



Dear Doctor

## MEDICAL EXAMINATION NZDF RECRUIT

Thank you for undertaking examinations of potential NZDF recruits. The following will assist you in providing the information required for the NZDF medical authority to make safe and reasonable recommendations about the candidate's fitness for military service in accordance with military medical standards.

The medical form (MD911) gathers a lot of information. Please expand on any positive responses, and note any regular medication, the amount and type of any regular physical exercise, alcohol intake, smoking habits, and any non-prescription drug use. Please note the nature of any significant family medical history.

The form has prompts to guide you in your examination, but your comments about the candidate's general appearance (obesity, general fitness) are also useful. Statements such as: *'Fit and muscular'*, or, *'mild central obesity and breathless on moving around the room'*, provide far more relevant information than the height and weight data. Similarly, a functional test is the most relevant part of the physical examination; please check the candidate's ability to squat, bend, kneel, reach, jump, and do a press-up.

If there are conditions about which additional information is required, this is usually from an appropriate medical specialist, and is done at the candidate's expense. There is no requirement for the PULHEEMS boxes at the end of the document; that is done when the candidate's medical status is finally confirmed and entered on our database.

It is important that all the documents are returned to the NZDF health reviewers as soon as possible. Please return the relevant forms via one of the following methods:

1. Scan and email to [recruiting.medicals@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:recruiting.medicals@nzdf.mil.nz)
2. Fax to (04) 496-0464
3. Courier to:

Recruiting Health Data Manager  
Defence Recruiting Organisation  
Level 2  
Defence House  
Private Bag 39997  
Wellington 5045

Enclosed is information about of the sort of conditions that military personnel will encounter during training and service, which may help your assessment.

Yours sincerely

Defence Recruiting Medical Board

Encl;  
Employment activities of NZDF personnel – Advice to Med Practitioners

# Employment activities of NZDF personnel

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## **ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY UNIFORMED PERSONNEL**

The following activities are detailed to provide medical practitioners with some guidance in assessing medical fitness for NZDF service. The list is indicative and not exhaustive. It is important that personnel are fit to serve not only in peace-time environments, but also during hostilities.

### **Initial Training**

The training at the beginning of a military career is designed to build physical fitness, enable members to function under stressful conditions, and develop the teamwork that is vital in an operational setting. These qualities are developed through a combination of vigorous physical activity, extended working days, and academic programs with frequent assessments conducted in various challenging environments.

Trainees live in group accommodation, and do not have 'leave' from the military base for several weeks. Each day's schedule includes a range of classroom work, sport, domestic chores, and team projects. Each training component is compulsory, and omission of any modules usually means that the course must be repeated.

Trainees spend up to three hours per day in organised physical training (running, sport, etc) during the first several months of service. Even minor medical and musculoskeletal problems can significantly interfere with their progress, so it is essential that any pre-existing conditions have fully resolved prior to the start of the training course. Trainees are also required to be fit to wear self-contained breathing apparatus, handle weapons, and to perform adequately while under stress including tolerating sleep deprivation, and meeting deadlines. Some of the specific activities are outlined below:

- Strenuous physical fitness activities such as running, cross country running, bush walking, obstacle course (including flying fox).
- Survival training including overnight exposure to an austere environment, in darkness, and conditions predisposing to general discomfort.
- Weapons training, involving the use of small arms (rifles, pistols and machine guns) and involving firing of live rounds on a firing range and blank ammunition in military exercises.
- Navy - exercises in ship damage control: These are done in a purpose-built facility that simulates the environment in a ship being damaged through combat, collision or fire (cold/wet/dark/smoke/noise).

### **Professional Training**

All members of the NZDF have training specific to their area of employment. Some areas demand particular physical abilities (such as normal colour vision).

### **Regular Service on completion of training**

Operational service and exercises often involve:

- enduring conditions of extremes of temperature;
- 24-hour activity involving shift work with frequent disturbances to sleep and meal routines;
- complying with strict timings and procedures;
- sharing accommodation with 6-30 others;
- tolerating a restricted range of food;
- coping with separation from family and friends for long periods; and
- managing self and others in stressful and dangerous situations.

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## **Emergency Exercises**

All personnel are expected to be able to contribute to the handling of emergency situations resulting from accidents and combat. Training involves control of disaster situations, casualty treatment and transportation, and fire-fighting (including wearing of breathing apparatus or masks).

## **Exercises**

Besides exercising the above emergency procedures, all personnel will be involved in combat exercises, including gunnery and missile firings. Exercises frequently involve working a roster system under simulated combat conditions for extended periods up to several weeks. This involves wearing special protective equipment, limited opportunity to move about, irregular meals, and often a noisy environment with uncontrolled lighting and/or ventilation. There is also frequent disruption to sleep.

Personnel responses and decision-making are evaluated in these stressful environments.

## **Combat**

All the activities described above (under headings of Routine, Emergency and Exercises) would be undertaken during actual combat with the added stress of real threat to life.

Casualties resulting from fire, explosion, shell and missile attacks would be expected. All personnel would be expected to take control of any situation within their area of responsibility and to assist in the control of damage, fire, and the treatment of injured personnel.

## **Fitness for service**

Decisions on fitness for entry to the NZDF are based on whether the candidate is considered to be 'fit' to undertake the physically-demanding basic training course, and whether the candidate is likely to remain fit for operational service in the longer term. This means that individuals with pre-existing, chronic or recurring conditions (physical, medical, or psychological) that could be aggravated during the training period, or could compromise their ability to undertake the full range of military activities may not be considered fit for entry to the NZDF.