

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**“Paradoxical alchemy”: An examination of  
the New Zealand Special Operations Forces’  
relationships in key security networks.**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Defence and Security Studies

at Massey University, Wellington,

New Zealand

Miriam Lesley Wharton

2021

This thesis has been completed as private study undertaken by the researcher. Except where explicitly cited, the views expressed in this thesis are the researcher's own and do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of the New Zealand Defence Force, the New Zealand Government, or any agency, organisation or individual other than the researcher.

## **Abstract**

Drawing on thirty-five interviews with senior military and security personnel, this thesis investigates how the New Zealand Special Operations Forces (NZSOF) maintain their relationships across three key security networks. The three networks are the 'New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), the New Zealand National Security Sector (NZNSS), and the Five Special Operations Forces (5SOF). The thesis specifically focuses on how the NZSOF formally and informally engage within these network relationships. The research identifies fifteen common characteristics that the NZSOF exhibit when engaging in these relationships. It then analyses two additional overarching characteristics displayed across these three networks: commonality and utility. Once the characteristics are defined, it then examines how the seventeen relational characteristics feed into the NZSOF's relational dynamics. The thesis finds that, at times, paradoxical relationships can also occur when liminality, ambiguity, and tension manifest in these relational dynamics. The research argues that the NZSOF have two possible approaches to these paradoxes, either to resolve them through changing their relational characteristics, potentially sacrificing their relational dynamism, or they can harness their paradoxical characteristics to support their security relationships, that also potentially comes at a cost. The thesis concludes by exploring the latter option which requires the NZSOF to employ a paradoxical alchemy, to hold the tensions in balance. However, alchemy is not a simple proposition; it is an inherently complex idea that necessitates active

management, creativity, and more than a little magic. This will be the future challenge for the NZSOF's contemporary security relationships.

## Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been completed without the diligent advice, expertise, patience, support and occasional pressure of my supervisors, Rhys Ball and William Hoverd. They were discerning to know when I needed encouragement and when I needed a (smaller or larger) push to keep going. Their mentorship and subject matter expertise have made the thesis stronger. I am grateful that they have remained the cornerstone of my support team through this lengthy process.

I would like to thank the Centre for Defence and Security Studies at Massey University for being my academic home while I conducted my research. Individually and collectively, the Centre staff have been supportive and proactive in lending their knowledge and encouragement when I requested it.

The New Zealand Defence Force has consistently encouraged my professional development. I am grateful to the innumerable individuals who have shown interest in the thesis and my personal wellbeing. Special thanks go to the New Zealand Special Operations Forces community, the Coeus breakfast club and the Defence Force library staff for their encouragement and practical support. Thank you to Chris Parsons for the phrase that encapsulates the heart of the thesis, "paradoxical alchemy". Thank you also to the Kaitohutohu NZDF | NZDF Māori Cultural Adviser who reviewed and provided advice on the use of the taiaha metaphor in Chapter 3.

I am also thankful to the international special operations forces community, both practitioners and scholars, who have supported and encouraged my research.

Opportunities to present elements of my work and to discuss concepts with them comprise favourite memories of this journey.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the New Zealand Special Air Service Trust and Massey University's Conference Presentation Grants Committee for supporting this thesis with financial assistance grants.

Finally, I want to thank my family and friends who have believed in and supported me. They have my deepest love and thanks. My relationships with them are the true meaning of success.

# Table of Contents

Abstract .....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vii
List of Illustrative Material.....	xii
Figures .....	xii
Tables.....	xiii
Acronyms and Abbreviations .....	xiv
1: The New Zealand Special Operations Forces and Relationships.....	1
1.0 Introduction .....	1
1.1 Secondary literature.....	4
1.1.1 Special operations forces popular literature: mainstream histories .....	5
1.1.2 Special operations forces popular literature: biographies .....	10
1.1.3 Special operations forces popular literature: media commentary .....	19
1.1.4 Special operations forces scholarly literature: The New Zealand Special Operations Forces 25	
1.1.5 Special operations forces scholarly literature: international special operations forces.....	29
1.1.6 Special operations forces scholarly literature: interdisciplinary New Zealand national security literatures.....	36
1.2 Identified gaps in the secondary literature.....	41
1.3 Conceptual framework .....	45
1.3.1 The network framework .....	46
1.3.2 Relationships as an analytical concept.....	51
1.3.3 The bricolage approach .....	52
1.4 Chapter summaries .....	56
2: Methodology .....	63
2.0 Introduction .....	63
2.1 The emic-etic researcher.....	64
2.2 Bricolage and a nexus of networks.....	66
2.3 Sourcing primary and interview literature .....	67
2.3.1 Primary literature .....	68
2.3.2 Interviews with subject matter experts .....	77
2.3.3 Coding, and thematic and comparative analysis .....	89
2.4 Limitations of the methodology .....	94



