

## RNZRSA ōtinga kōrero or results report

<b>Report for:</b>	Government Grant Expenditure Report 2023-2024	
<b>Due date:</b>	31 August 2024	
<b>Grant Term:</b>	01 July 2023 - 30 June 2024	
<b>Deliverables:</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Part 1:	Support veteran wellbeing – to improve access to support veterans; in particular, to support the RNZRSA in its frontline work to develop support for veterans with PTSD and mental injury, and to help them lead a healthy and productive life.	\$250,000
Part 2:	Project: as discussed between RNZRSA and VA.	\$25,000

## Report requirements / outcomes achieved

<b>Background to Grant</b>
<p>Since 2016 the Government, through Veterans' Affairs New Zealand (VANZ), has given a grant to the RNZRSA to assist the RNZRSA to support veterans and their families. The grant is in recognition of the RNZRSA Support Network which provides direct support and financial assistance to veterans in need beyond what government agencies can deliver. The RNZRSA continues to serve a unique role as a trusted and reliable organisation, working with Veterans' Affairs New Zealand (VANZ), New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), and other Government agencies and NGOs to address issues that impact Veterans. RNZRSA supports the Government's goals for Veterans as a recognised vulnerable population, delivering direct support to those we serve to inform decision-makers in the relevant sectors.</p>
<b>Who benefited from the Grant</b>
<p>The Government's monetary support has been a critical enabler of the development of a support network that delivers modern and responsive support services. This network reduces the demand on the public health and social services sectors by covering gaps and/or complementing existing services as well as influencing and leading the provision of support across the sector. The grant also provides a vital and tangible means to recognise the value of volunteers by providing reimbursement for travel costs associated with the thousands of kilometres travelled and the hours spent in increasing the wellbeing of Veterans and their families, often in demanding and stressful situations. Ultimately, the annual Government grant is used to fund the activity of the RNZRSA's Support Network to enable it to deliver services to Veterans and their whanau.</p>
<b>What outcomes were achieved through the Grant</b>
<p>Despite the current financial environment and the difficulties experienced, the training and outreach programme for the 2023/24 financial year was able to be delivered. This resulted in 26 Support Services clinics being conducted nationwide, furthering the goal of supporting the veteran community by increasing the capability and engagement of the RNZRSA Support Network. The</p>

Government grant continues to play a significant role in enabling the RNZRSA Support Network to conduct clinics and training as well as reimburse some of the costs incurred by our 200 plus volunteers for their ongoing time and travel to support Veterans and whanau.

We continued to partner with other NGOs and Government agencies to support working age Veterans and those who currently serve. Two specific examples of working relationships with government are the ongoing collaboration with Ara Poutama Aotearoa Department of Corrections' transition programme, where RNZRSA Support Advisors and volunteers work with clients who are transitioning from the justice system. The RNZRSA MSD employment transition project (which ended on 30 June 2024) assisted Veterans and their whanau to make effective transitions from military to civilian life through a skills and wellbeing programme aimed at working age Veterans.

RNZRSA Support Services continue to evolve to meet new and emerging needs. This includes greater engagement with ACC processes as the proportion of Scheme 2 Veterans under the Veteran Support Act 2014 (VSA14) who are not eligible for VANZ support becomes greater. There is a continued need for advocacy for individuals facing obstacles in getting support through a variety of agencies (both NGO and Government) where system complexities create barriers to effective communication and engagement. With the government grant the RNZRSA continues to support those service people with mental health and wellbeing issues to ensure every Veteran's life is fully lived.

### **Looking forward**

The RNZRSA continues to face challenges in operating as a purely volunteer support network due to the increased complexity of the support operating environment, with a need for more accurate data capture to justify funding and targeted outcomes. Inroads have been made to have more paid staff in support roles at the National Office and District levels, but the short- to medium-term future is a hybrid of paid experts and volunteers. This is a long-term work in progress which will require a sustained effort to develop the capability and capacity to maintain and enhance delivery through training, engagement, and programmes aimed at addressing clearly defined needs within the Veteran community. Focus areas include targeted health outcomes, bridging military service with civilian culture, validation of military service, pre- and post-employment conditions, and emerging technology effects on the military. This will require greater investment beyond what the grant currently provides and the RNZRSA internally funds.

