaviour included being excessively yelled at, being belittled, having their weaknesses identified, and being picked on by instructors. Some

said that, at the time, they had been unsure whether what they had experienced was appropriate. They felt that it was difficult to raise issues with the behaviour because of the power the instructors had.

2.219 Most examples of bullying during initial training were provided by women. However, men also described experiencing this. Both men and women who had experienced bullying told us that they had come out of initial training feeling anxious and unsure of themselves.

2.220 We heard that NZDF has attempted to move away from this style of training. However, there was a perception that some instructors could find it challenging to change their behaviour when they had experienced this type of training themselves and did not necessarily recognise that it was inappropriate.

2.221 Navy personnel told us about a range of negative experiences, which mostly occurred several years ago. The Navy has since made changes to its initial training. Personnel we interviewed who had been through the training said that clear expectations about what constituted appropriate behaviour had recently been set.

2.222 The experiences of bullying described in the Army were more recent. However, we also heard that command was trying to set clearer expectations about appropriate behaviours. We heard of instances where instructors who behaved in inappropriate ways (for example, through excessive discipline) were spoken to or reprimanded and their behaviour monitored.

Leaders played a key role in exacerbating or preventing harmful behaviours

2.223 We heard that leaders in the unit played a key role in either exacerbating or preventing peer-on-peer bullying and exclusion. We heard that when leaders engage in behaviour targeting individuals (including instructors during initial and other training), it sends a message that this is acceptable.

2.224 We also heard about leaders who discouraged bullying behaviours by sending clear messages that team cohesion and success come from everyone supporting each other. Some personnel described the frequency of leaders picking on individuals declining.

2.225 We heard about improvements that the Army had made. For example, we were told there used to be intense competition between different combat corps (which contributed to bullying and violence), but work had been done to create a greater appreciation of what each corps had to offer, and now different units were working much better together.

2.226 We heard generally that having a more diverse team (in terms of age, ethnicity, and gender) helped prevent bullying and exclusionary behaviours. However, several personnel said that, for this to happen, leaders also need to set the expectation that personnel are to be valued regardless of rank, gender, trade, or other traits. Some of those we interviewed noted that it is helpful to have personnel in influential positions, such as senior NCOs, reinforcing the message that diversity is beneficial.

Building people's agency was seen as a protective factor against bullying, harassment, and discrimination

2.227 Those who worked in environments free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination considered that several factors contributed to this. Valuing personnel for their contributions and opinions was seen as an important factor.

2.228 We talked to some Navy personnel who said that the ships they worked on felt less hierarchical. They felt that this contributed to a safer environment. Although the chain of command was still central, leaders adopted styles of leadership that were more accessible.

2.229 Personnel on these ships described good leadership as being built into the culture of their work environment. Leaders tried to listen to and value what junior personnel had to say, and personnel were encouraged to share ideas and challenge practices they did not agree with. Personnel felt that this protected against harmful behaviour.

2.230 We heard from Air Force personnel that the focus in recent years on improving safety helped encourage them to voice their opinion and feel more empowered to raise issues, and that this protected against harmful behaviour.

2.231 Making these changes has taken time and effort. We heard that a better environment was created when leaders were given permission to focus on building a positive work culture. For example, we heard about a unit where personnel were mistreating each other. New leaders were brought in to address the issues and were empowered to make this their focus. This led to positive change.

Impact area 2: The dignity and privacy of NZDF personnel are respected in the environments they live and work in

2.232 NZDF personnel work in unique environments. They spend periods of time living and working on ships, out on field exercises, and in other environments that are different from standard professional working environments.

2.233 The boundaries between living, working, and socialising in these environments can become blurred. This presents risks for harmful behaviour to occur. Crime prevention research has shown that physical environments designed in the right way can reduce risks. In military environments, this includes personnel having access to facilities that they feel safe using and living in (such as bathrooms and barracks), and adequate lighting around the camp and base.

2.234 NZDF has invested in infrastructure as part of Operation Respect. Although not yet consistent in each camp and base, there have been improvements to add lighting around barracks and bars on site, upgrade bathrooms, and add door viewers in barrack rooms that enable the room occupant to see who is outside.

2.235 In this impact area, we look at the experiences of personnel related to the physical environments they live and work in and how safe and included these environments make them feel.

Main findings for impact area 2

2.236 The changes made to infrastructure, such as to bathrooms and barracks, have improved some people's perceptions of safety. However, some personnel also felt that, to increase their sense of safety, some physical areas still needed changes.

Detailed findings for impact area 2

Mixed gender bathrooms and barracks were the places most likely to make personnel feel unsafe

2.237 Personnel highlighted aspects of the physical environment that could potentially make them feel unsafe. Mixed gender barracks and mixed gender bathrooms on camps and bases were most frequently identified as being potentially unsafe. However, there was a not a shared view on this.

2.238 Mixed gender barracks were mostly identified as unsafe when there was drinking and personnel who did not live in the barracks could enter. Some women said mixed gender bathrooms could be uncomfortable because, even though the showers have separate stalls, they still must walk out of the stall into a bathroom where men could be present. We also heard that open (but gender-segregated) showers could be uncomfortable to use and felt unsafe for both men and women.

Personnel acknowledged that NZDF has improved the physical environment

2.239 Some personnel acknowledged that NZDF had made efforts in recent years to improve infrastructure, including by adding door viewers that enabled the room's occupant to see who was outside, installing one-way handles on doors, and increasing the number of streetlights on camps and bases.

2.240 Door viewers help prevent "door knocking", which was described to us as when men knock on the doors of women's rooms and, if the woman answers the door, the man enters her room without permission. We were told that sexual assaults in the Army and the Air Force have occurred in this way. Several women described how adding door viewers made them feel safer.

2.241 Another area of improvement was the removal of inappropriate material in work environments. Environment assessments were carried out that uncovered explicit photographic content and other inappropriate material that was subsequently removed.

2.242 Improvements to bars on site were also mentioned. Stricter limits on when bars can open and how much alcohol can be consumed have been set. Some personnel felt that safety on ships had improved after alcohol consumption at sea was stopped.

Despite infrastructure improvements, some people continued to feel unsafe

2.243 Some personnel told us that they still did not always feel safe. They said that they sometimes felt that NZDF did not give enough weight to changes they felt were a priority.

2.244 Not all women had the same ideas about what they needed to feel safe. Several women told us that they felt comfortable having mixed bathrooms or that changes made to create more privacy for women were not necessary.

2.245 These women were concerned that introducing single-sex barracks and other measures would further separate men and women when they need to think of themselves as a team. In some instances, women would have preferred other solutions, such as having agreed times for women to shower, rather than gender-specific facilities.

2.246 Several personnel noted that changes to the physical environment can only do so much if people are intent on harming others. Although personnel valued the environmental and infrastructure changes that NZDF had made to date, they saw them as effective only when combined with efforts to change behavioural norms.

Impact area 3: Respectful and inclusive behaviours are valued and rewarded in the organisation

2.247 Personnel need to be incentivised to behave in respectful and inclusive ways. This involves not just discouraging and responding to harmful behaviour but also encouraging personnel to act respectfully and inclusively.

2.248 Human resource policies need to incentivise the desired behaviours and should encompass how personnel are selected, how performance is measured and managed, and how personnel are promoted.

2.249 In this impact area, we look at whether personnel felt that NZDF formally and informally recognises and rewards respectful and inclusive behaviours.

Main findings for impact area 3

2.250 Personnel often told us that NZDF values respectful and inclusive behaviours. However, personnel did not always feel that there were suitable methods to formally recognise these behaviours. In a small number of instances, personnel felt that reporting harmful behaviour had inhibited their career progression.

Detailed findings for impact area 3

Assessing whether respectful and inclusive behaviours are rewarded was difficult

2.251 It was difficult to assess whether NZDF rewards respectful and inclusive behaviours. When asked about this, personnel were often unsure how to answer. They often commented that they should not be rewarded for behaviour consistent with Operation Respect because they felt that it should just be expected.

2.252 Personnel we talked to interpreted the phrase "acting in line with Operation Respect" as being only about behaviours that they should not engage in, rather than also being about demonstrating positive behaviours.

2.253 This might be because there is not a shared understanding of what a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment looks like. Without this, personnel find it difficult to know what positive behaviours are needed to create it.

NZDF does not consistently use the Performance Development Report process to encourage respectful and inclusive behaviour

2.254 NZDF has a range of formal methods that it can use to recognise and reward respectful and inclusive behaviour. These include performance reviews, promotions, and other opportunities. Informal recognition of good behaviour can also be positive feedback from leaders.

2.255 We talked to a lot of personnel who shared their views on the Performance Development Report (PDR) process, which is part of NZDF's Talent Management System. This system applies to uniformed members of NZDF and civilian personnel. NZDF describes the PDR as a tool to track short-term goals and progress against them.

2.256 We heard a range of views about how well-integrated Operation Respect was with the PDR process.

2.257 Some personnel told us that Operation Respect is integrated into the PDR process through discussions about ethics and core values such as integrity and courage and that this is sufficient.

2.258 However, other personnel told us that their PDRs do not include objectives relating to Operation Respect and they did not feel they were held accountable for Operation Respect outcomes in any specific way. It appears to be up to individual commanders to determine whether to include objectives relating to Operation Respect in PDRs. Some personnel suggested that standardising PDRs to require personnel to report on how they supported Operation Respect values would be useful.

Some personnel felt that reporting harmful behaviour had inhibited their career progression

2.259 A small number of personnel told us that following the values of Operation Respect has inhibited their progression in NZDF. These personnel felt that they had embodied the values of Operation Respect by consistently speaking up when harmful behaviour occurred. They said that others would come to them for help when experiencing harmful behaviour.

2.260 These personnel felt that consistently raising these types of issues, especially when it involves senior personnel, had not helped their career. In some instances, they felt that it had led to promotions taking a longer time.

The skills needed to create respectful environments are not always valued

2.261 Leaders at all levels need specific skills to perform their role in creating respectful and inclusive work environments.[44] Personnel described these skills to us in several ways, including soft skills, empathy, compassion, people skills, and emotional intelligence. The extent that personnel felt that NZDF valued interpersonal skills was mixed.

44 Klein, M and Gallus, JA (2018), "The readiness imperative for reducing sexual violence in the US armed forces: Respect and professionalism as the foundation for change", *Military psychology,* 30(3), 264-269.

2.262 Some personnel said that interpersonal skills were valued but could not always articulate how. Some personnel had the sense that interpersonal skills are not seen as being central to NZDF's broader objectives as a military force. Some felt that, even if interpersonal skills are valued, war-fighting or technical skills are still seen as more important.

3 The role of leadership

3.1 Leaders set the tone for the camps, bases, and units that they lead. Research has shown that there is a higher likelihood of sexual harm occurring in units where commanding officers display or condone behaviours that encourage a sexualised environment (such as sexist jokes and derogatory comments).[45]

3.2 Informal leaders or influencers – such as senior NCOs and junior leaders – also play a key role in influencing the climate and culture.[46] They also need to model the right behaviour.

3.3 This Part sets out the data we collected that describes the experiences personnel have with leaders in the organisation and the impact their behaviour has on creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

The outcome and impacts we expect to see over time

3.4 The outcome we are assessing in this Part is "Leaders create an environment where what constitutes harmful behaviour is understood and not tolerated".

3.5 We identified three impacts that we expect to see if NZDF is likely to achieve this outcome:

- Leaders model respectful and inclusive behaviour.
- Leaders create an environment where harmful behaviour is not tolerated by setting clear expectations of what is and is not appropriate.
- Leaders and specialist support staff have the capacity and capability to support prevention activities.

Our assessment of progress

3.6 Good leadership is an important factor in creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment. The behaviour of managers and direct supervisors is key. Our overall assessment is that most personnel feel that their immediate supervisors model appropriate behaviour.

3.7 All parts of the chain of command need to work together to set clear behavioural expectations. Most personnel told us that they feel that harmful behaviour is not tolerated in their work environments. However, we heard that some leaders engage in inappropriate behaviours or do not act on it when they see it occur. This sends a message to personnel that harmful behaviour is tolerated.

3.8 We developed a mixed picture of the extent to which leaders take a deliberate and proactive approach to developing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment. Although leaders often model appropriate behaviour, there is less focus on

45 Sadler, AG, Mengeling, MA, Booth, BM, O'Shea, AM, and Torner, JC (2017), "The relationship between US military officer leadership behaviors and risk of sexual assault of Reserve, National Guard, and Active Component servicewomen in nondeployed locations", *American journal of public health* 107(1), 147-155.

46 Crompvoets, S (2021), *Blood lust, trust and blame*, Monash University Publishing.

proactively setting clear behavioural expectations, identifying issues in their units that need addressing, and implementing prevention activities.

3.9 Leaders at all levels need the right skills to create respectful and inclusive environments in their units. Their individual motivations, skills, and experience influence their ability to set expectations. Although some leaders are well equipped to do this, we heard that current training does not adequately prepare all leaders to lead or support activities to prevent harmful behaviour.

3.10 Our assessment of this outcome is based on our findings from the three impact areas described in paragraph 3.5.

Impact area 1: Leaders model respectful and inclusive behaviour

3.11 One of the main ways that leaders can support positive change is through modelling the behaviours that they expect to see in others.

3.12 In this impact area, we look at whether personnel felt that their leaders modelled respectful and inclusive behaviours and the impacts of this.

Main findings for impact area 1

3.13 Most personnel felt that their leaders modelled respectful and inclusive behaviours.

3.14 However, modelling good behaviour requires more than not engaging in harmful behaviour. It also includes demonstrating accessible, encouraging, and respectful behaviour. These behaviours are needed to create respectful and inclusive environments. We heard that the extent to which leaders did this was varied.

3.15 A small number of personnel experienced harmful behaviour from leaders. We heard that when this happens, it set a tone in their work environment that this behaviour was acceptable.

Detailed findings for impact area 1

Most personnel agreed that their immediate supervisor models respectful behaviour

3.16 We asked survey respondents how strongly they agreed with the statement that their leaders have modelled respectful behaviour and language in the last 12 months (see Figure 15).

Figure 15
Perceptions of whether leaders have modelled respectful behaviour and language in the last 12 months

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total respondents
All	55.7%	34.9%	6.9%	1.7%	0.8%	6075
Women	50.4%	36.7%	8.0%	3.1%	1.7%	1622
Men	57.9%	34.3%	6.0%	1.2%	0.5%	4331

Note: Totals of women and men respondents will not add up to total respondents because some survey respondents did not specify gender and some respondents identified as another gender. Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

3.17 Of all survey respondents, 90.6% strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that their leaders model respectful behaviour and language. The rate was slightly lower for women – 87.1% strongly agreed or agreed with the statement.

3.18 Our interviews supported the survey findings. Most personnel we spoke to reported that their immediate leader models respectful behaviour and language.

Leaders who were accessible and encouraging contributed to respectful and inclusive environments

3.19 Part 2 outlines the important role leaders have in encouraging or discouraging harmful behaviour in their work environment. Personnel described this as more than simply using respectful language. Leaders who contributed to creating respectful and inclusive environments:

- were accessible and made an effort to get to know their personnel;
- encouraged their personnel to share their views and were open to feedback;
- empowered and gave their personnel autonomy where appropriate; and
- sent clear messages that success comes through diversity.

3.20 A few personnel described this as leading with respect rather than leading with fear. It is an approach that aims to build people up rather than break them down. We heard that these leaders still challenged personnel to be good soldiers, sailors, or aviators through building their mental and physical resilience, but in different ways.

3.21 Not all personnel wanted this style of leadership. Some appreciated and wanted a more "old school" disciplinarian style of leadership. However, we heard that ideas of what makes a good leader are changing. Some senior NCOs who had reflected on their "old school" ways told us that they now realise that these are not the best approaches.

3.22 Some personnel experienced the positive behaviours described in paragraph 3.19. Others had more mixed experiences. For example, some felt that their immediate supervisors, although respectful, are less available or accessible.

3.23 A small group of personnel we interviewed told us that they had experienced harmful behaviour from their immediate supervisors (1-ups and 2-ups) or witnessed them exhibit harmful behaviour towards others.

3.24 Some survey comments also described inappropriate behaviours that some leaders had engaged in. We also heard that some personnel were frustrated when leaders did not acknowledge their past harmful behaviour. Personnel felt that, to model the right behaviour, leaders needed to be open and honest about their own past behaviour and what they had learned.

