

## Veterans' Advisory Board members

Members of the Veterans' Advisory Board are appointed by the Minister for Veterans.

### Leith Comer, Chair

- Served in the New Zealand Army for 21 years, including as a senior officer
- Has extensive knowledge of the workings of government, as well as leadership experience in the military, private and community sectors
- Has held senior positions as a public servant, including as the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Maori Development from 2001-2011, and the Deputy Secretary of Economic Development from 1997-2001
- Recently awarded the QSO.

### Fiona Cassidy

- Previous military service in the Army
- Held the role of Director, Defence Communications Group.
- Over 20 years of experience managing communications at a strategic level.
- Extensive experience in working with Māori, Pacific, and hard-to-reach communities.
- Has held a number of Director and board appointments on business, government, and not-for-profit organisations.

### BJ (Barry) Clark

- Former National President of the RNZRSA (2014–2022)
- RSA member since 1973, including service on executive at local, district and national level.
- 21 years in the Royal New Zealand Engineers, including service in Singapore, Moscow, Fiji, Antarctica and Sinai.

### Baden Ewart

- 28 years of service in the New Zealand Army.
- Has worked in both primary and secondary health care.
- Has been the General Manager Operations for the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority and is currently the Canterbury Civil Defence and Emergency Management Group Recovery Manager.
- Experienced with central and local government engagement, including with the Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Social Development.

### Denise Hutchins

- Career in the health sector spanned 44 years, commencing in the clinical area as a nurse in both hospital and community settings, progressing to a Chief Nursing Officer position.
- Moved into health management, working in organisational development with responsibilities for human resources, health, safety and wellbeing, learning and development and strategic quality improvement.
- Served as a Territorial in the New Zealand Army as a member of the Royal New Zealand Nursing Corps (Territorial) from 1979-1994, retiring as Lieutenant Colonel and Principal Nursing Officer 2 (GH) Field Hospital.

- Justice of the Peace since 2002 and is currently the Immediate Past President of the Royal Federation of New Zealand Justices' Associations.

## **Warrant Officer Class One Mark Mortiboy, Chief of Defence Force nominee**

- Warrant Officer of the Defence Force, a principal advisor to CDF, and a member of the NZDF Senior Leadership Team.
- Serving veteran with overseas postings and deployments to Singapore, the Sinai, East Timor and Antarctica.
- Sergeant-Major of the Army from 2014-2017.

## **Glenis Philip-Barbara**

- Deputy Chief Executive (Delivery) Ministry of Culture and Heritage
- Former Assistant Māori Commissioner for Children
- Has held a wide range of positions in New Zealand's public sector including being the Chief Executive of Te Taura Whiri I Te Reo Māori (the Māori Language Commission) and Deputy Chief Executive of the Ministry of Social Development.
- Has also held a range of teaching and managerial positions at tertiary education institutions, including lecturing in Sociology at Massey University.
- Has a family perspective on veterans through close family members who are former service personnel.

## **Deputy members**

When a member is absent a member's deputy may attend a meeting in their place.

## **Commander Katherine Ayers**

- Member of the Royal New Zealand Navy for over 20 years and currently the Business Partner (Navy) to the People Capability Portfolio.
- Has served as a Legal Officer, an Administration Officer, a Human Resources Officer, and a Military Complaints Officer.
- Commander Ayres has a Bachelor of Laws and a Masters in Strategic Policy.