### **Financial information**

While the Government Grant has allowed the RNZRSA Support Services to deliver direct engagement and support to veterans and their families in the 2023-2024 year, the 250k supplements but doesn't replace the need for internal funding for these activities in an environment where reduced financial resource is being experienced in nearly every sector of society. This will impact the breadth of future initiatives and means that support services will need to be more financially limited in scope and execution despite a steady need for increased support capability. For example with the Veteran Employment Scheme funding cut by MSD due to savings required by Government, a reduced capacity has to be implemented from internal RNZRSA funding to carry on this work despite the schemes early successes. The 25K for the Accommodation project as part of the Te Arataki work plan saw it supplement a part time staff member wages and operational costs to deliver it. (See attached financial Information)

## **PART 1 – Focus on results and outcomes that make a positive change to veterans and their whanau**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Provide a breakdown of the number of Veterans supported</b>	
Ex or current serving NZ Army	<b>945</b>
Ex or current serving RNZN	<b>228</b>
Ex or current serving RNZAF	<b>123</b>
Dependents or whanau	<b>308</b>
Foreign Veterans	<b>56</b>
Ex or current serving NZ Police	<b>19</b>
Not recorded as either Veterans or whanau	<b>71</b>
<b>Comments on those supported</b>	
The RNZRSA Support Network assisted a total of 1750 individuals. This doesn't include the 379 Veterans and 24 dependants or whanau seen at the 26 Support Services clinics in the 2023-2024 year where the type of service wasn't recorded, which would bring the total to 2159 individuals directly supported.	
<b>Provide a breakdown of the type of help Veterans asked for</b>	
Advocacy (includes referrals to and from agencies, form filling, agency liaison on behalf of the client, grant applications, and advice)	<b>951</b>
Welfare check/ visit (includes calls and physical visits to check on health or situation, transport to and from home, medical and goods pick up and drop off, and social health support)	<b>799</b>
Much of our work is as a navigator service, supporting our people to interact with agency systems and processes. Commonly this is simple form filling and referrals which can be challenging for the elderly and those with physical or mental health conditions to complete. Less common is direct advocacy with an agency or NGO as part of our case management work.	
<b>Show the percentage of each type requested</b>	
Advocacy (includes referrals to and from agencies, form filling, agency liaison on behalf of the client, grant applications, and advice)	<b>54%</b>
Welfare check/ visit (includes calls and physical visits to check on health or situation, transport to and from home, medical and goods pick up and drop off, and social health support)	<b>46%</b>

The split between the need for an advocate versus a case manager is even. The welfare visits tend to be driven by the Local Support Advisor (LSA) within a community. Advocacy is specialist work requiring a higher level of knowledge and expertise. This may include a detailed understanding of the regulatory environment, policy settings, complex case management, and coordinating multiple providers.

**Provide a breakdown of the number of referrals received**

Proactive interactions by RNZRSA Support Services by individual Support Advisors, through the Support Network or via a Support Clinic	<b>819</b>
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Referred from the RNZRSA outside of Support Services	<b>448</b>
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Self-referrals to support services either locally or at District level	<b>319</b>
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Friends or whanau	<b>71</b>
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Referred through VANZ	<b>46</b>
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Other government agencies	<b>11</b>
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NZDF via camp or base hubs or from other NZDF sources	<b>20</b>
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Other NGOs	<b>16</b>
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**Is anyone better off?**

How many veterans received more support	<b>951</b>
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How many veterans became more independent	-
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**Provide stories or commentary from veterans**

**Case study 1**

A foreign service veteran was referred to RNZRSA Support Services from another veteran for assistance as they were no longer able to work pay for medical treatment for their severe mental health issues. An RNZRSA Support Advisor interviewed and assisted them with funding to continue treatment sessions, and advocated on their behalf with their former countries government agencies and NGOs for further supports. The veteran was also registered for the Veteran Employment Scheme in order to be able to seek employment opportunities for them once they had stabilised their situation. Foreign veterans have the same issues associated with military service as NZ veterans but do not have the same access to veteran specific or centric support pathways - the RNZRSA recognises this and acts as an advocate to support them where government agencies cannot.

**Case study 2**

VA referred a NZ veteran to RNZRSA Support Services by due to the veteran being homeless and being unable to find suitable accommodation due to their physical and mental health issues, which limited their accommodation options. Initially funding was used to secure temporary accommodation for the veteran from the National Poppy Trust. The regions District

Support Manager (DSM) was contact to investigate any accommodation options in their area for the veteran, which proved impossible due to the lack of government and other NGO accommodation being available at the time. Concurrently National Office Support Services contacted another Veteran Support Organisation (VSO) to see what support could be obtained for the veteran if they were able to move to more a more suitable region in terms of ongoing support and accommodation. Accommodation was secured in this region by the VSO for the veteran and they moved in to it supported by the RNZRSA and VSO. Accommodation for veterans is a growing issue and RNZRSA Support Services continues to work with Government agencies and NGOs to stop veteran homelessness.