2.5	Conclusion .....	96
3:	Understanding the New Zealand Special Operations Forces .....	98
3.0	Introduction .....	98
	Section I .....	99
3.1	The <i>taiaha</i> metaphor: Understanding the NZSOF through their history and force elements .....	99
	Section II .....	112
3.2	General characteristics of the NZSOF .....	112
3.2.1	Unconventional .....	113
3.2.2	Evolutionary .....	115
3.2.3	Strategic .....	119
3.2.4	Opaque .....	121
3.3	Conclusion .....	124
4:	New Zealand Defence Force, the NZSOF's Hierarchical Network .....	127
4.0	Introduction .....	127
	Section I .....	128
4.1	Analysing the NZDF network as a hierarchy .....	128
4.1.1	Organisational structure .....	129
4.1.2	Ranks .....	134
	Section II .....	138
4.2	Relational characteristics: The NZSOF in NZDF .....	138
4.2.1	Belonging .....	139
4.2.2	Disconnection .....	143
4.2.3	Integration .....	148
4.2.4	Independence .....	151
4.3	Conclusion .....	155
5:	New Zealand National Security System, the NZSOF's Amorphous Network .....	157
5.0	Introduction .....	157
	Section I .....	158
5.1	Analysing the NZNSS network as amorphous .....	158
5.1.1	National security .....	158
5.1.2	All-of-Government .....	161
5.1.3	Operationalising the NZNSS network .....	165
	Section II .....	168
5.2	Relational characteristics: The NZSOF in NZNSS .....	168
5.2.1	Integration .....	168

5.2.2	Collaboration .....	172
5.2.3	Siloisation .....	177
5.2.4	Political sponsorship .....	181
5.3	Conclusion .....	189
6:	Five Special Operations Forces, the NZSOF's Community Network .....	192
6.0	Introduction .....	192
	Section I .....	193
6.1	Analysing the 5SOF network as a community .....	193
6.1.1	Structure .....	194
6.1.2	Community .....	198
	Section II .....	205
6.2	Relational characteristics: The NZSOF in 5SOF .....	205
6.2.1	Formalisation .....	206
6.2.2	Size .....	212
6.2.3	Pragmatism .....	216
6.3	Conclusion .....	222
7:	Analysing the NZSOF's Ego Node Relational Characteristics .....	225
7.0	Introduction .....	225
7.1	Reorganising the characteristics: overarching characteristics and subordinate characteristics .....	227
7.2	Overarching and subordinate characteristics: commonality .....	228
7.2.1	Commonality in the NZDF network .....	229
7.2.2	Commonality in the NZNSS network .....	232
7.2.3	Commonality in the 5SOF network .....	234
7.2.4	Commonality as an overarching relational characteristic .....	237
7.3	Overarching and subordinated characteristics: utility .....	239
7.3.1	Utility in the NZDF network .....	239
7.3.2	Utility in the NZNSS network .....	243
7.3.3	Utility in the 5SOF network .....	247
7.3.4	Utility as an overarching relational characteristic .....	250
7.4	Illustrating the overarching and subordinate characteristics: the Operation BURNHAM inquiry 251	
7.4.1	Operation BURNHAM inquiry and the NZDF network .....	254
7.4.2	Operation BURNHAM inquiry in the NZNSS network .....	256
7.4.3	Operation BURNHAM inquiry in the 5SOF network .....	258