Impact area 2: Leaders create an environment where harmful behaviour is not tolerated by setting clear expectations of what is and is not appropriate

3.25 Setting clear behavioural expectations is an important way for leaders to create safe, respectful, and inclusive environments.

3.26 In this impact area, we look at the extent that personnel felt that leaders set clear expectations about appropriate behaviours.

Main findings for impact area 2

3.27 Most personnel felt that harmful behaviour is not tolerated in their work environments. Almost 90% (89.4%) of all survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour is not tolerated in their current unit. However, only 80.9% of survey respondents thought that bullying, harassment, and discrimination were not tolerated in their current unit.

3.28 We heard some good examples of leaders making deliberate efforts to set clear expectations. However, overall, there appeared to be more focus given to reacting after events had occurred.

Detailed findings for impact area 2

Most NZDF personnel felt that harmful behaviour was not tolerated by leaders

3.29 We asked survey respondents how strongly they agreed with statements about how seriously inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour and bullying, harassment, and discrimination are taken in their units (see Figure 16).

Figure 16
Perceptions of tolerance of harmful workplace behaviour by leaders in the last 12 months

Statement	Sentiment	All	Women	Men
Inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour is not tolerated in my current unit – complaints are taken seriously	Strongly agree	58.1%	49.4%	61.6%
	Agree	31.3%	34.7%	30.3%
	Neutral	8.1%	11.9%	6.3%
	Disagree	1.7%	2.4%	1.4%
	Strongly disagree	0.8%	1.6%	0.4%
	Total respondents	**6074**	**1620**	**4332**
Bullying, harassment, and discrimination is not tolerated in my current unit – complaints are taken seriously	Strongly agree	44.5%	35.1%	48.4%
	Agree	36.4%	37.4%	36.2%
	Neutral	11.6%	15.3%	9.9%
	Disagree	5.1%	8.2%	3.7%
	Strongly disagree	2.5%	4.0%	1.7%
	Total respondents	**6062**	**1614**	**4326**

Note: Totals of women and men respondents will not add up to total respondents because some survey respondents did not specify gender and some respondents identified as another gender. Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

3.30 Most survey respondents (89.4%) agreed or strongly agreed that harmful sexual behaviour is not tolerated in their workplace and that complaints are taken seriously. The rate was slightly lower for women (84.1%).

3.31 Most respondents (80.9%) also agreed or strongly agreed that incidents of bullying, harassment, and discrimination will be taken seriously. The rate was lower for women (72.5%).

Leaders did not always proactively set expectations about behaviour

3.32 From our interviews, we heard many examples of leaders role-modelling good behaviour and acting on harmful behaviour when it occurs. However, personnel talked less about leaders making time specifically to discuss and reinforce behavioural expectations.

3.33 Some interviewees provided examples of where leaders had done this well. This included leaders:

- having regular discussions about above and below the line behaviours that became embedded in their routines;[47]
- leaders setting expectations for instructors about how they should behave with recruits;
- having sessions as part of training that set expectations, and involved discussions about how to respond to harmful behaviour; and
- facilitating discussions about appropriate behaviour when harmful behaviour occurred.

3.34 However, most personnel did not talk about leaders engaging in these types of activities. They talked more about leaders reacting after inappropriate behaviour occurs rather than proactively setting out what appropriate behaviour in their units or teams looked like.

All parts of the chain of command needed to work together to set clear expectations

3.35 Uniformed personnel recognised the importance of each level in the chain of command setting and reinforcing behaviour expectations.

3.36 We were told senior officers, such as the commanding officer (CO) of a unit and the officer commanding (OC)[48] need to provide clear direction about appropriate behaviour.

3.37 Senior NCOs (that is, warrant officers, staff sergeants) set the tone for appropriate behaviour below them. The CO and OC often rely on senior NCOs to know what is happening in a unit. Senior NCOs need to be accessible to personnel in their unit so that they know what behaviours are occurring and can pass information about the risks in the unit up to senior officers.

3.38 Junior leaders (including officers and NCOs – that is, corporal level) have more contact with most personnel in the unit. They also need to be accessible and available so personnel will bring issues to them, and they can escalate them up the chain of command. Junior officers and NCOs also need to have good relationships so that information about what type of behaviours are occurring can be passed to more senior officers.

3.39 This is what personnel described as all parts of the chain of command working well.

3.40 We heard that in the Army training environment, all leadership levels (CO, OC and senior NCOs) have agreed expectations about how they should behave. The CO sets clear expectations with the levels below them about how to work

47 The "above the line/below the line" model is a tool that NZDF uses to guide discussions about how personnel are expected to treat each other.

48 Officer commanding (OC) is the commander of a sub-unit or minor unit.

with recruits. We heard instructors talk about these expectations. We were also provided with examples from the Navy and Air Force (see paragraphs 2.228-2.231).

3.41 However, some personnel told us that parts of the chain are not working well. We were told by some personnel from all three services that messages about acceptable behaviour sent by senior officers sometimes got lost at the senior NCO level and did not filter down. We heard that strained relationships between junior NCOs and officers could be a problem and this meant that issues were not always escalated to senior personnel.

3.42 The survey results and our interviews indicate issues are more likely to occur when those at the top of the chain – such as a CO and OC – do not set good expectations, engage in harmful behaviour themselves, or do not act when they see harmful behaviour occur.

Leaders needed support to create the right environment

3.43 Leaders need to have the right skills to create an environment where harmful behaviour is not tolerated. We were told that leaders who effectively support the aims of Operation Respect often have the right skills and are interested in it. It was felt that those considered "old school" were less likely to lead well on Operation Respect.

3.44 We heard that leaders are not always aware of what constitutes inappropriate sexual behaviour, bullying, or victim-blaming. This makes it difficult for them to model appropriate behaviour and set expectations.

3.45 Some personnel said that to be effective at setting expectations and supporting the aims of Operation Respect, leaders need to be comfortable and convincing when they talk about it. It is clear when they are not, and this undermines the messages they deliver.

3.46 We heard that leaders at all levels need more support to create the right environment. Some personnel felt that there is not enough emphasis given to the "people side" in leadership training. Instead, the priority is on technical skill and operations.

3.47 Some personnel we interviewed felt that training did not adequately prepare junior leaders to have the necessary discussions or manage the types of issues they need to deal with.

3.48 Some junior leaders told us that they did not feel prepared to deal with some of the complex situations that are likely to arise in the workplace. These included how to talk to personnel about why certain behaviours, such as making "hot lists", are not appropriate or how to address complaints about women perceived to be getting "special treatment".

Impact area 3: Leaders and specialist support staff have the capacity and capability to support prevention activities

3.49 For personnel to work in an environment free from harmful behaviour, NZDF needs effective ways to target the causes of harmful behaviour and prevent it from occurring. Prevention can include a wide range of activities that focus on changing norms and expected behaviours.[49]

3.50 In this impact area, we look at whether leaders and specialist support staff felt that they had the capacity and capability to support or implement prevention activities.

3.51 We interviewed specialist support staff and senior officers on camps and bases to inform our understanding.

Main findings for impact area 3

3.52 Leaders and specialist support staff (such as SAPRAs and social workers) recognised the need for effective prevention activities. However, there were capacity and capability constraints.

3.53 Leaders were often not clear about what prevention activities should look like and what they should be doing to support prevention. Specialist support staff do some prevention work. However, they often did not have enough capacity because they spent most of their time on response activities.

3.54 Leaders and specialist support staff need to work together to implement effective prevention activities and for the support system to work effectively. This requires good relationships based on mutual trust. In some parts of NZDF, these relationships needed more attention.

49 Evidence about the comparative effectiveness of different prevention activities is still lacking, particularly in the military context. Examples of activities that have been used in other jurisdictions include healthy relationship training programmes, women's empowerment training, alcohol misuse prevention programmes, social norms marketing campaigns, and perpetration prevention programmes (See RAND Corporation, *Types of sexual assault prevention activities in the military: Finding and assessing effective prevention activities*, at rand.org).

Detailed findings for impact area 3

Specialist support staff were not always able to engage in prevention activities

3.55 NZDF employs a range of specialist support staff who can help design and deliver prevention activities:

- SAPRAs are experts in the subject of harmful sexual behaviour. They provide practical information, resources, and support to respond to, and prevent, any form of harmful sexual behaviour.
- Psychologists in NZDF provide psychological services, advice, and research to all parts of the organisation.
- Social workers are experienced at detecting issues early. They are also experienced at building programmes or interventions that target social harm.
- Chaplains focus on providing personnel with spiritual and pastoral support and guidance.

3.56 SAPRAs are responsible for implementing sexual harm prevention activities on camps and bases. They generally saw this as a key part of their role and have implemented a range of activities that support prevention.

3.57 SAPRAs deliver the Sexual Ethics and Respectful Relationships training, which is a key NZDF prevention activity. They also lead or are involved in other kinds of training, for example to reduce specific risk factors or work with different units that have issues with harmful behaviour.

3.58 However, SAPRAs told us that, in general, a lot of their time is taken up with response and support work. In some cases SAPRAs work across multiple camps and bases. This means it can be difficult to make time for prevention activities.

3.59 SAPRAs generally only design and implement activities for preventing sexual harm. It was less clear from our interviews who is responsible for supporting leaders to respond to or prevent bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

3.60 Some social workers and psychologists told us that they lead activities for preventing bullying, harassment, and discrimination. This includes delivering workshops in units with bullying, harassment, and discrimination issues. However, most did not describe it as a core part of their role and not all social workers and psychologists were engaged in this type of work. Some told us that they do not have enough capacity to design and implement prevention activities.

Leaders needed more support to engage in prevention activities

3.61 We asked leaders what work they did to prevent harmful behaviour. The most common response was that they responded to issues brought to their attention to demonstrate to others that harmful behaviour is not acceptable.

3.62 Some leaders talked about wanting to do more prevention but were often not sure what that involves. Leaders at multiple camps and bases expressed a desire to know more about appropriate prevention activities.

3.63 We were told by leaders that they were sometimes reluctant to engage in harm prevention activities because they feared doing the wrong thing. They needed the right support. However, at some sites SAPRAs had limited capacity to assist.

Leaders needed to understand the risks and issues in their units to better prevent harmful behaviour

3.64 To prevent harmful behaviour from occurring, leaders need a good understanding of both risks and protective factors in their unit or on their ship, camp, or base.

3.65 Many leaders did not fully understand the risks and issues related to harmful behaviour. These leaders needed more information, support, and guidance at the unit level to better understand the issues. This was particularly the case when dealing with inappropriate sexual behaviour.

3.66 We heard a few examples of leaders meeting regularly with specialist support staff to understand the issues that are occurring.

3.67 We were told that some commanding officers are also trying to better understand the issues by encouraging their direct reports to pass on anonymous information about the types of issues they observe. This helps them to understand whether there are unit-wide problems that need addressing.

3.68 Although these examples are positive, it was clear from our interviews that not all commanding officers were doing this.

Leaders and specialist support staff needed to work together

3.69 We heard that when commanding officers properly understood the role of SAPRAs and social workers and trusted them they were more likely to refer personnel when needed. They were also more likely to work with specialist support staff on prevention activities.

3.70 We were provided many examples of trusting relationships between command and specialist support staff. We heard that in these situations command ensured that personnel who needed access to SAPRAs or social workers could get it.

3.71 We heard about leaders and specialist support staff who worked co-operatively to support prevention activities on some camps and bases. For example, at some sites, leaders at the unit level asked specialist support staff to deliver targeted training to their units. Sometimes specialist support staff proactively offered this.

3.72 In other areas, experiences were mixed. In some instances, SAPRAs and other specialist support staff felt that they did not get as much access to units as they would have liked. In some areas, specialist support staff and command had good relationships when responding to harmful behaviour, but specialist support staff were less involved in prevention activities. We also heard that command sometimes consulted specialist support staff on prevention activities after they had been designed, when there would have been more value in involving them earlier.

3.73 We observed tensions between commanding officers and SAPRAs in some locations. We were told that commanding officers were sometimes frustrated with the restricted disclosure process, which meant that they could not get information on all incidents occurring in their unit or on their base.

3.74 Leaders told us they felt responsible for the welfare of personnel in their unit. It was difficult for them in situations where they knew that someone in their unit has experienced or been accused of harmful behaviour, but they did not know the details. They wanted to understand the situation to prevent further harm occurring.

3.75 We heard that the strong sense of responsibility many leaders feel makes it harder for them to trust civilian specialist support staff (such as SAPRAs and social workers) to manage these issues. They did not always recognise how important it was for personnel to have a confidential way to report harmful behaviour.

3.76 In most instances, commanders did not think that specialist support staff deliberately withheld information from them. In the few instances where they did feel this way, this seemed to be related to misunderstandings about the process of making a restricted disclosure and the confidentiality requirements that SAPRAs are bound by.

Raising, reporting, and responding to harmful behaviour

4

4.1 A safe, respectful, and inclusive environment is one where personnel can raise concerns and trust that those in authority will act on them appropriately. Organisations need to create mechanisms that enable this.[50]

4.2 Power is not equally distributed in NZDF, which can make speaking up difficult for some. If reports are dealt with promptly and appropriately, people are more likely to raise and report issues. They are also more likely to act when they see harmful behaviour occurring.

4.3 This Part sets out the data we collected that describes the experiences of personnel when they raise issues and report harmful behaviour.

The outcome and impacts we expect to see over time

4.4 The outcome area we are assessing in this part is "NZDF personnel work in environments where harmful behaviour can be raised and reported then dealt with safely and fairly".

4.5 We identified five impacts that we expect to see if NZDF is likely to achieve this outcome:

- NZDF personnel understand how to raise and report incidents.
- NZDF personnel feel able to speak up about harmful behaviour.
- NZDF personnel reporting harmful behaviour are satisfied with the process and do not experience negative repercussions from reporting.
- NZDF personnel trust that peers will respond to harmful behaviour appropriately.
- NZDF personnel trust that leaders will respond to harmful behaviour appropriately.

Our assessment of progress

4.6 Based on the data we collected, our overall assessment is that NZDF has not yet created an environment where harmful behaviour can be raised and reported, and dealt with safely and fairly. Getting this right is difficult. However, this is fundamental to supporting personnel affected by harmful behaviour and preventing further harm.

4.7 Most personnel feel that they work in environments where it is safe to raise and report harmful behaviour. Motivated and skilled leaders who set clear behavioural expectations, and a wider context where personnel feel valued and listened to, contribute to creating this environment. However, this is not the experience for all personnel.

50 Office of the Auditor-General (2022), *Putting integrity at the core of how public organisations operate: An integrity framework for the public sector*, at oag.parliament.nz.

4.8 NZDF has a range of formal and informal ways for raising and reporting harmful behaviour. Most NZDF personnel understand how to do this. However, the avenues for reporting unwanted sexual activity are clearer than those for reporting inappropriate sexual behaviour or bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

4.9 Although most survey respondents said they feel safe to report, most personnel who experience harmful behaviour do not report it.

4.10 Personnel who experience harmful behaviour often fear repercussions or do not trust that anything will be done. Those who witness harmful behaviour do not always report it for the same reasons.

4.11 Those with lower trust in the systems and processes for reporting harmful behaviour often feel that accountability for senior personnel who engage in harmful behaviour is lacking. This is because they do not see harmful behaviour being addressed adequately, or feel that senior personnel do not face appropriate consequences.

4.12 Leaders are not always creating environments where personnel feel comfortable to call out behaviour when they see it happening to others or raise concerns with leaders. This means that responsibility for raising issues or reporting harmful behaviour still primarily falls on those directly affected by it.

4.13 NZDF has a range of support services that allow personnel to access help when they want to report harmful behaviour. These services can help personnel navigate processes that can be complex and difficult.

4.14 However, satisfaction with reporting processes and systems is low. Personnel who experience harmful behaviour often do not see behavioural change after the harmful behaviour had been reported and dealt with. This contributes to a sense that there are not adequate consequences, which undermines trust in the systems.

4.15 Our assessment of this outcome is based on findings from the five impacts described in paragraph 4.5.

Impact area 1: NZDF personnel understand how to raise and report incidents

4.16 All personnel need to be aware of the ways that they can raise issues and report harmful behaviour. This is critical for creating an environment that allows harmful behaviour to be identified and addressed, and that properly supports personnel.

