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MEDIA STATEMENT

Acting Chief of Defence Force, Rear Admiral Peter McHaffie, Chief of Naval Staff.

Government commitment to a long-term development plan for the New Zealand Defence Force is a boost to confidence and morale within the ranks, acting Chief of Defence Force, Rear Admiral Peter McHaffie, said today.

“We can now get on with the detailed requirements in consultation with other agencies as appropriate and translate the policy commitment to delivering operational capability for the entire New Zealand Defence Force.

“The focus will be on building a Defence Force that is united, professionally trained, competent, appropriately equipped and capable of serving the interests of New Zealand. This includes confronting the security challenges of the future and meeting the requirements of the New Zealand Government.

“Work is already well advanced on a number of projects including the light operational vehicles, C130 upgrade and development of the maritime forces project with Registration of Interest expected to be called for shortly.

“Our Army is well on track for its move to mobilisation with the first LAV 111 vehicles expected to be delivered late next year. The new plan progresses the delivery of light operational vehicles and fire support capabilities.

“The decision to proceed with a wide range of capabilities for elements of the Air Force is particularly welcome while the Navy is already working hard on the maritime forces project which will take shape in the coming months.

The strength of the Defence Force is its people and the development plan provides a range of assets and upgrades that will provide a strong sense of progress.

“The plan approved by Government focuses on capabilities of the Defence Force, and there will be a positive impact for all service men and women who will benefit from the new capital acquisitions.