7.4.4	Operation BURNHAM inquiry as an illustration of ego node relational characteristics	260
7.5	Conclusion	264
8:	The NZSOF's Relational Dynamics – Paradoxical Alchemy?	266
8.0	Introduction	266
8.1	Relational dynamics	267
8.2	Liminality	268
8.3	Ambiguity	271
8.4	Tension	274
8.5	Paradox and paradoxical alchemy	278
8.5.1	Finding a paradoxical alchemy	280
8.6	Conclusion	282
9:	The Paradoxical Alchemy of the NZSOF's Relationships	284
9.0	Introduction: the research questions	284
9.1	Establishing the structure and language of the research	285
9.2	Identifying and analysing the NZSOF's relational characteristics	286
9.3	Assessing the implications of the NZSOF's relational characteristics	290
9.4	Final Thoughts	296
	Bibliography	300
	Audio-visual materials	300
	Interviews	300
	Media articles	302
	New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Ministry of Defence sources	309
	New Zealand legislation	313
	Publications	313
	Websites	334
	Appendix A: Interview Questions	339
A.0	Preamble	339
A.1	Questions	339
A.1.1	Closed questions	340
A.1.2	Open questions	340
	Glossary	342



# List of Illustrative Material

## Figures

Figure 1-1	Diagram of a Generic Network	49
Figure 1-2	Diagram of a Generic Ego Node Network	49
Figure 3-1	The NZSOF's Force Element Structure	101
Figure 3-2	The NZSOF as a <i>Taiaha</i>	102
Figure 4-1	Regiments in New Zealand Army Order of Battle	130
Figure 4-2	Simple NZDF Hierarchy Structure	131
Figure 4-3	The NZSOF's Command and Control Arrangements	132
Figure 4-4	Added Complexity in the NZDF Hierarchy	133
Figure 6-1	5SOF Community Structure	194
Figure 6-2	Added Complexity in the 5SOF Network	197

## **Tables**

Table 1-1	The NZSOF's Characteristics (An Evolving Table)	60
Table 2-1	Interview Participants	78
Table 2-2	Interview Demographics by Network	90
Table 2-3	Interview Demographics by Rank	91
Table 2-4	Interview Demographics by Civilian / Uniform	91
Table 2-5	Interview Demographics by Gender	92
Table 3-1	The NZSOF's Characteristics (An Evolving Table)	125
Table 4-1	NZDF Commissioned Ranks	136
Table 4-2	NZDF Non-Commissioned Ranks	137
Table 4-3	The NZSOF's Characteristics (An Evolving Table)	155
Table 5-1	The NZSOF's Characteristics (An Evolving Table)	189
Table 6-1	The NZSOF's Characteristics (An Evolving Table)	223
Table 7-1	The NZSOF's Characteristics (An Evolving Table)	226

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

<i>Acronym / Abbreviation</i>	<i>Term</i>
1 NZSAS Regt	1st New Zealand Special Air Service Regiment
5SOF	Five Special Operations Forces [NZ, AU, CA, UK, US]
AFSOC	Air Force Special Operations Command [US]
AIRCDRE	Air Commodore
AUSAS	Australian Special Air Service
AUSOF	Australian Special Operations Forces
BRIG	Brigadier General
BRUSA	Britain – United States of America agreement
C4ISR	Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
CAPT	Captain
CASOF	Canadian Special Operations Forces
CBRE	Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Explosive
CDRE	Commodore
CDSS	Centre for Defence and Security Studies
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads Of Government Meeting

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency [US]
COL	Colonel
CTTAG	Counter Terrorist Tactical Assault Group
DPMC	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
DSO	Directorate of Special Operations
FVEY	Five Eyes [NZ, AU, CA, UK, US]
GCSB	Government Communications Security Bureau
GSN	Global Special Operations Forces Network
HON	Honourable
HQJFNZ	Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand
JSOC	Joint Special Operations Command [US]
JTF2	Joint Task Force 2 [CA]
LRDG	Long Range Desert Group
LTCOL	Lieutenant Colonel
LTGEN	Lieutenant General
MAJ	Major
MAJGEN	Major General
MARSOC	Marine Forces Special Operations Command [US]
MBIE	Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment



MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAVSPECWARCOM	Naval Special Warfare Command [US]
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NZDDP	New Zealand Defence Doctrine Publication
NZDF	New Zealand Defence Force
NZNSS	New Zealand National Security System
NZSAS	New Zealand Special Air Service
NZSIS	New Zealand Security Intelligence Service
NZSOF	New Zealand Special Operations Forces
ODESC	Officials Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination
OSS	Office of Strategic Services [US]
PASSWG	Pacific Area Security Sector Working Group [US-sponsored]
RADM	Rear Admiral
SAS	Special Air Service
SASR	Special Air Service Regiment [AU]

SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation
SGT	Sergeant
SOE	Special Operations Executive [UK]
SOLO	Special Operations Liaison Officer
STG	Special Tactics Group
UKSAS	United Kingdom Special Air Service
UKSOF	United Kingdom Special Operations Forces
USASOC	United States Army Special Operations Command
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
USSOF	United States Special Operations Forces
WO1	Warrant Officer Class 1

*NOTE: Acronyms and abbreviations are New Zealand-specific, unless otherwise specified in the term or in square brackets after the term.*

# 1: The New Zealand Special Operations Forces and Relationships

## 1.0 Introduction

...New Zealand soldiering is based on respect and relationships rather than status and position.<sup>1</sup>

Frank Rennie, the first commander of the New Zealand Special Air Service (NZSAS) and ostensible parent of today's New Zealand Special Operations Forces (NZSOF), believed relationships were the foundation upon which New Zealand's soldiering was built. This was a simple and profound claim. It suggests that interactions between human beings, rather than social or cultural constructs (rank or position), fundamentally define the military experience. The accuracy of Rennie's historical proposition might today be tested against any individual military force element or series of force elements. This thesis applies the test to the NZSOF in a contemporary context.<sup>2</sup> It takes Rennie's proposition as an opportunity to examine the NZSOF through a *relational* lens, to discover whether relationships could provide an analytic through which to better understand how they bureaucratically interact across a number of domains.

---

<sup>1</sup> Frank Rennie, *Regular Soldier: A Life in the New Zealand Army* (Auckland: Endeavour Press 1986), 9. Rennie's military career spanned World War II in the Pacific and Cold War counter-insurgency conflicts in South-east Asia.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-D New Zealand Defence Doctrine," 4th ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2017), 82: A 'force element' is defined in this thesis as a military entity that directly contributes to the delivery of military outputs.

The thesis focuses on the NZSOF's relationships inside three key security networks.

These networks are the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), the New Zealand National Security Sector (NZNSS), and the Five Special Operations Forces (5SOF). 5SOF is an original term devised for the thesis. This new term encompasses the interrelations between the Western special operations forces from New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.<sup>3</sup>

The three key security networks were selected because they have immediate relational value to the NZSOF's everyday business and they allow for analysis within a larger military organisation, across government and with international partners. The NZDF is the network within which the NZSOF exist as military force elements. The NZNSS network is an all-of-government evolving national security construct to which any state instrument (including the NZSOF) might be called to respond and contribute collaboratively to the national interest. The 5SOF network is comprised of force elements that are the NZSOF's equivalent force elements from its international Western partners with whom the NZSOF retain long-standing historical ties. The purpose of selecting these three networks is to build a comprehensive analytical understanding of how the NZSOF build, maintain, and perhaps hinder relationships across their local community (NZDF), nation (NZNSS) and the world (5SOF).

To direct its analysis, the thesis asks two central research questions:

- (1) What relational characteristics shape the NZSOF's relationships in key security networks?

---

<sup>3</sup> 5SOF was created as a special operations forces version of the Five Eyes (FVEY) group of states – New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

(2) What implications do those relational characteristics have for how the NZSOF engage in relationships with others in key security networks?

As the thesis develops its answers to the research questions across its chapter content, it offers a unique and significant contribution to knowledge in three primary ways. First, the findings are situated within and add to the scant scholarship about the NZSOF and to the nascent international interdisciplinary special operations forces field. Second, it develops a conceptual framework that integrates notions of relationships, networks, and bricolage that is applied to its analysis of the NZSOF's contemporary relationships. Third, this conceptual analysis is applied to a comprehensive empirical data source drawn from thirty-five original interviews. This dataset represents a body of knowledge unique to the field. As such, this thesis offers the interdisciplinary field of special operations forces empirical data-driven insight into how contemporary the NZSOF build, maintain, and potentially hinder its relationships with a variety of security partners.