4.17 Personnel can use a range of formal and informal mechanisms to raise or report incidents of harmful behaviour.

4.18 Uniformed and civilian personnel can go to a SAPRA when they have experienced any form of harmful sexual behaviour. SAPRAs can support them to make a formal report (through the chain of command as part of an unrestricted disclosure) or help them access confidential support (through a restricted disclosure). Personnel can also report through their chain of command, which will trigger an investigation.

4.19 There are two complaints processes uniformed personnel can use to raise a complaint – a complaints system for bullying, harassment, and discrimination (under Defence Force Order Three (Part 5)),[51] and a formal administrative complaints system (under Defence Force Order Three and section 49 of the Defence Act 1990).[52] The former can be used only for complaints of bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

4.20 Civilian personnel can also make complaints of bullying, harassment, and discrimination under Defence Force Order Three (Part 5). They can also lodge a personal grievance under the Employment Relations Act 2000.

4.21 Uniformed and civilian personnel who have experienced criminal behaviour can report it to the New Zealand Police. They can also make complaints to the Human Rights Commission if they feel they have been unlawfully discriminated against.

4.22 In this impact area, we look at whether personnel understand how to raise concerns and report different types of harmful behaviour.

Main findings for impact 1

4.23 Personnel had a good knowledge of the different ways they could raise concerns or report harmful behaviour. However, civilian personnel had a more limited understanding of how to report harmful behaviour than uniformed personnel.

51 This order sets out that personnel should first attempt to address these behaviours at the lowest level possible, such as by raising concerns with their chain of command or an Anti-Harassment Advisor (who should use informal resolution strategies where possible). Personnel can also request in writing that their commanding officer resolve the problem through a mediation process or a formal investigation.

52 This requires a verbal or written complaint to their chain of command, which triggers an investigation.

4.24 Personnel understood the processes for reporting and getting help when they experienced unwanted sexual activity, but they were sometimes less sure how to do this when they experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour. They did not always understand that in these situations they could talk to a SAPRA, for example.

4.25 Some expressed concerns about the confidentiality of reporting processes and were not always aware of the confidential reporting and support options available.

Detailed findings for impact area 1

Personnel were generally aware of the processes for reporting inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour

4.26 Results from our survey and interviews showed that most personnel had some understanding of how to report harmful sexual behaviour.

4.27 We asked survey respondents about the extent of their awareness of different types of support and the processes for reporting harmful behaviour in the workplace (see Figure 17).

Figure 17
Awareness of the support and reporting processes for harmful behaviours

Type of support or process	Very aware	Somewhat aware	Not aware	Total respondents
SAPRA	67.7%	29.0%	3.3%	6078
Access to social workers on base	60.1%	32.2%	7.7%	6036
The process for reporting inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour	47.1%	46.5%	6.4%	6070
The process for making complaints of bullying, harassment, and discrimination	48.4%	44.8%	6.8%	6074
How to access confidential support for sexual harm	44.3%	44.1%	11.7%	6070
How to access confidential external support for sexual harm (such as the Safe to Talk helpline)	38.5%	46.7%	14.8%	6072

Note: Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

4.28 Most survey respondents (93.6%) were very aware or somewhat aware of the processes to report inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour. Only 6.4% of survey respondents were not aware of the processes to report inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour.

4.29 In 2016, NZDF recruited SAPRAs to provide a pathway to raise issues outside the chain of command and provide confidential support. Survey respondents had a high awareness of SAPRAs. More than 95% (96.7%) of survey respondents said that they were very aware or somewhat aware of them.

4.30 In our interviews, personnel frequently identified a SAPRA as the first person to contact, particularly after incidents of unwanted sexual activity. However, in our interviews, we found that personnel's depth of understanding about this pathway for reporting varied.

4.31 Some personnel had a clear understanding because they had recently completed training, such as initial training or promotions courses. Others said it was frequently discussed at their unit or team meetings, and referred to regular visits from SAPRAs. Regular reminders of these processes appeared to help build awareness and understanding.

Civilian personnel and those in locations where SAPRAs were less visible had more limited understanding of how to report harmful sexual behaviour

4.32 Although awareness of how to report inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour was generally high, some personnel had less awareness.

4.33 Compared to uniformed personnel, civilian personnel had a more limited understanding and awareness of the processes for reporting inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour. For example, 7.7% of civilian personnel did not know about SAPRAs (compared to 1.6% of uniformed personnel).

4.34 This was also reflected in interviews with civilian personnel, who rarely identified SAPRAs as an avenue for reporting harmful sexual behaviour. We interviewed several civilian women who had experienced harmful sexual behaviour and were not aware of the existence of SAPRAs (or other support services).

4.35 Although some uniformed personnel talked about receiving frequent information about the different ways of reporting inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour, this was not the case for civilian personnel. This likely contributes to their lower awareness.

4.36 Our survey did not show any significant differences between the services about understanding the process for reporting inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour or awareness of the SAPRAs. However, some differences were evident in our interviews.

4.37 The Papakura Military Camp did not have a permanent SAPRA, and personnel who worked at that camp spoke less about the SAPRAs. Navy personnel also spoke about the SAPRAs (and other support services, such as social workers) less frequently. This could be because SAPRAs are based on shore, and many Navy personnel spend significant periods at sea. Visibility of specialist support staff appeared to be an important factor in encouraging awareness of these reporting pathways (see paragraphs 5.71-5.73).

NZDF personnel tended to think SAPRAs only provide support after experiences of unwanted sexual activity

4.38 The role of a SAPRA is to provide advice and support to personnel who have experienced all kinds of harmful sexual behaviours, from inappropriate sexual behaviours to unwanted sexual activity.

4.39 It was apparent from our interviews that some personnel saw SAPRAs as an available support avenue for instances of unwanted sexual activity but not for inappropriate sexual behaviour (particularly sexualised comments, gossip, or unwanted contact of a non-criminal nature).

NZDF personnel were not always aware of the confidential reporting and support options that are available

4.40 Uniformed personnel were sometimes concerned about confidentiality, which affected how likely they were to report harmful behaviour (see paragraph 5.35). SAPRAs can provide confidential support for sexual harm. There are also external avenues available for this, such as counselling.

4.41 Personnel did not always know that this confidential support for sexual harm was available. Our survey results indicated:

- 11.7% of respondents did not know how to access confidential support; and
- 14.8% of respondents did not know how to access external confidential support.

4.42 Some personnel we interviewed did not fully understand the difference between restricted and unrestricted reporting avenues, or that they could go to SAPRAs for confidential support where they could choose what actions to take. This affected how likely they were to access SAPRA support.

Personnel were generally aware of the processes for making complaints about bullying, harassment, and discrimination

4.43 Most personnel had some understanding of how to make complaints about bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Our survey indicated that 93.2% of respondents had at least some knowledge about the processes for reporting

bullying, harassment, and discrimination. However, 6.8% were not aware of the processes for making complaints about bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

4.44 Personnel can go to social workers for support when they have experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Most (92.3%) survey respondents were very aware or somewhat aware of social workers on base. However, 17.3% of civilian personnel who responded to our survey did not know about the presence of social workers.

4.45 Awareness of the options available to get support in dealing with bullying, harassment, and discrimination was high. However, it was evident in our interviews that personnel do not always have a clear understanding of how the reporting process works.

4.46 Many personnel we spoke to said that they understood what to do, but their explanations were not consistent. Most understood that reporting harmful behaviour required working through the chain of command. Personnel variously mentioned social workers, psychologists, chaplains, and Anti-Harassment Advisors as places they could go.

4.47 The role of Anti-Harassment Advisors seemed the least well understood. Many personnel we interviewed did not mention them. Those who did were mostly from the Navy.

Impact area 2: NZDF personnel feel able to speak up about harmful behaviour

4.48 To speak up about harmful behaviour, personnel need to feel that they work in an environment where it is safe to do so.

4.49 In this impact area, we look at whether personnel feel safe speaking up about harmful behaviour and what affects their perceptions of safety.

Main findings for impact area 2

4.50 Most personnel felt safe to report harmful behaviour. In our survey:

- 82.9% of respondents said that they would feel safe reporting harmful sexual behaviour, irrespective of the rank of the person committing the harmful behaviour; and
- 78.1% of respondents said that they would feel safe reporting bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

4.51 Although most personnel said they would feel safe to report harmful behaviour, most incidents of harmful behaviour were not reported to someone in authority. A range of barriers existed that undermined trust in reporting processes.

4.52 A fear of repercussions and lack of trust in reporting systems continued to be barriers to some personnel speaking up about harmful behaviour. These were most pronounced when it was senior personnel who engage in harmful behaviour.

4.53 A lack of trust in reporting systems often arose when personnel had seen harmful behaviour that was not dealt with properly in the past. Many personnel had seen various forms of harmful behaviour misunderstood, ignored, or diminished. Therefore, they did not trust that those in authority would deal with their complaints appropriately.

4.54 Women, especially junior women, felt less safe to report harmful behaviour than men. This means that the environment is not yet conducive for those most likely to be affected by harmful behaviour to report it.

4.55 Some environments are more conducive to raising and reporting instances of harmful behaviour than others. Personnel felt more able to speak up in environments that had:

- clear expectations for appropriate behaviour;
- leaders who acted on harmful behaviour;
- clear support for personnel voicing their opinions and concerns; and
- reporting avenues that personnel trust.

Detailed findings for impact area 2

How safe do personnel feel reporting harmful behaviour?

Most NZDF personnel said they would feel safe reporting harmful behaviour

4.56 We asked respondents whether they would feel safe reporting inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour by someone, regardless of their rank (see Figure 18).

Figure 18
Perception of safety to report inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour

Statement	Sentiment	All	Women	Men
I would feel safe reporting inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour by someone, regardless of their rank	Strongly agree	50.2%	38.0%	54.9%
	Agree	32.7%	34.9%	32.0%
	Neutral	10.2%	14.5%	8.3%
	Disagree	4.5%	8.2%	3.1%
	Strongly disagree	2.5%	4.3%	1.5%
	Total respondents	**6067**	**1620**	**4325**

Note: Totals of women and men respondents will not add up to total respondents because some survey respondents did not specify gender and some respondents identified as another gender. Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

4.57 Most (82.9%) respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they would feel safe reporting inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour by someone, regardless of their rank.

4.58 The rates were similar, although slightly lower, for bullying, harassment, and discrimination (see Figure 19). Most respondents (78.1%) either strongly agreed or agreed that they would feel safe reporting bullying, harassment, and discrimination by someone, regardless of their rank.

Figure 19
Perception of safety to report bullying, harassment, and discrimination

Statement	Sentiment	All	Women	Men
I would feel safe reporting bullying, harassment, and discrimination by someone, regardless of their rank	Strongly agree	44.8%	33.3%	49.5%
	Agree	33.3%	34.0%	33.4%
	Neutral	11.7%	16.7%	9.5%
	Disagree	6.2%	10.4%	4.5%
	Strongly disagree	4.0%	5.6%	3.1%
	Total respondents	**6060**	**1614**	**4324**

Note: Totals of women and men respondents will not add up to total respondents because some survey respondents did not specify gender and some respondents identified as another gender. Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Women said they would feel less safe reporting harmful behaviour than men

4.59 Women, especially junior uniformed women, were less likely to say they would feel safe reporting both inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour and bullying, harassment, and discrimination than men. In our survey:

- 72.9% of women said that they would feel safe reporting inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour by someone, regardless of their rank (compared to 86.9% of men);
- 63.1% of junior uniformed women said that they would feel safe reporting inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour by someone, regardless of their rank (compared to 84.7% of junior uniformed men);
- 79.3% of senior uniformed women said that they would feel safe reporting inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour by someone, regardless of their rank (compared to 91.2% of senior uniformed men);
- 67.3% of women respondents said that they would feel safe reporting bullying, harassment, and discrimination by someone, regardless of their rank (compared to 82.9% for men). For junior uniformed women, this rate was 61%, compared to 81.2% for junior uniformed men.

4.60 These results reflected what we heard in our interviews. Personnel expressed a range of views about how safe they felt raising and reporting harmful behaviour they experience or witness.

4.61 Those who had seen NZDF deal with harmful behaviour poorly in the past (either in the way that leaders had dealt with it or how the complaints and disciplinary system worked) had less trust and felt less likely to raise issues in the future.

4.62 Conversely, some who either had not seen any harmful behaviour occur or had seen issues dealt with well (such as being taken seriously by leaders) had more trust.

What do NZDF personnel do when they experience harmful behaviour?

4.63 Although survey responses showed a high level of trust in reporting processes overall, this did not always mean that those who experienced harmful behaviour reported it. Personnel often did not report unwanted sexual activity, inappropriate sexual behaviour, or bullying, harassment, and discrimination to someone in authority.

Most unwanted sexual activity experienced is not reported to someone in authority

4.64 It is common for people who have experienced unwanted sexual activity to not report it.[53]

4.65 We asked survey respondents who said that they had experienced unwanted sexual activity whether they or someone else reported it to authorities. One-

53 Ministry of Justice (2020), *New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey,* at justice.govt.nz.

third of respondents said that it had been reported to authorities. Of these respondents:

- more than half (56.3%) reported it to their military or civilian supervisor; and
- half (50%) reported it to the military or civilian police.[54]

4.66 We asked survey respondents who had reported unwanted sexual activity whether the incident went to summary trial or court martial. In most instances (91.5%), respondents said that the incident had not.

Action is not always taken when someone experiences inappropriate sexual behaviour

4.67 We asked survey respondents who said that they had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months what actions they or somebody else had taken in response (see Figure 20).

Figure 20
Actions taken after experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour

Reason	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
No action was taken	43.4%	46.6%	42.4%	41.8%	47.4%
I talked to the person or people responsible for the behaviour	34.4%	25.9%	35.9%	41.8%	26.3%
I reported the behaviour to someone in authority	21.6%	22.4%	18.5%	20.9%	28.1%
Somebody else talked to the person or people responsible for the behaviour	16.6%	19.0%	10.9%	18.2%	17.5%
Somebody else reported the behaviour to someone in authority	10.3%	17.2%	6.5%	12.7%	-
I spoke to the SAPRA	8.8%	10.3%	7.6%	10.9%	-
I sought support outside of the New Zealand Defence Force	8.8%	8.6%	12.0%	8.2%	-
An action not listed above	11.3%	10.3%	10.9%	12.7%	8.8%
Total respondents	**320**	**58**	**92**	**110**	**57**

Note: Percentages will not total to 100% because respondents could choose more than one response. Totals for services and for civilians will not add up to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service or whether they are a civilian. If there are fewer than five respondents, the percentage is not calculated and the breakdown is not provided.

4.68 Just under half (43.4%) of respondents who answered this question said that neither they nor anyone else had taken any action.

4.69 If respondents said that some action had been taken, the most common action reported was talking to the person responsible for the harmful behaviour

54 Respondents could select more than one response, so percentages will not add to 100%.

(34.4%) or reporting it to someone in authority (21.6%). There were no significant differences in responses between the Navy, Army, Air Force, or civilian personnel.

4.70 When personnel reported inappropriate sexual behaviour to someone in authority, they most commonly reported it to their military or civilian supervisor. Two-thirds (66.3%) of survey respondents said this.

Those who had experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination were most likely to report the behaviour to someone in authority

4.71 We asked survey respondents who said that they had experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the last 12 months what actions they or somebody else had taken in response (see Figure 21).

Figure 21
Actions taken after experiencing of bullying, harassment, and discrimination

Action	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
I reported the behaviour to someone in authority	40.2%	43.0%	28.1%	27.9%	53.7%
No action was taken	36.6%	31.8%	43.2%	40.8%	31.4%
I talked to the person or people responsible for the behaviour	28.5%	29.9%	26.6%	27.9%	29.3%
Somebody else talked to the person or people responsible for the behaviour	18.0%	18.7%	14.6%	19.0%	19.4%
I sought support outside of the New Zealand Defence Force	15.7%	17.8%	19.3%	10.9%	14.5%
An action not listed above	14.2%	16.8%	19.3%	12.9%	9.5%
Total respondents	**734**	**107**	**192**	**147**	**283**

Note: Respondents could choose more than one action, so percentages will not add to 100%. Totals for services and for civilians will not add up to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service or whether they are a civilian.

4.72 Of those who said that they had experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination, two-fifths of respondents (40.2%) reported the behaviour to someone in authority.