### Case study 3

A veteran contacted the RNZRSA Support Services for advocacy in relation to ongoing issues with a government agency process, requesting assistance in resolving the issue with the agency. The local RSA support service was already in place for the health conditions the veteran had, but part of the ongoing process was difficult for the veteran to navigate directly with the agency so RNZRSA Support Services came in to advocate on behalf of the veteran. Through engagement with the agency and ongoing communication with the veteran a way forward was developed and implemented to the satisfaction of the veteran and agency. The RNZRSA Support Services assists veterans to navigate government processes while informing government agencies of the limitations and frustrations of veterans with health issues in engaging in processes designed by people who have no understanding of the veteran experience or the effect of health conditions on them.

### Provide feedback from veterans, whanau and other stakeholders

*"Just wanted to say a massive thank you for all of your help to date. I would have never been able to articulate things the way you did... It has made a massive difference having the support of RNZRSA ... It has helped us to be able to focus on treatment and recovery and not stress about the financial side of things."* Email 3 June 2024 12:08 pm

*"Thank you again for the support you have offered us over the last 2 years. We couldn't have gotten this far without you."* Email 23 July 2024 10:29 pm

*"Thank you for all your hard work and support. It was appreciated so much to have someone fighting in my corner!"* Email 24 July 2024 2:28 pm

### RNZRSA Support Network activity

#### Hours of engagement that Support Advisor volunteers were performing their role

Individual interactions with clients on support matters	<b>2,023 hrs</b>
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The vast majority of the interactions were for the purposes of application filling for conditions or VIP services, and general client visits to check up on clients' needs or situations but also includes all other client related activity such as taking a client to attend an appointment, delivery of goods or medicines, making enquiries or advocating on behalf of the client. All interactions allowed for a continuation of support to the clients or in linking them to a health provider or support agency to manage or support their individual needs.

Group related events with stakeholder organisations	<b>963 Hrs</b>
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<p>Mainly NZDF wellness expo attendance and stakeholder workshops and forums as a formal representative of the RSA Support Services at an organised event including as being at a event to raise awareness of support related issues. The need to raise awareness and funding for veterans or their families' better assists delivery of RSA support services locally and nationally as it destigmatises the needs of those suffering from health issues, raises funds and widens public understanding of the issues.</p>	
Meetings: physical or online	<b>825 hrs</b>
<p>This includes RSA Hub management meetings with NZDF command and strategy and alignment meetings with other veteran support organisations and government agencies. These are physical or teleconference/video linked meetings between organisations representatives related to Support Services activities. For example, establishing protocols between local ACC representative and the Support Advisors to better facilitate support for RSA clients. These stakeholder interactions impact directly on the delivery of support to ex and current serving people and their families, usually by establishing a working relation or MOU with the agencies involved to better facilitate physical, mental and social health or financial outcomes.</p>	
Training: includes presentations to organisations, groups and individuals	<b>137 hrs</b>
<p>The majority of the training was directed internally to training of support volunteers but includes presentations to organisations, groups and individuals representing and promoting the activities of the Support Advisor role. This includes induction training of new Support Advisors/Support Advisor assistants. Training received e.g. Attendance at workshops and courses that enhance the knowledge and delivery of welfare support services. The government grant supports direct training in mental health awareness due to the need of third-party expertise in this area to deliver train to support advisors and partners to better deliver support to clients.</p>	
Other activities not quantified in other criteria	<b>1,728 hrs</b>
<p>The hours of this are mainly in administrative matters linked to support – emails, report writing, correspondence and messaging (internally and externally) and transport to locations to assist and support veterans and includes internal organisational representation as a support Advisor.</p>	
Total reported:	
• Volunteer hours for delivery of support	<b>5,676 hrs</b>
• Number of working days (8 hour working day)	<b>709 days</b>
• Distance travelled for above activities	<b>33,809 kms</b>
<b>Case management</b>	
• Total recorded national office ongoing case management for the year	<b>17</b>
• How many new cases	<b>9</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many hours spent on ongoing and new cases</li> </ul>	<b>373</b>
<p>RNZRSA Case management has ongoing files from 2022 and is defined as support cases beyond the expectations of Local Support Advisors. This is specifically advocacy related cases generally with veterans in dispute with Veterans Affairs or ACC, where a review or appeal is required due to disagreement on the determination of circumstances of the veteran's eligibility to financial support or benefits. This requires face to face interviewing, follow up conversations, research in to legislation and medical conditions, specialist interviews and correspondence and then a review meeting or going to an appeal panel. Case management is complex and time consuming.</p>	
<b>Skills building</b>	
Support Advisor courses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many Support Advisor induction courses were run</li> </ul>	<b>6</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many people trained as Support Advisors</li> </ul>	<b>17</b>
<p>All registered RSA support advisors who complete the pre-requisite requirements are eligible to attend the SA Induction course which is a practical course designed to increase overall skill levels of RSA support volunteers and selected stakeholder veteran support organisations volunteers. The 2023-2024 year had a small increase in new Support Advisors needing to complete the course.</p>	
Case Management Clinics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many veteran clinics were run</li> </ul>	<b>26</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where were they run</li> </ul>	<b>See below</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many attended</li> </ul>	<b>403</b>
<p>The 26 Clinics were run in five districts – Waikato, Manawatu, Northland, Southland and the East Coast. The majority of attendees were scheme 1 veterans (293) however 80 were scheme 2 or a mix of both schemes. The number of widows, spouses or family members attended seeking support was 24 and 6 foreign forces veterans were also seen and supported.</p>	
Mental Health courses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many mental health courses were run</li> </ul>	<b>0</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where were they run</li> </ul>	<b>N/A</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many attended</li> </ul>	<b>N/A</b>
<p>No mental health courses were run by the previous provider in the 2023-2024 year due to costs. Mental Health Courses for SAs who have not attended a Mental Health course is being looked at for the 2024-2025 year.</p>	
<b>Meetings</b>	