The research findings will be of interest to special operations forces scholars who currently only have a small amount of literature about the NZSOF available to them. Because it situates the NZSOF in relation to 5SOF, the thesis contributes to the growing literature devoted to small state special operations forces in a field understandably dominated by research about larger special operations forces. In addition, the thesis will be of interest to the NZSOF. It offers them the opportunity to be self-reflective about the ramifications of how they approach relationships with their partners, particularly in the three networks examined. It will also be of interest to those network partners with whom the NZSOF conduct relationships. The three networks (and perhaps

others) will be able to extract a deeper understanding of how the NZSOF maintain their bureaucratic relationships with their partners.

To summarise, Chapter 1 thus far has introduced the thesis origins, the research questions, the contribution to knowledge, and noted potential audiences for the research. The remainder of the chapter will: (1) locate the thesis within four literatures, and (2) develop a framework that supports the research through three key concepts – networks, relationships, and bricolage.

## **1.1 Secondary literature**

The NZSOF and international special operations forces literatures were reviewed to understand the currently available literature relevant to this thesis. What became immediately apparent in these literatures was that popular literatures – histories, biographies (including autobiographies), and media commentary – are the most evident, accessible sources.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, the literature review begins with an analysis of those genres. It then moves to situate the research questions in relation to special operations forces scholarly literature, which forms the second half of the literature review. The scholarly literature is still relatively nascent, but the strength of emerging research suggests knowledge about special operations forces is developing and maturing quickly.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> In its use of terminology this thesis makes a clear distinction between ‘special operations’ which are activities, actions or events, and ‘special operations forces’ who are the human beings who carry out those activities, actions or events.

<sup>5</sup> Scholarly literature is supported by the special operations forces community to some degree where that community sees value in research being conducted that answers some of its own

In examining special operations forces scholarly literature it became evident that a holistic understanding of the NZSOF's relationships must also include an understanding of the NZSOF's New Zealand domestic security environment. This fact was borne out in the interviews the researcher began to conduct around the same time; participants' answers to interview questions offered contextual information about national security. Therefore, New Zealand national security literature is also reviewed in this chapter. The literature review is structured in four parts:

- Special operations forces popular literature: mainstream histories
- Special operations forces popular literature: biographies
- Special operations forces popular literature: media commentary
- Special operations forces scholarly literature:
  - The New Zealand Special Operations Forces
  - International special operations forces
  - Interdisciplinary New Zealand national security literatures

### **1.1.1 Special operations forces popular literature: mainstream histories**

Mainstream histories enable researchers and general interest readers to better understand special operations forces without having to access official information not available to the public. They offer important insights to this thesis, particularly as contextual information about specific relationships, events, cultural norms, and political utility that characterise current special operations forces. Mainstream histories provide

---

self-reflective questions. See New Zealand Defence Force, "Special operations research topics 2019," March 2019; Joint Special Operations University, "Special operations research topics 2020: Revised edition for academic year 2021," The Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2020, [https://jsou.libguides.com/ld.php?content\\_id=55347911](https://jsou.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=55347911).

not just a background understanding of special operations forces, but also provide much of the substantive content publicly available about them as well. In relation to the NZSOF, for example, both the earliest comprehensive mainstream history of the force elements, written by a United States teacher and former serviceperson – W.D. Baker’s *‘Dare to Win’: The Story of the New Zealand Special Air Service* – and the more recent comprehensive history written by a New Zealand historian – Ron Crosby’s *NZSAS: The First Fifty Years* – combine an historical approach with some reflections on the NZSOF as contemporary force elements.<sup>6</sup> Crosby’s book was far more detailed than Baker’s because the author had the advantage of a closer association with the NZSOF while writing his history, as opposed to Baker’s book which only received NZSAS Association support.<sup>7</sup> Crosby’s work in particular was used in the thesis to give historical detail or context to a piece of analysis, particularly in Chapter 3 which examines the NZSOF as the ego node of the research.

Within the genre, histories of the NZSOF were also found within broader historical literature. Again, the value of those sources is to provide contextual knowledge. For example, Brendon O’Carroll’s series of books on the New Zealand involvement with the Long Range Desert Group (LRDG) in World War II provides the context of a special operations force relevant but prior to the establishment of the NZSOF in their contemporary form.<sup>8</sup> Those works also connect to similar international mainstream

---

<sup>6</sup> W.D. Baker, *‘Dare to Win’: The Story of the New Zealand Special Air Service* (Nashville: The Battery Press, Inc., 1987); Ron Crosby, *NZSAS: The First Fifty Years* (North Shore: Viking, 2009).