4.73 Our survey found that civilian and Navy personnel were more likely to report bullying, harassment, and discrimination to someone in authority (civilian personnel: 53.7%, Navy: 43.0%) than personnel in the Army and the Air Force (Army: 28.1%, Air Force: 27.9%).

4.74 More than a third of respondents (36.6%) said that neither they nor anyone else had taken any action after they had experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Respondents in the Army (43.2%) and the Air Force (40.8%) were more likely to report that no action had been taken compared to the Navy (31.8%) and civilian personnel (31.4%).

4.75 Although most (70.5%) respondents said that they had reported incidents of bullying, harassment, and discrimination to their military or civilian supervisor, about half (47.4%) reported to someone other than their supervisor.[55]

Men were less likely to report experiences of harmful behaviour to a person in authority

4.76 There were differences between men and women when it came to reporting harmful behaviour. Our survey found that:

- men were less likely to report inappropriate sexual behaviour to someone in authority (13.8%) than women (26.3%); and
- men were also less likely to report inappropriate sexual behaviour to their military or civilian supervisor (55.0%) than women (69.5%).

4.77 Men who had experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination were also less likely to report the behaviour to someone in authority (35.7%) compared to women (45.5%).

What factors affect the actions taken after personnel experience harmful behaviours?

Not trusting the formal complaints process and fearing negative consequences were barriers to reporting for personnel who experienced unwanted sexual activity

4.78 We asked survey respondents who said they had not contacted someone in authority after experiencing unwanted sexual activity why they had not done so. The most common reasons were that they did not trust the formal complaints process or that they did not believe that anything would happen.

4.79 Another common reason was fear of negative consequences (for example, revenge, career implications, being labelled). Survey respondents also said that they had not contacted anyone because they had not felt that the behaviour was serious enough, including when it was unwanted touching.

55 Respondents could select more than one response, so percentages will not add to 100%.

Fear of negative consequences was the biggest barrier to taking action when inappropriate sexual behaviour has occurred

4.80 We asked survey respondents who said that neither they nor anyone else had taken action after experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour why not (see Figure 22).

Figure 22
Reasons no action was taken after experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour

Reason	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
I was afraid of negative consequences for myself (such as personal harm, retaliation or revenge, career implications, being labelled)	50.4%	33.3%	69.2%	43.5%	51.9%
No action was needed, or I didn't think it was serious enough	48.9%	44.4%	51.3%	52.2%	44.4%
I didn't trust anything would happen if I reported it	44.6%	44.4%	46.2%	45.7%	40.7%
Those responsible were a higher rank than me	25.9%	33.3%	33.3%	19.6%	18.5%
I didn't know what to do	12.9%	-	28.2%	10.9%	-
Someone else had taken some form of action	5.0%	-	-	-	-
Other reason	23.0%	-	25.6%	26.1%	22.2%
Total respondents	**139**	**27**	**39**	**46**	**27**

Note: Totals for services and for civilians will not add up to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service or whether they are a civilian. Respondents could select more than one response, so percentages will not add to 100%. If there are fewer than five respondents, the percentage is not calculated, and the breakdown is not provided.

4.81 About 50% of these survey respondents said that they were afraid of negative consequences for themselves. Two other reasons why survey respondents said that no action had been taken were:

- they did not think any action was needed (48.9% of respondents); and
- they did not trust that anything would happen if it was reported (44.6% of respondents).

4.82 Women were more likely than men to say that they were afraid of negative consequences. Over half (55.2%) of women said that they were afraid of negative consequences for themselves, compared to 38.9% of men. This rate was highest for junior uniformed women, at 64.7%.

4.83 Nearly 70% (69.2%) of respondents from the Army were afraid of negative consequences for themselves. This was lower for the other two services and civilians. About half (51.9%) of civilian respondents, one-third (33.3%) of respondents from the Navy, and 43.5% of respondents from the Air Force were afraid of negative consequences for themselves.

A lack of trust that anything would happen was the biggest barrier to taking action when bullying, harassment, and discrimination has occurred

4.84 We asked survey respondents who said that neither they nor anyone else had taken any action after they experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination, why not (see Figure 23).

Figure 23
Reasons no action was taken after experiencing bullying, harassment, and discrimination

Reason	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
I didn't trust anything would happen if I reported it	61.4%	66.7%	61.3%	55.0%	64.3%
I was afraid of negative consequences for myself (such as personal harm, retaliation or revenge, career implications, being labelled)	55.6%	72.7%	62.5%	45.0%	51.2%
Those responsible were a higher rank than me	42.5%	60.6%	50.0%	33.3%	34.5%
No action was needed, or I didn't think it was serious enough	23.9%	21.2%	22.5%	35.0%	19.0%
I didn't know what to do	15.8%	15.2%	11.3%	18.3%	19.0%
Someone else had taken some form of action	3.1%	-	-	0.0%	6.0%
Other reason	17.8%	-	20.0%	18.3%	16.7%
Total respondents	**259**	**33**	**80**	**60**	**84**

Note: Totals for services and for civilians will not add up to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service or whether they are a civilian. Respondents could choose more than one response, so percentages will not add up to 100%. If there are fewer than five respondents, the percentage is not calculated and the breakdown is not provided.

4.85 Just over 60% (61.4%) of respondents said that no action had been taken because they did not trust that anything would happen if they reported the incident.

4.86 More than half (55.6%) were afraid of negative consequences for themselves. These rates were higher for respondents from the Navy (72.7%) and the Army (62.5%) than for respondents from the Air Force (45.0%) and civilian personnel (51.2%).

4.87 There was also concern about the rank of the person responsible. More than 40% (42.5%) of respondents said that no action had been taken because the person committing the harmful behaviour was of a higher rank than them. These rates were higher for respondents from the Navy (60.6%) and the Army (50.0%) compared to civilian personnel (34.5%) and respondents from the Air Force (33.3%).

NZDF personnel were most concerned about negative consequences when they had experienced harmful behaviour from someone more senior

4.88 The seniority of the person causing harm often affected how able personnel felt to raise or report harmful behaviour. In our interviews and responses to our survey, personnel commonly talked about not feeling comfortable speaking up about harmful behaviour when the person causing the harm is more senior than them.

4.89 Those who had lower trust in reporting processes felt that raising an issue involving someone senior was difficult because of the control that senior personnel had over their careers. They felt that the person would treat them poorly, especially if the complaint did not go anywhere. Some personnel had experienced this in the past, and so they did not want to report again.

4.90 Poor treatment that personnel were concerned about included receiving negative feedback in their Performance Development Report (PDR), having their competence questioned, supervisors not signing off paperwork needed to progress, withholding opportunities, or the harmful behaviour worsening.

4.91 Several personnel who had experienced unwanted sexual activity noted in their survey response a fear of not being believed or being judged for what had happened to them. A few said that even if the person responsible were held accountable, there was still a risk they might experience mistreatment by that person's friends.

4.92 Some were worried that reporting harmful behaviour would continue to affect their career, even when they moved into new roles, because details of what happened could become common knowledge.

NZDF personnel also feared repercussions when raising issues against peers, but having shared expectations helped

4.93 In some units or teams, raising issues involving peers presented risks of being excluded.

4.94 In interviews, personnel who felt able to raise issues commonly said this was because their unit had clear and shared behavioural expectations, including an expectation that they would hold each other accountable. When personnel

received a good response from peers for speaking up about harmful behaviour, they were more likely to continue raising issues.

4.95 Some personnel told us that recent training, focused on what to say when they witnessed harmful behaviour, helped. We heard examples of some units practising giving and receiving feedback so that personnel knew what to do. Through practice, personnel felt they could get better at raising issues and having issues raised with them.

4.96 However, others we interviewed described barriers that had prevented them from raising issues involving peers. Personnel, particularly junior NCOs, commonly talked about having to be careful about when and how they raised issues involving peers because of the risk of exclusion.

4.97 We heard, in some units, men and women had a different understanding about what is acceptable, especially in relation to inappropriate sexual behaviour. This made raising issues more difficult.

4.98 Personnel we interviewed who had called out inappropriate sexual behaviour described receiving varied reactions. Some said that they were told they needed to "take a joke" or similar. Although some did not take this personally, it still limited how often they would raise issues.

4.99 Some personnel said they raised issues sparingly because they did not want to draw attention to themselves or be excluded by their peers. Some women we talked to felt that if they raised issues they would be perceived as the person who would get all men in trouble and be ostracised.

When personnel had seen leaders fail to respond in the past this impacted trust

4.100 In interviews and survey comments, people described instances where they had seen people in authority condone harmful behaviour, including harmful sexual behaviour. For example, we heard of an instance when a senior NCO made inappropriate comments in front of other senior NCOs and officers, and none of the senior leaders acted on it.

4.101 These types of situations led to a belief that senior personnel looked after each other, and that there would be no consequences for poor behaviour if the incident were reported. This diminished trust in reporting.

4.102 Some of the people we talked to believed that raising an issue about someone with specialist or sought-after skills is more difficult because NZDF prioritises these people. Several people told us that they had seen examples of this.

4.103 Similarly, we heard that people who worked in areas with not many job prospects could find it difficult to raise issues because they felt the risks to their career were greater.

Environments where personnel felt their voices were heard built trust

4.104 Some junior personnel described how working in environments where they were encouraged to voice their opinions helped build trust in the processes for reporting harmful behaviour.

4.105 We heard that when personnel raised issues about various aspects of their environment (such as health and safety issues) and received a good response, they were more likely to raise issues with harmful behaviour.

4.106 However, some junior uniformed personnel we talked to described working in environments where they did not always feel that their voices were heard or their ideas encouraged. This made it harder for them to feel safe reporting incidents of harmful behaviour. In some instances, they felt that senior personnel struggle with younger personnel having a voice.

4.107 Some uniformed personnel talked about it being more difficult to report in the military environment because personnel are meant to follow orders. They did not want to raise issues because it could make them appear difficult and hurt their career.

4.108 Civilian women expressed similar views. Several survey comments from civilian women indicated they felt that NZDF does not generally respect or listen to them. They felt that there was no point reporting the harmful behaviour they had experienced because they did not think it would be taken seriously.

Personnel were more likely to raise and report issues when they trusted the reporting processes

4.109 Personnel told us that they felt more able to raise and report issues when they trusted the processes.

4.110 In survey responses and interviews, some personnel said they were reluctant to report harmful behaviour they had experienced because they felt they would not have control over the actions taken. Some feared that there would be an over-reaction, which would have negative repercussions for themselves and the person responsible, and they did not see avenues for more informal action to be taken (see paragraph 4.154).

4.111 Several personnel told us that introducing specialist support services, such as SAPRAs and social workers, had created a better environment for raising and reporting issues. However, numerous personnel expressed concerns about how

long and difficult the complaints, summary trial, and military justice processes can be. This was a barrier to some personnel reporting harmful behaviour (see paragraphs 4.166-4.168).

4.112 Fears about lack of confidentiality also affected people's willingness to raise or report harmful behaviour.

4.113 Several personnel expressed reservations because they did not think that command would protect their confidentiality. This was especially the case when they had experienced or heard about breaches of confidentiality previously.

4.114 Some personnel told us they worried about going to specialist support staff (such as medical staff, psychologists, and chaplains) to report harmful behaviour because they worried that what they said would be passed on to command (see paragraphs 5.34-5.42).

Impact area 3: NZDF personnel reporting harmful behaviour are satisfied with the process and do not experience negative repercussions from reporting

4.115 Personnel need to feel that NZDF takes their reports of harmful behaviour seriously. For the systems to work properly, it is critical that personnel feel they are appropriately supported and treated well through these processes.

4.116 In this impact area, we look at the experiences of personnel when they have raised or reported harmful behaviour and how satisfied they were with the response.

Main findings for impact area 3

4.117 Personnel were satisfied with reporting processes when they could access support, get a resolution through the right avenue, and observe a change in behaviour as a result.

4.118 As described in the previous section, although trust in reporting was generally high, personnel who experienced harmful behaviour often did not feel safe reporting it because of how they had seen it dealt with previously. Satisfaction with formal and informal reporting processes and systems was low. Low satisfaction with how harmful behaviour is dealt with can affect trust in reporting processes.

4.119 Personnel needed to see that someone in authority takes action to address the harmful behaviour that they report. However, this did not always happen. Our survey showed that although those in authority often acted on reports of unwanted sexual activity, they less commonly acted on reports of inappropriate sexual behaviour and bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

4.120 Personnel who experienced harmful behaviour were not often satisfied with how leaders responded to it when it was reported to them. Our survey found that:

- slightly more personnel reported being dissatisfied than satisfied with the response from the person in authority after reporting unwanted sexual activity;
- only 39.1% of survey respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the response from the person in authority after reporting inappropriate sexual behaviour; and
- only 24.3% of survey respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the response from the person in authority after reporting bullying, harassment and discrimination.

4.121 There was a perception that leaders did not always understand that these behaviours were harmful, so they did not always act on them appropriately.

4.122 Personnel often had low satisfaction with the complaints process and/or the disciplinary system. These processes were often lengthy, and personnel often felt that they were not kept adequately up to date about what to expect or the progress of their case. This was especially so for complaints about bullying. Personnel with supportive managers and access to support services tended to have a less negative experience.

4.123 Personnel needed to see that the person responsible changed their behaviour. However, for those we talked to, this often did not happen – even after those in authority had taken action to address the harmful behaviour. Sometimes, harmful behaviour continued even after a complaint went through the complaints and disciplinary processes. If no further consequences were applied, this contributed to a perception that reporting harmful behaviour did not result in positive change.

4.124 Most personnel did not experience negative repercussions from reporting harmful behaviour. However, we heard that, when personnel do experience negative repercussions, others notice and this has a detrimental impact on their likelihood of raising issues they witness or experience.

Detailed findings for impact area 3

How were incidents of harmful behaviour responded to when raised or reported?

4.125 In our interviews, we heard about a range of issues that personnel had raised and the ways they did this. These included:

- calling out inappropriate comments in the moment or afterwards;
- alerting or telling someone in authority when other senior personnel made sexualised comments or touched them inappropriately;
- making formal complaints about bullying or sexual harassment that went through an investigation; and
- reporting incidents under the Armed Forces Discipline Act 1971 and proceeding through formal disciplinary processes (summary trial or court martial).

Most reports of unwanted sexual activity were acted on when reported to someone in authority

4.126 We asked those survey respondents who reported an experience of unwanted sexual activity to someone in authority whether that person had followed it up.

4.127 Most respondents indicated that it had been followed up. However, the number of respondents was small because the number of personnel who reported their incident to someone in authority was also small.

4.128 Interviews and survey comments echoed this. Action was taken in most instances where personnel reported unwanted sexual activity. We were told that when unwanted sexual activity came to the attention of command, they dealt with it seriously and sensitively.

4.129 In some instances, personnel reported gratitude for support that their supervisors or chain of command provided. This included senior leaders and specialist support services, such as SAPRAs.

4.130 However, we heard of several instances where it was felt that those in authority did not act on behaviour appropriately. There was a perception that the behaviour was not taken seriously, or there were attempts to protect the person responsible for the harmful behaviour.

Those in authority did not always understand that inappropriate sexual behaviour was harmful, and this meant responses could be inconsistent

4.131 We asked those who reported experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour to a person in authority if there had been any follow-up (see Figure 24).

Figure 24
Follow-up after a report to a person in authority of inappropriate sexual behaviour

	All	Women	Men
Yes	62.3%	65.2%	53.8%
No	36.1%	34.8%	46.2%
Don't know	-	0.0%	0.0%
Total respondents	**61**	**46**	**13**

Note: Totals for women and men will not add up to total respondents because some respondents identified as another gender or did not specify gender. If there are fewer than five respondents, the percentage is not calculated, and the breakdown is not provided.

4.132 Nearly two-thirds of respondents (62.3%) who reported experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour said there had been follow-up.

4.133 In our interviews and survey comments, the extent that personnel felt that inappropriate sexual behaviour was taken seriously by people in authority varied. When a senior leader took swift action, such as talking to the person responsible for the harmful behaviour, the person who raised or reported the matter viewed the process positively.

4.134 Personnel also appreciated efforts to keep details of the incident confidential, and some personnel described feeling very grateful for the support they had received.

4.135 However, some personnel told us that they had raised concerns about inappropriate sexual behaviour with leaders who did not always understand the behaviour as harmful. They felt leaders dismissed the complaints as not serious or did not properly investigate them.