Veterans Advisory Board (VAB)	
• How many meetings attended	6
The RNZRSA maintains a presence on the Veterans Advisory Board (VAB) to advocate for veteran interests as well as to support government understanding and aspirations in the veteran space. This assists the support services network to ensure situational awareness across topics related to health and wellbeing of the veteran community to government.	
Veterans Reference Group (VRG)	
• How many meetings attended	1
Though a part of this group it hasn't met formally as the VRG since its contribution to Te Arataki. However, RNZRSA did attend the Te Arataki symposium that was held on the 22 March 2024.	
Veteran Support Organisation (VSO)	
• How many attended	0
• Where were they held and what was the topic	N/A
The RSNZRSA hasn't held a formal VSO meeting since the one held in Palmerston North in June 2023 due to budget constraints, but we have maintained individual organisational communications as needed to direct ex and current serving clients to the VSOs depending on the type of support required. The current members of the VSO is the RNZRSA, Sailors Soldiers Aviators Association New Zealand (SSAANZ), Veteran's Combined Forces Surfing Association (VCFSA), Te Kiwi Maia, Families of the Fallen, Onward Bar and Pilgrim Bandits.	

## **PART 2 – Focus on results and outcomes that make a positive change to veterans and their whanau**

**Project goal:** Conduct a stocktake of RNZRSA accommodation (Te Arataki action)

The stocktake of RNZRSA accommodation was completed in March 2024.

### **Project status**

Completed.

### **Project highlights**

We now have answers to the following questions:

1. What accommodation is available? There is 274 accommodation types listed at 13 sites throughout New Zealand.
2. What is the configuration of the accommodation? The majority are one or two bedroom units but there is also five houses owned by RSAs including one three bedroom house.



3. What is the cost of the accommodation? Cost vary by region but they are at discounted rates for veterans. 4. What is the ownership structure of the accommodation? Nearly all are managed under a trust, either directly under an RSA Association or are linked into the RSA by the likeminded objective of supporting veterans (i.e. Ranfurly Veterans Trust). 5. Is the accommodation tenanted to Veterans? In the main it is mixed between veterans and the general population, however nearly all prioritise veterans if there is a competing need. 6. What is the availability of accommodation regionally? RSA has seven of the eight regions with accommodation. Only Otago/Southland has no RSA owned or linked accommodation in that region for veterans at this time.	
<b>Identified project risks and mitigation</b>	
Risk	Mitigation
1. Accommodation is owned by separate legal entities	1. Communication and coordination is key
<b>Next steps   FY24/25</b>	
The focus area and priority as agreed for FY24/25 is a piece of work to improve the quality of completed applications to reduce unnecessary administration and time taken to process.	

If you require assistance with reporting requirements or other assistance, contact:



You must confirm report is true and correct before you submit the report