<sup>7</sup> Crosby, *NZSAS*, 12-21; Baker, *‘Dare to Win’*, vi.

<sup>8</sup> Brendon O’Carroll, *Kiwi Scorpions: The Story of the New Zealanders in the Long Range Desert Group* (Devon: Token Publishers, 2000); Brendon O’Carroll, *Barce Raid: The Long Range Desert Group’s Greatest Escapade* (Wellington: Ngaio Press, 2005); Brendon O’Carroll, *The Long Range Desert Group in the Aegean* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword Military, 2020).



histories such as Ben Macintyre's *SAS: Rogue Heroes* which also mentions the LRDG and New Zealand's involvement in that unit.<sup>9</sup> Christopher Pugsley's *From Emergency to Confrontation: The New Zealand Armed Forces in Malaya and Borneo 1949-66* and John Crawford and Glyn Harper's *Operation East Timor: The New Zealand Defence Force in East Timor 1999-2001* are examples of histories where the NZSOF appear in broader historical narratives.<sup>10</sup> Many mainstream histories have an operational (or operations-adjacent) focus dissimilar to the bureaucratic focus of this thesis. Unlike the NZSOF mainstream histories mentioned in the previous paragraph, the value to this thesis of broader historical literature that contained pieces of the NZSOF-related material is peripheral. While they contain individual nuggets of information that could be used in the thesis (for example, Pugsley's reflections on the New Zealand Special Air Service's (NZSAS) relationship to the British Special Air Service (SAS) in Borneo referenced in Chapter 6), even contextually they are of limited utility because the information available is in smaller quantities and less directly relevant to a contemporary study of the NZSOF.

Although the international special operations forces mainstream historical literature is more extensive than historical literature about the NZSOF, similar issues of peripheral relevance, operational focus, and lack of deep observation or analysis of contemporary relationships arise when considering relevance to this thesis. General histories of special

---

<sup>9</sup> Ben Macintyre, *SAS: Rogue Heroes* (UK: Penguin Books, 2017), 54, 57, 59-60.

<sup>10</sup> Christopher Pugsley, *From Emergency to Confrontation: The New Zealand Armed Forces in Malaya and Borneo 1949-66* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2003): chapters 4 and 9, and appendices 5 and 11; John Crawford and Glyn Harper, *Operation East Timor: The New Zealand Defence Force in East Timor 1999-2001* (Auckland: Reed Books, 2001). See also Richard Harman, "Duel of the Davids: The standoff of 19 May," *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 22 (1998).

operations forces in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America are available in greater quantities, particularly for the latter two states because they possess larger populations in terms of not only size, influence and operational activity, but also readership markets.<sup>11</sup> They offer some contextual knowledge about how these types of force elements evolved over time, for example Derek Leebaert's *To Dare and To Conquer: Special Operations and the Destiny of Nations, from Achilles to Al Qaeda* or Max Boot's *Invisible Armies: An Epic History of Guerrilla Warfare from Ancient Times to the Present*.<sup>12</sup> Every so often those international sources make specific reference to the NZSOF, for example the Australian Ian McPhedran and the British author Tony Geraghty, or mention interactions with the NZSOF that are anecdotal