4.136 We heard that leaders sometimes excused behaviours (which included unwanted physical contact and inappropriate messages sent through social media) by saying that it was not intended to be harmful, the person responsible is "just like that", or that the person affected was overreacting.

4.137 Several personnel described having to continue raising the behaviour with other senior personnel until they found someone who took it seriously.

There was follow-up in only half of cases where personnel had reported bullying, harassment, and discrimination to someone in authority

4.138 We asked survey respondents whether there had been any follow up by those in authority after they reported an incident of bullying, harassment, and discrimination (see Figure 25).

Figure 25
Follow-up after a report to a person in authority of bullying, harassment, and discrimination

	All	Women	Men
Yes	51.4%	51.3%	51.6%
No	48.2%	48.7%	47.6%
Don't know	-	0.0%	-
Total respondents	**245**	**113**	**124**

Note: If the number of respondents is fewer than five, the percentage is not calculated, and the breakdown is not provided. Totals for women and men will not add up to total respondents because some respondents identified as another gender or did not specify gender. Percentages might not total 100% due to rounding.

4.139 About half (51.4%) of those who reported incidents of bullying, harassment, and discrimination to someone in authority said that there had been follow-up. This was less than the level of follow-up reported for both unwanted sexual activity and inappropriate sexual behaviour. There were no significant differences by gender.

4.140 In our interviews and survey comments, some personnel described positive experiences where those in authority had taken immediate action in response to a complaint of bullying, harassment, or discrimination. They felt that they had been supported and treated respectfully throughout the process.

4.141 However, in survey comments personnel who had experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination frequently described situations where they had tried to raise issues with someone more senior and they felt they had not been taken seriously, and the matter was not followed up.

4.142 Some personnel felt that when they raised concerns about an incident of bullying, harassment, or discrimination it was dismissed as "just banter" or the behaviour was excused because the person responsible was under pressure at the time.

4.143 Some felt that, although the behaviour might have been acknowledged as problematic, they were still encouraged to drop the matter because of the effort it would take to deal with it or because it would be disruptive to the team's work.

4.144 Other personnel felt that there was no follow-up because the complaint was about a person more senior.

4.145 We heard of some instances where personnel had received a good response from their immediate supervisor when they raised the issue, but it had stalled when it was escalated. In a few cases the complainant was told that this was because the person the matter had been escalated to was friends with the person responsible for the behaviour.

How satisfied were personnel with the response to reports of harmful behaviour?

There were low levels of satisfaction with how personnel in authority responded to all forms of harmful behaviour

4.146 Results from our survey and interviews showed that personnel were often dissatisfied with how those in authority responded to reports of harmful behaviour.

4.147 For unwanted sexual activity, the number of respondents to this question was small because only a small number of personnel reported the incident to someone in authority. Responses varied. Slightly more personnel reported being dissatisfied than satisfied.

4.148 We also asked respondents who had reported experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour how satisfied they were with the response (see Figure 26).

Figure 26
Satisfaction with response from a person in authority after reporting inappropriate sexual behaviour

	All
Very satisfied	17.1%
Somewhat satisfied	22.0%
Neutral – neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	19.5%
Somewhat dissatisfied	15.9%
Very dissatisfied	29.3%
Total respondents	**82**

Note: Percentages for men and women are not given because the number in some of the response categories is fewer than five. Respondents were expected to select only one response to this question. Percentages will not add up to 100% because three respondents selected more than one response.

4.149 Of all respondents who had reported inappropriate sexual behaviour, 39.1% indicated that they were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the response from the person in authority. Almost half of respondents (45.2%) indicated that they had been very dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied with the response.

4.150 We also asked respondents how satisfied they were with the actions those in authority had taken after reporting an incident of bullying, harassment, and discrimination (see Figure 27).

Figure 27
Satisfaction with response from a person in authority after reporting bullying, harassment, and discrimination

	All	Women	Men
Very satisfied	7.0%	8.9%	5.8%
Somewhat satisfied	17.3%	18.5%	16.2%
Neutral – neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	18.2%	19.2%	17.5%
Somewhat dissatisfied	23.6%	24.0%	22.7%
Very dissatisfied	33.9%	29.5%	37.7%
Total respondents	**313**	**146**	**154**

Note: Totals for women and men will not add up to total respondents because some respondents identified as another gender or did not specify gender. Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

4.151 Most survey respondents said that they were not satisfied with the response. In our survey:

- over half (57.5%) of respondents were very dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied with the actions taken; and
- men (60.4%) were slightly less satisfied with the response from authority than women (53.5%).

4.152 These findings echo what personnel said in our interviews.

Personnel were more satisfied when the behaviour was dealt with in the way that felt right for them

4.153 In our interviews, we were told that when a person had reported an incident of harmful behaviour, they were more satisfied when it had been managed in a way they felt comfortable with and when they had some say over the process.

4.154 Personnel often wanted issues resolved informally, especially incidents of inappropriate sexual behaviour. There were various reasons for this. Formal investigations and complaints were seen as arduous and time consuming, and personnel worried about negative repercussions from raising a formal complaint (see paragraphs 4.175-4.178).

4.155 We heard from personnel who appreciated it when those in authority dealt with harmful behaviour informally, particularly if they had requested this. An example of dealing with a complaint informally could involve a 1-up speaking to the person responsible for making inappropriate comments.

4.156 We also heard about leaders holding mediations or dealing with behaviours in other informal ways. Informal methods may sometimes be appropriate; however,

it is important that leaders ensure that the behaviour is addressed with an appropriate level of seriousness. Leaders also need to ensure they have the right skills, or can access support, to manage difficult conversations. We heard that this is not always the case.

4.157 We heard from several personnel who were frustrated because incidents of harmful behaviour they had reported were resolved informally even though they had requested a formal investigation. They told us this made them feel less safe.

4.158 Personnel can choose to make a restricted or unrestricted disclosure when reporting behaviours that are offences under the Armed Forces Discipline Act. We heard from one person who had made a restricted disclosure. They told us they had appreciated the opportunity to access support without having to make a formal complaint. They had chosen the restricted reporting pathway because they feared repercussions.

4.159 Uniformed personnel we spoke to did not always understand that if they disclose experiencing or witnessing behaviour that is an offence under the Armed Forces Discipline Act (such as an indecent assault) to another uniformed person, that person has an obligation to report the behaviour to the accused's commanding officer. We heard of several occasions where personnel had disclosed this information without understanding what would happen. It is important that these processes are clear to all personnel so that they understand, and are prepared for, what will happen next. Otherwise, it can result in further harm for them.

Personnel were less satisfied when they did not see a change in behaviour

4.160 When personnel raised concerns or reported harmful behaviour, they were most satisfied when they saw a behaviour change from the person causing harm. In our interviews and survey comments, personnel gave us examples of changes in behaviour they had observed. These most often related to cases of inappropriate sexual behaviour. In some instances, all that was needed was for the person causing harm to be spoken to, and their behaviour changed.

4.161 We heard of several ways that harmful behaviour was dealt with, including:

- Someone spoke to the person.
- The person was charged.
- The person received some form of mentoring or behaviour coaching.
- The behaviour was noted in the person's PDR.
- There was a formal investigation through the complaints process.

4.162 However, harmful behaviour did not always stop after one intervention. When harmful behaviour persisted after these responses, personnel became frustrated that those in authority did not take further action. We were told of only one instance where multiple escalating interventions were made, which did eventually lead to the person causing harm to change their behaviour.

4.163 We were told of some situations where a person engaging in harmful behaviour was moved to a different part of the organisation or promoted. Situations like this were also mentioned in survey comments.

4.164 We heard from those in leadership positions that addressing harmful behaviours could be challenging. They told us they were aware that personnel sometimes felt that nothing was being done. However, because of the need to protect privacy, leaders could not always share what was happening.

4.165 Finding ways to be more transparent about how issues are dealt with in general, while not referring to specific incidents, could help. Several personnel we interviewed told us that actions like publishing the outcomes of summary trials about harmful behaviour help to demonstrate that actions against harmful behaviour were being taken.

Those who went through formal processes generally described unsatisfactory experiences

4.166 Only a small number of personnel we interviewed made complaints that went through the complaints or disciplinary systems. However, we did get numerous survey comments about experiences with these processes. Personnel who had been through a formal process often found it stressful and confusing.

4.167 Most personnel we spoke to who made a complaint of bullying through the military or civilian complaints systems, had negative experiences. This was echoed in the survey comments we received. Experiences described included:

- very lengthy processes;
- not feeling informed about what to expect;
- not being kept informed throughout the process;
- not being properly informed when decisions were made and, in a few instances, never receiving information about the final outcome; and
- not feeling supported during the process or not being protected from negative repercussions.

4.168 The few personnel we spoke to who had gone through, or were preparing to go through, the summary trial system or court martial process also talked

about negative experiences they had. They had experienced many of the issues described in paragraph 4.178, as well as:

- not being kept properly up to date on how they would be protected from the person responsible;
- being worried about negative repercussions if they had to testify; and
- feeling as if they were being put on trial.

4.169 We heard that access to SAPRAs, social workers, Anti-Harassment Advisors, external parties, and a compassionate and supportive command team helped reduce the negative impact of going through the formal complaints and disciplinary processes.

Personnel wanted clear information about the expected consequences for different behaviours

4.170 In our interviews, personnel who had reported harmful behaviour sometimes told us that they were frustrated with the outcome of their complaint. Some felt that the punishment did not match the seriousness of the behaviour. Conversely, some told us that they were frustrated by the outcome because the response had been too severe for the harm caused. Some felt that there was little consistency in how behaviours were treated.

4.171 Personnel affected by harmful behaviour do not all want the same outcome. A response that considers their views on how the behaviour should be dealt with can help ensure they have a sense of control over the process and are satisfied with the outcome. This must be balanced with ensuring there is consistency with how similar behaviours are dealt with and that there is a fair process for the accused.

4.172 We observed that personnel were not always clear about what to expect during the disciplinary and complaints processes or what the potential consequences were (for example, what kind of offence would lead to a fine or what an acceptable consequence was for someone who had repeatedly made sexualised comments). Not knowing what to expect sometimes made personnel reluctant to speak up.

4.173 It was evident from our interviews that it is more difficult for personnel to judge whether their case has been dealt with fairly if they do not have clear information about the expected consequences for different behaviours.

Only a small proportion of personnel who reported harmful behaviour experienced negative repercussions

4.174 Most (91.5%) personnel who reported experiencing unwanted sexual activity said that no-one in authority had done or threatened to do things that negatively affected, or could negatively affect, their position or career.

4.175 The very small number of personnel who reported repercussions gave examples such as being reassigned to duties that did not match their current grade, being transferred to a different unit, or being rated lower than they felt they deserved on a performance evaluation.

4.176 Similarly, most personnel we interviewed who had raised or reported instances of bullying, harassment, and discrimination did not experience negative repercussions. However, our interviews and survey comments highlighted some instances where they did.

4.177 These situations mostly arose after personnel had raised or reported instances of bullying. Examples we were provided included being treated worse by the senior person they had raised a complaint about, being accused of insubordination, being reprimanded, and being accused of being unfit for service.

4.178 Several women spoke about situations where they felt personnel had not been properly protected after sexual harm was reported. They told us about situations where the person accused of causing harm and the person who reported experiencing it continued to work together while the investigation was ongoing. Some told us they had witnessed instances where women were blamed for their assault.

4.179 Although these examples were not common, it was clear to us from those we spoke to that where personnel who raise issues do experience negative repercussions, those repercussions are often visible to or heard about by others. This has a wider impact on how safe people feel reporting issues.

Impact area 4: NZDF personnel trust that peers will respond to harmful behaviour appropriately

4.180 Responsibility for speaking up about harmful behaviour should not only fall on those that the behaviour affects directly. Creating an environment where peers can intervene safely and appropriately when they witness harmful behaviour helps build a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

4.181 In this impact area, we discuss how personnel responded when they witnessed harmful behaviour and how much personnel trusted their peers to act when harmful behaviour occurred.

Main findings for impact area 4

4.182 Our survey results found that most (81.7%) respondents trusted their peers to call out inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour when they saw it.

4.183 However, junior uniformed women had less trust in their peers to call out harmful behaviour. Those most affected by harmful behaviour were still burdened with the responsibility of speaking up.

4.184 Personnel commonly acted when they witnessed harmful behaviour. In our survey:

- three-quarters (74.1%) of survey respondents had acted in at least some situations where they had witnessed inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour; and
- more than two-thirds (71.9%) of survey respondents had acted in at least some situations where they had witnessed bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

4.185 However, a fear of negative repercussions (such as being excluded by peers) and lack of trust that anything will be done prevented some bystanders from intervening in incidents of harmful behaviour in the same way it prevented those who experienced it from reporting it.

4.186 Personnel felt safer to act when there were clear behavioural expectations, and they were supported to develop the skills to intervene.

Detailed findings for impact area 4

Harmful sexual behaviour

Women had less trust than men that their peers would call out inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour

4.187 We asked survey respondents how much they trusted their peers to call out inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour when they saw it (see Figure 28).

Figure 28
Perception of trust that peers would call out inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour

Statement	Sentiment	All	Women	Men
I trust my peers to call out inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour when they see it	Strongly agree	40.1%	33.6%	42.7%
	Agree	41.6%	40.8%	42.2%
	Neutral	12.6%	15.6%	11.0%
	Disagree	4.6%	7.9%	3.4%
	Strongly disagree	1.2%	2.2%	0.8%
	Total respondents	**6057**	**1617**	**4320**

Note: Totals of women and men respondents will not add up to total respondents because some survey respondents did not specify gender and some respondents identified as another gender. Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

4.188 Most respondents (81.7%) said that they trusted their peers to call out inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour when they witnessed it. However, these rates were lower for women, especially junior women officers:

- 74.4% of women said that they trusted their peers to call out inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour if they witnessed it; and
- 65.1% of junior women officers said that they trusted their peers to call out inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour if they witnessed it.

4.189 In our interviews, personnel expressed varying levels of trust in their peers to intervene when they saw harmful behaviour.

4.190 Men, more than women, said that they trusted their peers to intervene. For some, this view came from having seen someone intervene or having intervened in an incident themselves. We were told of examples where personnel called others out by saying that their behaviour was not consistent with Operation Respect. More commonly, we were told that although they had not seen it happen, they trusted that it would, based on what they knew about their unit and peers.

4.191 Women we interviewed expressed a range of views. Some said that they did trust their peers to intervene and gave examples of when that had happened.

4.192 These included situations where peers had challenged those who told women they only got into NZDF because of quotas, calling out inappropriate behaviour in the bars, standing up for women when they had experienced sexual harm, and supporting them to report it.

4.193 When these interventions occurred, women appreciated this support. It increased their overall level of trust in their peers and their sense of safety and inclusion in their unit.

4.194 However, this was not the experience for everyone we interviewed. Several women told us it was common for peers (particularly men) to ignore harmful behaviour when it occurred. They felt that it was generally left to them, or other women, to raise concerns. A few of these women talked explicitly about how they wished that their male peers would call out harmful behaviour and "have their back".

Most bystanders took action when witnessing inappropriate sexual behaviour

4.195 We asked survey respondents whether they had taken any action after witnessing inappropriate sexual behaviour (see Figure 29).

Figure 29
Those who took informal or formal action after witnessing inappropriate sexual behaviour

	Yes	No	In some instances, yes; in other instances, no	Total respondents
All	30.9%	25.9%	43.2%	679
Navy	31.5%	22.0%	46.5%	127
Army	37.0%	23.6%	39.4%	208
Air Force	24.7%	26.0%	49.3%	219
Civilian	31.2%	33.6%	35.2%	125

Note: Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

4.196 Most respondents (74.1%) who had witnessed inappropriate sexual behaviour reported taking action at least some of the time. Our survey results found that civilian personnel who had witnessed inappropriate sexual behaviour were less likely to report taking action at least some of the time compared to those in the services.

Fear of negative consequences and lack of trust that anything would happen prevented some bystanders from intervening when they witnessed inappropriate sexual behaviour

4.197 We asked survey respondents who indicated that they had witnessed but not responded to incidents of inappropriate sexual behaviour why they did not take action (see Figure 30).

Figure 30
Reasons those who witnessed inappropriate sexual behaviour did not act

Reason	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
No action was needed, or I didn't think it was serious enough	40.3%	40.2%	44.2%	42.4%	30.2%
Someone else had taken some form of action	34.9%	37.9%	34.1%	32.1%	38.4%
I didn't trust anything would happen if I reported it	28.5%	29.9%	30.2%	25.5%	30.2%

Reason	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
I was afraid of negative consequences for those targeted by the behaviour or for myself (such as personal harm, retaliation or revenge, career implications, being labelled)	22.5%	21.8%	14.7%	28.5%	23.3%
Those responsible were a higher rank than me	16.1%	17.2%	17.1%	17.0%	11.6%
I didn't know what to do	5.6%	-	-	7.9%	9.3%
Other reason	15.8%	16.1%	16.3%	12.1%	22.1%
Total respondents	**467**	**87**	**129**	**165**	**86**

Note: Respondents could indicate more than one reason so percentages will not add up to 100%. If the number of responses is fewer than five, the percentage is not calculated and the breakdown is not provided.

4.198 The most common reason given for not responding after witnessing inappropriate sexual behaviour was that respondents did not feel that any action was needed, or they did not think it was serious enough to warrant action (40.3%). This was followed by a third (34.9%) reporting that they did not act because someone else had taken some form of action.

4.199 More than a quarter (28.5%) said that they had not taken action because they did not trust that anything would happen. Just under one quarter (22.5%) were afraid of negative consequences for those affected by the behaviour or for themselves.

4.200 In our interviews, some personnel talked about the fear of being excluded if they acted. A few interviewees who had not intervened after witnessing harmful behaviour said that they knew it would have been the right thing to do. However, they felt they would be looked down on if they did.

Bullying, harassment, and discrimination

Most respondents who witnessed bullying, harassment, and discrimination took some action

4.201 We asked survey respondents who indicated that they had witnessed bullying, harassment, and discrimination whether they had taken any formal or informal action (see Figure 31).

Figure 31
Those who took informal or formal action after witnessing bullying, harassment, and discrimination

	Yes	No	In some instances, yes; in other instances, no	Total respondents
All	31.4%	28.1%	40.5%	948
Navy	35.1%	27.7%	37.2%	191
Army	32.0%	24.4%	43.6%	266
Air Force	27.2%	33.5%	39.3%	239
Civilian	32.1%	26.5%	41.4%	249

Note: Totals for services and for civilians will not add up to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service or whether they are a civilian.

4.202 Most respondents who had witnessed bullying, harassment, and discrimination reported that they acted in at least some instances (71.9%). Just over a quarter (28.1%) of respondents said that they did not take any action.

There were a variety of reasons why personnel did not intervene when they witnessed bullying, harassment, and discrimination

4.203 We asked survey respondents why they had not taken any action after witnessing an incident of bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the last 12 months (see Figure 32).

Figure 32
Reasons those who witnessed bullying, harassment, and discrimination did not act

Reason	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
Someone else had taken some form of action	32.3%	32.0%	30.5%	31.6%	35.5%
No action was needed, or I didn't think it was serious enough	32.3%	30.3%	35.6%	43.9%	18.7%
I was afraid of negative consequences for those targeted by the behaviour or for myself (such as personal harm, retaliation or revenge, career implications, being labelled)	29.8%	33.6%	29.4%	26.9%	30.7%
Those responsible were a higher rank than me	24.2%	25.4%	27.7%	25.1%	18.7%

Reason	All	Navy	Army	Air Force	Civilian
I didn't know what to do	8.3%	7.4%	6.2%	9.9%	9.6%
I didn't trust anything would happen if I reported it	31.4%	28.7%	26.0%	29.2%	41.0%
Other reason	12.4%	13.9%	13.0%	8.8%	14.5%
Total respondents	**637**	**122**	**177**	**171**	**166**

Note: Respondents could select more than one reason, so percentages will not add to 100%. Totals for services and for civilians will not add up to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service or whether they are a civilian.

4.204 No one reason stood out to explain why people did not respond after witnessing bullying, harassment and discrimination. The same types of reasons were also provided in the survey comments and were reflected in our interviews.

4.205 Some personnel told us that fear of becoming the target of bullying was a barrier. This concern was included in survey comments, along with a fear of not being believed or having credibility questioned. Some comments indicated respondents had seen this type of thing happen in the past.

4.206 In survey comments, some personnel highlighted that they did not think anything would be done because they had seen these types of issues ignored in the past, especially when the person responsible for the behaviour was more senior.

4.207 Several personnel told us that they were unsure whether to intervene because they did not know whether what they witnessed was harmful or just banter (see paragraph 2.211). They found it particularly difficult to clearly identify exclusionary behaviour.

4.208 Some personnel told us that even when they did see harmful behaviour, they did not know what the right thing to do was. They told us specific training and guidance in how to intervene and what to say would be helpful.

Impact area 5: NZDF personnel trust that leaders will respond to harmful behaviour appropriately

4.209 Leaders play a key role in both resolving issues informally and initiating investigations through the disciplinary and complaints systems.

4.210 To create an environment where incidents of harmful behaviour can be identified, raised, and addressed, personnel need to trust that their leaders will respond to harmful behaviour appropriately.

4.211 In this impact area, we look at the experiences that personnel have in reporting harmful behaviour to leaders, and how much they trust their leaders to respond appropriately.

Main finding for impact area 5

4.212 NZDF personnel generally trusted that leaders – especially their 1-ups and 2-ups – would respond to harmful behaviour appropriately. Most (84.3%) survey respondents trusted their immediate supervisors to deal with harmful sexual behaviour effectively.

4.213 However, some personnel who had experienced harmful behaviour felt that those in authority did not always understand what harmful behaviour was or act on it appropriately. This affected their trust in leaders.

4.214 Perceptions about the skills that leaders have affected how much personnel trusted them. Personnel reported less trust in leaders who they felt lacked empathy, did not have the right skills to respond, or would not be able to influence behaviour.

4.215 Personnel felt that leaders needed to actively create a work environment where they could easily and safely report information about harmful behaviour. To achieve this, leaders needed to be accessible and open, demonstrate that they were trying to understand what personnel were experiencing, and create safe forums for issues to be raised. The extent that this was happening varied.

Detailed findings for impact area 5

Personnel often trusted their supervisors to deal with inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour effectively

4.216 We asked survey respondents to indicate how much they agreed that their supervisor would intervene in incidents of inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour (see Figure 33).

Figure 33
Perception of trust in supervisors to intervene in incidents of inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour

Statement	Sentiment	All	Women	Men
Would intervene if individuals were saying that someone who experienced harmful sexual behaviour was lying or was responsible for what happened to them	Strongly agree	57.2%	50.1%	60.1%
	Agree	31.9%	32.9%	31.8%
	Neutral	8.8%	12.6%	6.9%
	Disagree	1.5%	3.0%	0.9%
	Strongly disagree	0.6%	1.4%	0.3%
	Total respondents	**6073**	**1621**	**4331**
Would stop individuals who were making sexually suggestive jokes, discussing someone's appearance, or talking about people's sex life at work	Strongly agree	50.1%	44.7%	52.4%
	Agree	35.0%	35.6%	35.0%
	Neutral	10.8%	12.4%	9.8%
	Disagree	3.0%	5.2%	2.1%
	Strongly disagree	1.1%	2.1%	0.6%
	Total respondents	**6070**	**1620**	**4330**
Would intervene if an individual was the subject of unwanted sexual attention at work (such as staring at someone's chest, rubbing someone's shoulders)	Strongly agree	57.9%	49.5%	61.4%
	Agree	31.9%	33.5%	31.4%
	Neutral	8.2%	13.0%	6.0%
	Disagree	1.4%	2.8%	0.9%
	Strongly disagree	0.6%	1.2%	0.3%
	Total respondents	**6071**	**1619**	**4331**
I trust my chain of command to effectively deal with inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour	Strongly agree	53.4%	46.1%	56.3%
	Agree	30.9%	33.7%	30.2%
	Neutral	9.8%	12.1%	8.7%
	Disagree	4.0%	6.0%	3.2%
	Strongly disagree	1.8%	2.1%	1.6%
	Total respondents	**6069**	**1621**	**4327**

Note: Totals of women and men respondents will not add up to total respondents because some survey respondents did not specify gender and some respondents identified as another gender. Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

4.217 Most respondents said that they trusted their chain of command to effectively deal with different incidents of harmful behaviour. In our survey:

- for all questions, more than 85% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their supervisor would intervene;
- the percentage of women who strongly agreed or agreed was slightly lower, but in all questions more than 80% of women reported that they felt that their supervisor would intervene; and
- junior uniformed women were less likely to strongly agree or agree with all these statements compared to women overall.

4.218 In our interviews, men more commonly expressed trust in leaders to respond appropriately. Women's views were more mixed.

Personnel's level of trust was directly influenced by their past experiences of raising issues

4.219 In our interviews we heard that those who had higher trust in leaders often had positive experiences when raising issues with them (often their 1-ups and 2-ups).

4.220 In these instances, leaders took the behaviour seriously and responded with empathy, including when a formal disciplinary or complaints processes had been initiated. We were told that this helped to lessen the stress of this process.

4.221 Conversely, trust was often lower when senior personnel had engaged in the harmful behaviour, or it was felt that those in authority had not dealt with behaviour appropriately when it was reported. Personnel told us that when leaders did not keep information confidential, failed to call out inappropriate behaviour they witnessed, did not take incidents raised with them seriously, or did not follow the proper process (that is, start an investigation) it eroded their trust.

4.222 Personnel we interviewed often recognised the difficult position that their 1-ups and 2-ups were in when someone more senior (such as a warrant officer or commanding officer) was bullying or harassing. They realised that when they raised an issue about senior personnel with their immediate supervisors it was sometimes difficult for their supervisors to influence the situation.

4.223 However, personnel generally appreciated it when their supervisors took their complaint seriously and tried to address it. Even if their complaint did not result in the desired outcome, personnel thought more positively of leaders who had taken some action.

Leaders who prioritised outputs over personnel were trusted less

4.224 Personnel told us that they trusted leaders more when they felt that their welfare was being taken seriously. We heard about leaders who made sure that personnel knew what support was available and were always available if they needed to talk. People told us this made them feel that they could approach leaders to discuss harmful behaviour.

4.225 Conversely, some personnel talked about leaders who appeared too busy to deal with instances of harmful behaviour. Several talked about having less trust in leaders who more visibly prioritise outputs over the welfare of personnel. Some personnel told us this sent a message that dealing with harmful behaviour is not a priority.

Personnel trusted leaders who had a more open and accessible style of leadership and whom they felt had the skills to respond appropriately

4.226 Many personnel we interviewed had not experienced harmful behaviour – their perceptions of trust were influenced by how they saw leaders behave generally.

4.227 Some personnel trusted that their leaders would respond appropriately because they were accessible and empathetic.

4.228 Other personnel said that if something happened to them they would not go to their 1-up or 2-up but to the person they trust most in their unit who they felt was more accessible and empathetic.

4.229 There were specific skills that personnel felt leaders needed to respond properly to harmful behaviour. They needed to be able to have difficult conversations about harmful behaviour (including sexual harm) and to be able to talk to both the person experiencing the harm and the person responsible.

Leaders needed to understand what behaviours were occurring in their work area

4.230 Building trust in leadership requires more than encouraging personnel to report incidents. Leaders need to make a dedicated effort to put in place ways to understand what personnel are experiencing. This helps to avoid situations where the burden of raising or reporting harmful behaviour falls only on the person affected by it.

4.231 We heard about some situations where leaders attempted to find out what behaviours were occurring by, for example, setting up forums where personnel could speak to leaders and have above the line/below the line discussions. These were seen as beneficial and helped identify issues early.

4.232 It is important that these types of forums are safe spaces for personnel to raise concerns. Women-only forums or more private and anonymous ways to give ideas or feedback were also seen as useful.

5 Access to appropriate support

5.1 NZDF personnel who have experienced harmful behaviour need to be provided with the right support. Support can come in a variety of forms, including:

- access to internal or external support services (such as counselling);
- support from leaders (such as time off work for appointments); and
- informal support from colleagues.

5.2 There is no one-size-fits-all approach to providing support. Each person will have distinct needs. NZDF should provide various methods of support to meet these needs. Support needs to be easily accessible and trusted.

5.3 This Part sets out the data we collected about experiences of personnel accessing support after experiencing harmful behaviour.

The outcome and impacts we expect to see over time

5.4 The outcome we are assessing in this Part is "NZDF personnel can access appropriate support they need to recover and those in the organisation providing support have the capability and the capacity to do so".

5.5 We identified three impacts that we expect to see if NZDF is likely to achieve this outcome:

- NZDF personnel feel able to access support services.
- NZDF personnel who have experienced harmful behaviour receive the right support in the right way to recover.
- Leaders and specialist support staff have the capacity and capability to support personnel affected by harmful behaviour.

Our assessment of progress

5.6 Our overall assessment is that NZDF has a good range of support options available, particularly for those who experience harmful sexual behaviour.

5.7 When personnel access support they often see it as effective, especially in instances of harmful sexual behaviour. SAPRAs provide personnel with support through the summary trial or court martial process and ensure that they have access to other support as needed.

5.8 However, it is less clear what the support pathways are for personnel who have experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination and whether their needs are met.

5.9 Although a range of support options is available, personnel do not always access support when they need it. There might be several reasons for this.

5.10 When support services are more visible, personnel feel they are more accessible and trusted. However, some feel that the high workload of some SAPRAs and social workers on camps and bases makes accessing this support more difficult.

5.11 Personnel do not always want to report what they have experienced to their chain of command. There are a range of alternative and confidential options personnel can access, including outside NZDF. However, not all personnel understand the full range of options available.

5.12 Personnel who have seen leaders not take confidentiality seriously are less likely to trust the support available. They can also feel ongoing stigma about seeking support and fear that accessing it will have negative effects on their career.

5.13 Summary trial and court martial processes are difficult for personnel who have experienced harmful behaviour. Access to specialist support services and being well-supported by command help lessen the stress.

5.14 Leaders need more guidance in some areas to provide adequate support. We heard that not all leaders are currently equipped to do so.

5.15 Our assessment of this outcome is based on findings from the three impacts described in paragraph 5.5.

Impact area 1: NZDF personnel feel able to access support services

5.16 It is important that NZDF personnel feel able to access different types of support. In this impact area, we looked at whether they understood what support was available and whether they felt that they could access this support easily.

Main findings for impact area 1

5.17 There was a high level of awareness of the main support services available. However, personnel did not always understand the specifics of the options available, including how to access confidential support.

5.18 Although personnel often indicated they were aware that support services were available, they did not always access them. For example, only 24% of survey respondents who had reported experiencing unwanted sexual activity also said they accessed SAPRA support.

5.19 There were several barriers to accessing support, including limited visibility of specialist support staff at some sites and concerns about confidentially.

Detailed findings for impact area 1

Personnel knew about most of the support that was available

5.20 Results from our survey and interviews indicated that most personnel were aware of the main support avenues they could use if they experienced harmful behaviour. Many respondents to our survey were aware of SAPRAs (see paragraph 4.29) and social workers (see paragraph 4.44).

5.21 Many personnel we interviewed told us that they were confident about accessing support if they needed it. When prompted, most personnel were able to list the relevant support services at NZDF. This included SAPRAs, social workers, chaplains, military psychologists, external psychologists, counsellors (including the Employee Assistance Programme), Anti-Harassment Advisors, and command.

5.22 They also told us about informal support arrangements from friends and senior women who provide informal support to younger personnel.

5.23 Although personnel often had a broad understanding of what support services were available, they were not always aware of what these services specifically provided. They were not always aware, for example, of the availability of external counselling or the full range of support SAPRAs provide, including to personnel who have experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour. As we mentioned in paragraphs 4.40-4.42, some personnel were also not aware that SAPRAs can provide confidential support.

Although most personnel knew what support was available, not all of those who had experienced harmful behaviour accessed these services

5.24 We asked respondents who reported experiencing unwanted sexual activity whether they had accessed SAPRA support (see Figure 34). The survey results showed that most personnel who experienced unwanted sexual activity did not seek support from SAPRAs.

Figure 34
Those who accessed support from SAPRAs after experiencing unwanted sexual activity in the last 12 months

Response	Percentage
No	76.0%
Yes	24.0%
Total respondents	**50**

5.25 Of the 50 survey respondents who answered this question, 76.0% did not seek support from SAPRAs. There was no material difference by gender.