---

<sup>11</sup> David Horner, *SAS Phantoms of War: A History of the Australian Special Air Service* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2002); David Horner with Neil Thomas, *In Action with the SAS* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2009); Bernd Horn, *Shadow Warriors: The Canadian Special Operations Forces Command* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2016); Bernd Horn, "The Canadian Special Air Service Company" (monograph 22, CANSOFCOM Education & Research Centre, Ottawa, 2017); Michael Asher, *The Regiment: The Real Story of the SAS* (London: Penguin Books, 2008); Ken Connor, *Ghost Force: The Secret History of the SAS* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998); William Fowler, *SAS Behind Enemy Lines: Covert Operations 1941 to the Present Day* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997); Michael Graham, *Secret SAS Missions in Africa: C Squadron's Counter-Terrorist Operations 1968-1980* (Yorkshire: Pen & Sword, 2018); Macintyre, *SAS: Rogue Heroes*, Alastair MacKenzie, *Special Force: The Untold Story of 22nd Special Air Service Regiment (SAS)* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011); Mike Ryan, *Secret Operations of the SAS: From the Deserts of Africa to the Mountains of Afghanistan* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword Books, 2003); Mir Bahmanyar, *Shadow Warriors: A History of the US Army Rangers* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2005); Mark Moyar, *Oppose Any Foe: The Rise of America's Special Operations Forces* (New York: Basic Books, 2017); Sean Naylor, *Relentless Strike: The Secret History of Joint Special Operations Command* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015); Michael Smith, *Killer Elite: The Inside Story of America's Most Secret Special Operations Team* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2006); Eric Blehm, *The Only Thing Worth Dying For: How Eleven Green Berets Forged a New Afghanistan* (New York: Harper, 2010); Daniel R. Green, *In the Warlords' Shadow: Special Operations Forces, the Afghans, and Their Fight Against the Taliban* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2017).

<sup>12</sup> Jeremy Black, ed., *Elite Fighting Forces: From the Praetorian Guard to the Green Berets* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2011); Derek Leebaert, *To Dare and To Conquer: Special Operations and the Destiny of Nations, from Achilles to Al Qaeda* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2006); Max Boot, *Invisible Armies: An Epic History of Guerrilla Warfare from Ancient Times to the Present* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2013).

evidence of the NZSOF's relationships.<sup>13</sup> While these tangentially related sources have some relevance to the subject at hand and complement the NZSOF's mainstream histories, they lack the necessary depth of observation or analysis to be of significant research value.

Mainstream histories of special operations forces provide some useful historical context to understand the development of the NZSOF and other special operations forces since their origins to the beginning of the twenty-first century. As might be expected of the genre, however, these histories do not typically (or in detail) examine special operations forces as contemporary force elements. Critically, they do not examine special operations forces relationships in any specificity, other than as one aspect among many of how those force elements acted through their histories. Similarly, those histories lack the analytic rigour of interdisciplinary special operations forces scholarly literature.

The gaps identified in mainstream historical literature about the NZSOF and international special operations forces contributed to the need for this thesis and its particular focus. Specifically, the thesis helps to address two gaps:

- The thesis examines the NZSOF as contemporary force elements, rather than as historical force elements.

---

<sup>13</sup> This happens not just in histories but in more thematic sources, such as Dick Couch, *The Finishing School: Earning the Navy SEAL Trident* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2004), 209-210: [Lynn Kunkle] "I spent three months in New Zealand at the advanced SAS tracking school. I learned a lot from those guys"; and Andy McNab, *Seven Troop* (London: Transworld Digital, 2008) where the author recounts visits to New Zealand in the 1980s. Tony Geraghty, in particular, has devoted specific chapters in his histories of the British Special Air Service, to the NZSOF: Tony Geraghty, *Who Dares Wins: The Story of the Special Air Service, 1950-1980* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1980); Tony Geraghty, *This is the SAS: A Pictorial History of the Special Air Service Regiment* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1982). See also Ian McPhedran, *Soldiers Without Borders: Beyond the SAS* (Sydney: HarperCollins, 2010).

- The thesis specifically focuses on the NZSOF's relationships, a topic within the genre that was not previously addressed in a systematic way.

### **1.1.2 Special operations forces popular literature: biographies**

In contextualising this thesis's scholarship about the NZSOF's relationships within a wider understanding of existing literature, the second popular literature genre readily apparent and available for public consumption were special operations forces biographies (including autobiographies). The mainstream histories provide a general context for more specific scholarly work while biographies provide some more specific but *ad hoc* narratives of special operations forces relationships. Biographies are individual historical narratives, told from the perspective of or about a single person. They are focused on the human experience of individuals, which the thesis argues inevitably involves the establishment and maintenance of relationships. An examination of contemporary special operations forces literature reveals that biographies are comparatively few in number. Special operations forces have been described as "quiet professionals" which suggest they tend not to discuss their activities publicly, but individuals in the community are also strongly discouraged or even prohibited from speaking out about their experiences.<sup>14</sup> Notwithstanding that point, special operations