5.26 We asked those who had experienced inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months whether they had sought support (see Figure 35).

Figure 35
Those who accessed support after experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months

Response	All	Women	Men
No support was needed	55.9%	47.1%	76.3%
Yes	25.5%	32.6%	8.5%
No	18.6%	20.3%	15.3%
Total respondents	**204**	**138**	**59**

Note: Totals of women and men respondents will not add up to total respondents because some survey respondents did not specify gender and some respondents identified as another gender. Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

5.27 Nearly three-quarters (74.5%) of survey respondents who reported experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour did not seek support. Of those who did not seek support, most felt that they did not need any support.

5.28 There was some variation by gender. Men (76.3%) were more likely to report that no support was needed than women (47.1%). Men (8.5%) were also less likely to seek support than women (32.6%).

5.29 Although most respondents to our survey and personnel we interviewed knew what specialist support services were available, they also highlighted barriers to accessing them.

Some personnel thought that support services were not visible or were very busy

5.30 One of the main barriers to accessing support we heard about was the visibility and availability of SAPRAs and, to a lesser extent, social workers.

5.31 Several personnel told us that SAPRAs and social workers at some sites appeared very busy and this was a disincentive to engage with them. Some also said that specialist support services were harder to access in certain environments, such as when personnel were deployed, especially on ships.

There was stigma about accessing support in some places

5.32 We were told that there was a culture that encouraged personnel to access support at many locations.

5.33 However, we were also told that there was still a stigma associated with accessing support services on some camps and bases. Some personnel perceived that

accessing support could lead to them being labelled as not resilient, which could affect their career progression. In some instances, personnel were concerned that seeking mental health support would cause them to be medically downgraded, which could have implications for their career.

Concerns about confidentiality were a barrier for some personnel

5.34 As we outlined in Part 4, concerns about confidentiality can be a barrier to reporting experiences of harmful behaviour. These concerns affected the level of trust people had in accessing support services.

5.35 Some personnel we spoke with made general comments about how NZDF was not good at dealing with confidentiality. This affected how likely they were to seek support.

5.36 Some personnel preferred going to uniformed specialist support staff when they experienced harmful behaviour. However, others told us that they preferred to talk to civilian personnel or people outside the organisation because they felt that their confidentiality would not be maintained if they spoke to uniformed personnel.

5.37 A small number of uniformed personnel told us that when they had spoken with command about harmful behaviour they had experienced it had been passed on to other uniformed personnel. They had not expected this to happen.

5.38 As discussed in paragraph 4.159, the Armed Forces Discipline Act requires that when behaviours that might be offences under the Act are disclosed to someone in uniform they must be reported to the accused's chain of command. This is what appears to have happened in the cases we heard about. It was evident that personnel were not always aware of this and could be surprised when it happened.

5.39 Other personnel who had raised experiences of harmful behaviour with their chain of command felt that more people found out about the issue than required. This had made them distrustful of seeking support in future.

5.40 Several personnel also talked about seeing command share private information about personnel – such as medical information – with others. As a result, they did not trust that command would treat information they provided about harmful behaviour appropriately.

5.41 Several personnel were not sure about the confidentiality that specialist support staff provide. SAPRAs and social workers are obliged to keep information that personnel provide about harmful behaviour confidential unless otherwise agreed. Personnel can access this support without having to formally report harmful

behaviour, which would involve the chain of command. However, not all personnel we talked to fully understood this.

5.42 Most personnel we interviewed or surveyed were positive about the level of confidentiality that they had received when getting support from SAPRAs and social workers. When there were concerns expressed, this did not appear to be based on a specific experience with SAPRAs or social workers. Instead, it was because they did not trust how NZDF treated personal information more generally.

Impact area 2: NZDF personnel who have experienced harmful behaviour receive the right support in the right way to recover

5.43 In this impact area, we discuss the experiences of personnel who received support after experiencing harmful behaviour and whether it met their needs.

Main findings for impact area 2

5.44 When personnel accessed specialist support services, they were generally satisfied with the support they received. For example, 86.6% of those who had received support for inappropriate sexual behaviour were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with that support. However, those who had experienced bullying, harassment, or discrimination might need access to more support.

5.45 Personnel who had experienced harmful behaviour were also affected by how well leaders provided support. Personnel felt more supported when leaders took their concerns seriously, responded with empathy, linked them with support services, and kept them informed. Experiences were mixed.

Detailed findings for impact area 2

Personnel appreciated being able to get a wide range of support, including from external parties

5.46 NZDF personnel had different preferences for the type of support they wanted to access when they had experienced harmful behaviour. Some preferred to access support through military personnel, some through civilian support roles, and others through services external to NZDF.

5.47 Most personnel we interviewed who had accessed support had positive feedback about their experience. We heard positive comments about being able to access support provided by SAPRAs, social workers, chaplains, military psychologists, external psychologists, and external counsellors.

5.48 Having access to external support was important for some. Those who accessed it told us that their experiences with external counsellors and psychologists had been positive. Personnel said that they appreciated having support from someone outside NZDF because they felt it was more confidential and there was no risk that it could affect their career.

Personnel who had received support for harmful sexual behaviour were often satisfied with this support

5.49 We asked survey respondents who indicated that they had received support after incidents of inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months how satisfied they were with the support (see Figure 36).

Figure 36
Satisfaction with support received after experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviour in the last 12 months

Response	Percentage
Very satisfied	46.2%
Somewhat satisfied	40.4%
Neutral or somewhat dissatisfied	13.4%
Total respondents	**52**

5.50 The level of satisfaction for survey respondents who had received support was high – 86.6% of respondents were very or somewhat satisfied with that support. Because the number of respondents for this question was small, we do not provide any further breakdown by category (such as gender or service).

5.51 The levels of satisfaction for those who had received support for unwanted sexual activity were more mixed. In our survey, we asked personnel who had experienced unwanted sexual activity whether they were provided with the support they needed.

5.52 About half of the respondents said that they did not get the support they needed. Because the number of respondents for this question was small (32), we do not provide any further breakdown by category (such as gender or service).

5.53 It was not clear whether those who indicated they did not receive the support they needed could not access the right type of support or whether they were dissatisfied with the support they received. Several personnel commented in the survey that they had not reported the harmful behaviour that they had experienced to anyone (so it was unlikely that they accessed support).

5.54 We interviewed a small number of personnel who told us they had experienced unwanted sexual activity. Most of those we spoke with who accessed support services told us that they were happy with the support they had received.

5.55 We talked to a small number of personnel who had got support from SAPRAs, and they were positive about the quality of support they had received from them. This included being kept informed and supported during the formal disciplinary process. Being kept informed was important for personnel. We were told that not knowing what to expect from the summary trial or court martial process could cause considerable stress.

Personnel who had experienced bullying or who had harmed others did not always have adequate support

5.56 Personnel who experience bullying can also access many kinds of support services, such as Anti-Harassment Advisors, social workers, and psychologists. Personnel who accessed support from social workers and psychologists often described it as helpful in managing the effects that harmful behaviour had.

5.57 However, some personnel felt that the process for getting support after experiencing bullying was not as clear as it was for personnel who needed support after experiencing sexual harm.

5.58 Some personnel who had gone through formal complaints processes for bullying told us in our interviews and survey comments that they felt that they had not been adequately supported. For example, they did not think that they had been given adequate guidance about what they should expect from the process, or they felt that they had not been given support to help them manage the negative effects of going through this process.

5.59 Many personnel also told us they felt there were gaps in the support system for those accused of engaging in harmful behaviour. In some locations, social workers took on this role.

Personnel affected by harmful behaviour appreciated support from leaders but did not always get it

5.60 Commanders play an important role in supporting personnel affected by harmful behaviour. When they know about it, they can refer the person to the right support service. Commanders can also ensure that personnel are supported in

their work environment by, for example, making sure they have time off to attend any necessary appointments.

5.61 We asked survey respondents who said that they had experienced unwanted sexual activity about the support they had received from their military chain of command or civilian supervisor. We asked whether their supervisor:

- made them feel supported;
- provided flexibility to take time off as needed;
- ensured that they had access to appropriate support; and
- kept details confidential and discouraged gossip in their work environment.

5.62 Only a small number of respondents (20) answered these questions. Therefore, we do not provide breakdowns between these categories for each question.

5.63 Most respondents indicated that they had received at least some support from their supervisors. Some told us they felt very supported. However, others felt they did not get the support they needed. This was consistent with what we heard in interviews.

5.64 Appropriate support was described to us as leaders responding without judgement, linking personnel with the right support services, and continuing to check in on them.

Impact area 3: Leaders and specialist support staff have the capacity and capability to support personnel affected by harmful behaviour

5.65 It is important that NZDF personnel have trained professionals who they can go to when they experience harmful behaviour. A SAPRA's core role is supporting personnel who have experienced harmful sexual behaviour. Other support staff, such as chaplains and social workers, also provide important services.

5.66 Leaders are responsible for the safety and well-being of personnel working for them. Leaders need to be equipped with the right knowledge and skills to carry out this role effectively.

5.67 In this impact area, we look at whether leaders and specialist support staff on camps and bases felt that they had the capacity and capability to support personnel affected by harmful behaviour.

5.68 We based our assessment primarily on interviews with specialist support staff and senior officers on camps and bases.

Main findings for impact area 3

5.69 In some areas, specialist support staff (including SAPRAs and social workers) said they need more capacity to adequately respond to harmful behaviour, support those personnel affected by it, and support leaders.

5.70 Leaders generally feel equipped to support personnel affected by harmful behaviour. However, there are areas where they need more guidance to properly support both those who report experiencing harmful behaviour and those accused of it.

Detailed findings for impact area 3

Specialist support staff were not as visible in some locations

5.71 It is important for specialist support staff to be visible to command and other personnel because it helps build awareness of their role and increases trust. We heard that this visibility is harder to achieve for specialist support staff working in large camps or bases, or across multiple camps and bases.

5.72 Limited visibility and the perception that specialist support staff are very busy affect whether personnel seek support services (see paragraphs 5.30-5.31).

5.73 Leaders struggled when specialist support staff had limited capacity. Some leaders also talked about SAPRAs lacking visibility and the difficulty of not having them on site. These comments were more frequent in situations where a SAPRA is required to work across multiple sites.

Command needed more guidance in some areas to properly support personnel affected by harmful behaviour

5.74 Most leaders said that they were clear on the process to follow when harmful behaviour occurred. Many leaders told us that they would go to a SAPRA if harmful sexual behaviour was reported to them. Some said that when harmful behaviour occurred they felt well supported by specialist support staff.

5.75 Despite this, some leaders felt that there were gaps in their knowledge. They were less confident overall when they felt that a SAPRA had less capacity to support them.

5.76 A specific challenge that some leaders talked about was how to manage the personnel involved in a case while it was going through the military justice system. They wanted to make sure that they reduced the risk of further harm by ensuring appropriate separation between the person who reported experiencing the harmful behaviour and the person accused of it.

5.77 We heard there are gaps in training and guidance for what to do in these and other related situations.

6 Shared understanding of a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment

6.1 A shared understanding of what constitutes harmful behaviour is critical to reducing it. NZDF personnel also need to have a shared understanding of the value of a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment, including how this environment enhances the ability of the organisation to achieve its aims.

6.2 This Part sets out the data we collected that describes what personnel understand harmful and inappropriate behaviour to be and how necessary and effective they think Operation Respect is.

The outcome and impacts we expect to see over time

6.3 The outcome we assess in this Part is "NZDF personnel have a shared understanding of the purpose and value of a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment".

6.4 We identified three impacts that we expect to see if NZDF is likely to achieve this outcome:

- NZDF personnel understand what is and is not appropriate behaviour.
- NZDF personnel have a shared understanding of what Operation Respect is and what it is intended to address.
- NZDF personnel believe that Operation Respect is an appropriate and effective initiative.

Our assessment of progress

6.5 Our overall assessment is that although there is a good understanding of what constitutes unwanted sexual activity, there is not yet a shared understanding of what constitutes inappropriate sexual behaviour or bullying, harassment, and discrimination. This means there is not a shared understanding of what a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment looks like and why it is important for NZDF's success.

6.6 Personnel generally see Operation Respect as an effective intervention. It is widely known as an initiative targeting harmful sexual behaviour, but less known as an initiative targeting bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

6.7 Operation Respect's high name recognition means that it has the potential to widely communicate that NZDF does not tolerate harmful behaviour.

6.8 However, Operation Respect had limited visible activity in the 12 months prior to the collection of our data. When leaders prioritise Operation Respect and implement activities designed to reduce harmful behaviour, it sends a message that harmful behaviour is not tolerated. However, this is not happening frequently enough, and Operation Respect is not yet embedded into day-to-day work. This undermines its effectiveness.

6.9 Our assessment of this outcome is based on findings from the three impact areas described in paragraph 6.4.

Impact area 1: NZDF personnel understand what is and is not appropriate behaviour

6.10 To work in safe, respectful, and inclusive environments, NZDF personnel need to have a shared understanding of what constitutes appropriate behaviour. Research in other organisations suggests that a shared understanding of harm provides an essential basis for change.[56]

6.11 This allows personnel to respond to harmful behaviour confident that they are on "shared ground". It also helps to mitigate under-reporting that can arise from a fear of not being taken seriously.[57]

6.12 In this impact area, we look at what personnel understand harmful behaviour to be and whether that understanding is shared throughout NZDF.

Main findings for impact area 1

6.13 There was a shared understanding of what constitutes unwanted sexual activity. However, there was not a shared understanding of what constitutes inappropriate sexual behaviour or bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

Detailed findings for impact area 1

Harmful sexual behaviour at the criminal end was understood

6.14 The personnel we interviewed had a shared understanding of what constituted harmful sexual behaviour at the criminal end, including rape and indecent assault.

6.15 However, in our interviews, a small number of personnel expressed victim-blaming attitudes. This included the view that those who had experienced unwanted sexual activity were in some way responsible for the incident through, for example, wearing what those personnel considered provocative clothes or drinking too much.

6.16 Although these views were not widespread, personnel in positions of authority sometimes expressed them. If leaders hold and express these views, it can reduce the likelihood that personnel will report unwanted sexual activity.

56 Firmin, C, Lloyd, J, and Walker, J (2019), "Beyond referrals: Levers for addressing harmful sexual behaviours between students at school in England", *International journal of qualitative studies in education* 32(10), pages 1229-1249.

57 Firmin, C, Lloyd, J, and Walker, J (2019), "Beyond referrals: Levers for addressing harmful sexual behaviours between students at school in England", *International journal of qualitative studies in education*, 32(10), pages 1229-1249.

There was not a shared understanding of what constitutes inappropriate sexual behaviour and the harm it causes

6.17 Personnel told us that the understanding of what constitutes appropriate behaviour in the workplace has shifted since NZDF introduced Operation Respect. However, there was not a shared understanding of what constitutes inappropriate sexual behaviour.

6.18 For example, some personnel still saw some forms of inappropriate sexual behaviour as harmless. In Part 2, we observed that personnel did not have a shared understanding of the harm caused by sexualised jokes and gossip.

6.19 Research has shown that unwanted sexual activity is more likely to occur in environments where inappropriate sexual behaviour is common.[58] Although NZDF made attempts to convey this message when it first introduced Operation Respect (see paragraphs 6.60-6.63), this relationship was still not well understood.

Bullying, harassment, and discrimination were also behaviours that were not well understood

6.20 There did not appear to be a shared understanding of what constituted bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

6.21 As with inappropriate sexual behaviour, personnel had different understandings of what was acceptable banter in a work environment and what crossed the line into behaviours that ridiculed and excluded (and could be considered bullying).

6.22 In Part 2, we discussed the lack of shared understanding about the difference between appropriate command and discipline behaviours and bullying from superiors.

6.23 Finally, there was not a good understanding of what constituted harassment on the basis of ethnicity, sexual orientation (see paragraphs 2.182-2.184), and gender. For example, we heard that in some units or teams, there were frequent comments about women not being good soldiers, sailors, or aviators, which were seen as acceptable.

6.24 Even when personnel did not describe these comments as harmful, it was evident that the comments created additional pressure to perform. The effect of these kinds of comments did not appear well understood in the organisation.

58 Breslin, RA, Klahr, A, Hylton, K, Petusky, M, and White, A (2020), *2019 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Reserve Component Members: Results and Trends*, Office of People Analytics Fors Marsh Group, LLC; Schell, TL, Cefalu, M, Farris, C, and Morral, A (2021), *The relationship between sexual assault and sexual harassment in the US Military: Findings from the RAND military workplace study*. RAND Corporation.

Impact area 2: NZDF personnel have a shared understanding of what Operation Respect is and what it is intended to address

6.25 Visibility of an organisation-wide initiative can be indicative of its priority in the organisation. The extent that personnel hear about and see activity related to Operation Respect in their workplace can affect whether they trust that NZDF takes their safety seriously.

6.26 In this impact area, we look at what personnel understood the purpose of Operation Respect to be and how visible it was to them.

Main findings for impact area 2

6.27 Operation Respect had a high level of name recognition throughout NZDF. It was well known as an initiative to address harmful sexual behaviour. However, it was less well known as an initiative to address other harmful behaviours, such as bullying.

6.28 In recent years, there had been visibility of Operation Respect. Almost two-thirds (64.3%) of personnel told us that Operation Respect had been visible to a great extent or some extent in their workplace in the last 12 months. However, we were told by some that it was seen as a compliance exercise and it was not yet embedded in everyday work.

Detailed findings for impact area 2

Most personnel said that there had been visibility of Operation Respect in the last year

6.29 Results from our survey and interviews showed that Operation Respect was visible to most personnel and that it had high name recognition throughout NZDF.

6.30 We asked survey respondents to identify how visible they thought Operation Respect had been in their workplaces in the last 12 months (see Figure 37).

Figure 37
Perception of visibility of Operation Respect in the last 12 months

		To a great extent	To some extent	To a small extent	To no extent	Total respondents
All	All	21.8%	42.5%	25.6%	10.1%	6062
	Women	16.7%	43.0%	29.2%	11.1%	1611
Navy	All	24.9%	42.8%	22.5%	9.8%	957
	Women	18.5%	44.0%	25.0%	12.5%	248
Army	All	24.7%	41.0%	23.0%	11.3%	1928
	Women	13.9%	43.2%	31.0%	11.9%	294
Air Force	All	17.6%	45.2%	29.3%	7.8%	1504
	Women	9.6%	44.6%	38.3%	7.5%	334
Civilian	All	20.4%	41.6%	27.0%	11.0%	1664
	Women	20.4%	41.7%	25.9%	12.0%	734

Note: Totals for services and for civilians will not add up to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service or whether they are a civilian. Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

6.31 Just under two-thirds of survey respondents (64.3%) reported that Operation Respect had been visible to a great extent or some extent in their workplace in the last 12 months. Operation Respect's visibility appeared to be similar across the services and for civilians.

6.32 However, in our survey:

- 10.1% of survey respondents indicated that Operation Respect had not been visible to any extent in their workplace;
- women were generally less likely to report that Operation Respect was visible to a great or some extent at work (59.7%) compared to men (66.3%); and
- junior women officers (53.3%) and junior women NCOs (61.9%) were also less likely to report that Operation Respect has been visible to a great or some extent at work.

6.33 Almost everyone we spoke to knew what Operation Respect was. However, although it has high name recognition, most NZDF personnel we interviewed said that there had been little visible activity associated with the initiative in the last year.

6.34 Several personnel spoke about how visible Operation Respect was when it was first launched and said that this had subsided. Many respondents to our survey also said that there had been little official communication about Operation Respect in the last 12 months and little discussion in teams and workplaces.

6.35 For most personnel, they were aware of Operation Respect only because it had been discussed in the Sexual Ethics and Responsible Relationships (SERR) training they attended or because they knew about SAPRAs.

6.36 Civilian personnel had less awareness of Operation Respect. Some had not heard of Operation Respect nor attended any of the activities associated with it.

Operation Respect had more visibility in environments where it was prioritised by leaders

6.37 Personnel had more awareness of Operation Respect when they were involved in specific activities related to it.

6.38 Activities that we heard about included discussions about above and below the line behaviours, scenarios built into training sessions, infrastructure changes, and discussions about what constituted appropriate behaviour when an incident occurred.

6.39 These activities occurred in all parts of the organisation. However, some camps and bases put more focus into Operation Respect after the 2020 review and visibility of it was higher in those locations.

6.40 We were told about specific individuals who were seen as committed to Operation Respect and who had made efforts to embed it into the work of their unit. Some of these individuals were instructors who introduced it as a focus area in recruit training. However, as we discussed in Part 3, some personnel would have liked more direction from leaders on how to embed it.

When personnel did not observe ongoing Operation Respect activity, it could be seen as a compliance exercise

6.41 Many personnel we talked to felt that Operation Respect had become a compliance exercise. Those people often said that discussion or activities related to Operation Respect were limited or not visible to them.

6.42 Most personnel we talked to were positive about the SERR training. However, some felt it was the only tangible activity, and this reinforced a view that Operation Respect was not embedded into the day-to-day work of the military.

6.43 One person told us that Operation Respect had become just a tagline (a "safe, respectful, inclusive environment") but it was not clear to personnel what this actually meant. This made it difficult for people to know whether their work environment was safe, respectful, and inclusive.

6.44 Those who felt that Operation Respect was needed, especially those who had seen or experienced harmful behaviour, were frustrated that some in the organisation saw Operation Respect as a compliance exercise. They felt this meant NZDF was

not prioritising addressing harmful behaviour. Many personnel told us that the gains that Operation Respect made when it was first introduced have now stalled.

Operation Respect was less well-known as an initiative to address bullying, harassment, and discrimination

6.45 Operation Respect was designed to address a wide spectrum of harmful behaviour, including sexual harm and bullying, harassment, and discrimination. However, most personnel we interviewed did not associate Operation Respect with addressing bullying, harassment, and discrimination. The reset of Operation Respect after the 2020 review does not appear to have addressed this gap in understanding.

6.46 However, personnel also told us that they supported the idea that Operation Respect should also focus on bullying, harassment, and discrimination, because they felt that these types of problems needed more visibility.

Impact area 3: NZDF personnel believe Operation Respect is an appropriate and effective initiative

6.47 In this impact area, we look at how necessary personnel consider Operation Respect is to NZDF's success and how effective they think it has been.

Main findings for impact area 3

6.48 Personnel we spoke to believed that Operation Respect had been effective in reducing harmful sexual behaviour in the workplace to some degree. Most survey respondents (81.5%) reported that they felt that it was effective or very effective in reducing inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour in the workplace. This rate was lower for women, especially junior uniformed women.

6.49 Most personnel still thought Operation Respect was needed. However, preventing harmful behaviour was not seen as something that all personnel feel collectively responsible for. Operation Respect was also still not widely understood as being core to operational effectiveness.

Detailed findings for impact area 3

Most personnel thought Operation Respect had been effective at reducing harmful behaviour

6.50 The survey asked respondents to rate how effective they thought Operation Respect had been at reducing inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour in the workplace (see Figure 38).

Figure 38
Perception of Operation Respect's effectiveness at reducing inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour in the workplace

		Very effective	Effective	Ineffective	Very ineffective	Total respondents
All	All	12.1%	69.4%	13.9%	4.5%	4676
	Women	9.1%	70.6%	16.4%	3.8%	1151
Navy	All	10.9%	71.7%	13.0%	4.3%	771
	Women	7.2%	71.8%	16.9%	4.1%	195
Army	All	13.3%	63.4%	16.0%	7.3%	1539
	Women	8.6%	64.9%	21.2%	5.4%	222
Air Force	All	9.4%	72.4%	14.3%	3.9%	1214
	Women	3.7%	70.5%	20.5%	5.2%	268
Civilian	All	14.1%	72.7%	11.5%	1.7%	1145
	Women	13.3%	73.0%	11.6%	2.1%	466

Note: Totals for services and for civilians will not add up to total respondents because some respondents did not specify service or whether they are a civilian. Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

6.51 Most survey respondents (81.5%) said that they felt that Operation Respect was effective or very effective.

6.52 There was some variation between the services. Respondents in the Army had the lowest results when asked if they viewed Operation Respect as effective and the highest when they were asked if they viewed it as ineffective or very ineffective.

6.53 Almost one-quarter (23.3%) of respondents from the Army said that they felt that Operation Respect was ineffective or very ineffective, compared to 18.2% of respondents from the Air Force, 17.3% of respondents from the Navy, and 13.2% of civilian personnel.

6.54 Most personnel we interviewed said that Operation Respect had some effect in reducing harmful behaviour and had made it easier to report it where it occurs. We heard many examples of how personnel thought that Operation Respect had helped to change behaviours.

6.55 Personnel from the Army, Navy, and Air Force and civilian personnel described how Operation Respect helped them to:

- be more aware of what they say;
- come to more of a shared understanding of what behaviour is acceptable;

- stop seeing differences as something to make fun of;
- better understand reporting processes; and
- see that there could be consequences for people engaging in harmful behaviour.

6.56 Several personnel told us that they had changed their behaviour and how they treated peers. They said that they had been through a process of reflection and realised they needed to acknowledge the harm they had caused.

Women, especially junior uniformed women, were less likely to see Operation Respect as effective

6.57 Women (79.7%) were slightly less likely to agree that Operation Respect was effective or very effective than men (82.5%). Both junior women NCOs (73.2%) and junior women officers (69.3%) were less likely than other groups to believe that Operation Respect was effective or very effective.

6.58 This was also reflected in our interviews. Women said more often that they did not see Operation Respect as effective. This was particularly the case for women who had been affected by harmful behaviour that had not been dealt with satisfactorily.

6.59 Men were less likely to experience harmful behaviour or witness it (see Part 2). This might have positively influenced their views of Operation Respect's effectiveness. Conversely, junior women were most likely to be affected by harmful behaviour and this may have negatively influenced their views. Because junior women are disproportionately impacted by harmful behaviour, it is particularly important to understand their perceptions about the effectiveness of Operation Respect.

Perceptions of effectiveness were impacted by how personnel related to key messages

6.60 Many personnel were still influenced by the messages they heard when Operation Respect was first launched in 2016. There was a widespread belief that the original message was that all men had the potential to commit sexual violence.

6.61 NZDF had tried to convey the message that sexual harm existed on a continuum: Unwanted sexual activity was at the extreme end and inappropriate sexual behaviour (such as sexualised jokes) was at the other end.

6.62 This message is consistent with research that shows that, although most people will not commit unwanted sexual activity, when inappropriate sexual behaviour is more common, the likelihood that unwanted sexual activity and other criminal behaviours will occur increases.[59]

59 Breslin, RA, Klahr, A, Hylton, K, Petusky, M, and White, A (2020), *2019 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Reserve Component Members: Results and Trends,* Office of People Analytics Fors Marsh Group, LLC; Schell, TL, Cefalu, M, Farris, C, and Morral, A (2021). *The relationship between sexual assault and sexual harassment in the US Military: Findings from the RAND military workplace study,* RAND Corporation.

6.63 We were told that many interpreted this message as equating inappropriate sexual behaviour with unwanted sexual activity. Personnel from all genders felt that this messaging created a sense of shame and division between them.

6.64 Although personnel generally felt that messaging about Operation Respect had changed, those feelings had stuck with them and influenced their views. This was echoed in comments we received in the survey. People told us that a more effective narrative of Operation Respect that conveys the importance of addressing all forms of harmful behaviour needed to be developed.

Most personnel felt that Operation Respect is needed to some extent

6.65 Personnel who had experienced, witnessed, or knew about harmful behaviour were more likely to see Operation Respect as needed to set clear boundaries and expectations about appropriate behaviour.

6.66 Some personnel told us how their views about Operation Respect had changed when they became more aware of the behaviour others experienced. In some instances, they had been sceptical of Operation Respect in the beginning because they did not think it related to them. They had not understood its purpose until they heard about individual cases (for example, from friends) or came into a role where they were more exposed to the harmful behaviour that others experienced.

A minority of personnel did not see it as a high priority

6.67 Some personnel we talked to were ambivalent about Operation Respect. Although they were not opposed to it, they did not see it as a high priority. This often occurred where harmful behaviour was not visible to them and they felt it had little bearing on their everyday work life. Although ambivalent views more commonly came from men, some women also felt this way.

6.68 In some of these instances, personnel expressed frustration about having to attend any activity related to Operation Respect (such as SERR training). They saw the training as irrelevant to them because they did not think they engaged in harmful behaviour.

6.69 Some felt that, because harmful behaviour occurs in wider society, it was a societal problem rather than an NZDF problem. Similarly, some felt that harmful behaviour was perpetrated by only a small number of personnel. They thought there was little NZDF could do to change these behaviours.

6.70 Personnel who held these views often did not see themselves as playing a role in actively supporting Operation Respect.

6.71 Several women we talked to expressed frustration that some men do not understand the impacts of harmful behaviour and did not take Operation Respect seriously.

6.72 We observed that there was not a shared understanding of Operation Respect as a collective responsibility. Some personnel felt that the original message of Operation Respect contributed to this because it created division rather than promoting collective responsibility.

A minority of women did not feel Operation Respect is needed

6.73 A small number of women we talked to, including those who had experienced harm, felt Operation Respect drew attention to them and made their situation worse.

6.74 This was most apparent when they worked in male-dominated environments (although not all women in male-dominated environments felt this way). Some women working in these environments said that it was important that they fit into the unit and did not want to be defined by their gender.

6.75 They felt that initiatives such as Operation Respect (and work on increasing recruitment and retention of women) drew attention to them and made them feel different from men. In their view, this increased the chance that men would perceive them as advancing in the organisation only because of special treatment.

6.76 We heard about women distancing themselves from Operation Respect for these reasons. These feelings were also expressed in some of the survey comments. These respondents said that Operation Respect isolates women and makes them feel less camaraderie than they had previously.

A minority felt that Operation Respect causes harm to NZDF

6.77 A small group felt that Operation Respect is not needed and causes harm to NZDF. They expressed this view in a variety of ways in our interviews and survey comments.

6.78 There was a sense from some that attention focused on Operation Respect takes attention away from operational outputs and gets in the way of operational effectiveness. In survey comments, some personnel said that "political correctness" or "cancel culture" is ruining the military's capabilities.

6.79 A general theme was that Operation Respect is too focused on targeting "banter" and some felt it would remove the ability for people to joke and have fun in the workplace. Some felt this would affect team morale and the ability of teams to work effectively. This was especially the case in difficult circumstances (for example, on field exercises or long deployments on ships).

6.80 Although some of what personnel described as banter sounded like appropriate workplace behaviour, some of what we heard described as banter appeared to be potentially harmful (that is, sexualised jokes). This indicates a lack of shared understanding of what harmful banter is and the negative impacts it can have.

6.81 Some personnel felt that the focus on respectful behaviours might conflict with NZDF's aims and reduce the ability of personnel in combat roles to engage in combat effectively. This view was more common among Army personnel we spoke to.

6.82 Some personnel also felt that Operation Respect could affect leaders' ability to command. We were told that if personnel are encouraged to speak up and question decisions, this could lead to personnel not following orders. This view was more common among Navy personnel we spoke to.

Most did not link Operation Respect to operational effectiveness

6.83 Personnel had a variety of views for why Operation Respect is important, including, most commonly, that it is needed to ensure that personnel treat each other with respect. However, what this meant was not consistently defined (see paragraph 2.207).

6.84 From what we heard, there did not seem to be a shared understanding of Operation Respect's value to operational effectiveness.

6.85 Some personnel talked about Operation Respect as being central to organisational success. For example, some commented that NZDF is a high-performing organisation that needs a diverse range of skillsets, and to have these respected. Those people recognised that Operation Respect could support that.

6.86 The need for Operation Respect was often better understood in areas such as training units, where it is better able to be embedded in everyday work. However, overall it was evident that, for many personnel, Operation Respect is more a "nice to have" than an initiative fundamental to NZDF's success.

6.87 Many personnel had thoughts on how Operation Respect could be more effective. Many outlined ideas to embed Operation Respect in their work environments and encourage more ownership of it. It was noted that, to be effective, Operation Respect needs to be focused on enabling and supporting operational roles.

6.88 Personnel also talked about how to get buy in. The ability of leaders to talk about and lead this work was frequently mentioned (see Part 3). Personnel recommended that the focus of Operation Respect be at the unit and team level, with involvement from junior personnel, and informed by what drives the team.

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