---

<sup>14</sup> Jim Dorschner, "Quiet professionals," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, June 2015; Thomas Gibbons-Neff, "Top U.S. special operations general: 'We're hurting ourselves' with all these movies and books," *Washington Post*, 15 September 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2016/09/15/top-u-s-special-forces-general-were-hurting-ourselves-with-all-these-movies-and-books/>; "SAS men are ordered never to write books," *Independent*, 23 October 2011, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/sas-men-are-ordered-never-write-books-1356609.html>; Martin Gould, "EXCLUSIVE – SEALS AT WAR: Fellow warriors brand Rob O'Neill a LIAR after he claims he was the shooter who fired three bullets into Bin Laden's head," *Daily Mail Australia*, 07 November 2014, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2824136/Fellow-SEALs-turn-Team-Six-member-going-public-bin-Laden-killing-Rob-O-Neill-not-truthful-telling-fired-three-bullets-terror-mastermind->

forces biographies do exist in both the NZSOF and international special operations forces literature and, like mainstream histories, offer both contextual knowledge and specific examples of relationships to the thesis.

The personal experiences outlined in biographies offer some rich examples of relationships and useful insights or contextual knowledge for this research. Rennie's proposition at the beginning of this thesis came from his autobiography, written initially in 1986 (with a revised edition in 2012).<sup>15</sup> Aside from its conceptual usefulness in initiating the researcher's thoughts about her work, the content of Rennie's autobiography represented the recollections of the NZSOF's 'parent', the individual who above any others in New Zealand military history was associated with the NZSOF. Therefore, for example, his reflections on the curiosity and lack of clarity in NZDF about the New Zealand Special Air Service (NZSAS) in 1955 demonstrate the ambiguity inherent in the relationship between the NZSOF and other NZDF network nodes in a historical context, which is relevant to the discussion of the opaque descriptive characteristic in Chapter 3 or the ambiguity product of the NZSOF's relational dynamic in Chapter 8:

Early in 1955 at Waiouru...There was quite a buzz at breakfast in the officers' mess, especially because the commitment had been identified as 'SAS'. What did SAS stand for? What did they do? How did they do it? Some believed the 'service' part of the title

---

[s-head.html](#); Nick Ryan, "The SAS man who wouldn't stay quiet," *The Irish Times*, 23 March 2004, <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/the-sas-man-who-wouldn-t-stay-quiet-1.1136564>.

<sup>15</sup> Rennie, *Regular Soldier*, 9.

meant that it would be part of the Army Service Corps, others considered that 'air' identified it with the Air Force. Few, if any, had any idea of what sort of unit it was...<sup>16</sup>

Rennie's autobiography is a prominent example of the biography genre and an example of how there was some relevance and contextual knowledge from those sources. Another example of the genre, high-profile but less relevant to the thesis than Rennie's book because its information was generally focused at the operational and tactical levels, was the biography of the most recent Victoria Cross for New Zealand winner, Corporal Willie Apiata, VC.<sup>17</sup> What becomes clear when examining these sources is that while biographies are full of reflections about relationships with other people, they deliver no systematic, rigorous analysis of those relationships, rather recounting events as they were remembered without much further reflection.

Other former soldiers wrote about their time in the NZSOF in greater or lesser detail, for example Tim Keating, or Jerry Mateparae (a future New Zealand Governor General and Chief of Defence Force), or Mike Coburn.<sup>18</sup> Michael Williams' autobiography *Shooting from the Shadows: New Zealand Special Air Service, the 'Wings' Williams*

---

<sup>16</sup> Frank Rennie, *Regular Soldier: A Life in the New Zealand Army* (Christchurch: Willsonscott Publishing International Ltd., 2012), 147-148.

<sup>17</sup> Paul Little, *Willie Apiata VC: The Reluctant Hero* (North Shore: Viking, 2008). That book was supplemented by a video documentary, "Reluctant hero", which served as a partner piece to the book: "Reluctant hero: Cpl. Willie Apiata, VC," directed by Steven O'Meagher, 2008, DVD, Auckland: Desert Road.

<sup>18</sup> Wayne Thompson, "A grunt's dream soldier," *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 5 (1994): 7-10; Tim Keating, "The relentless pursuit of excellence," in *Leaders Like You: New Zealand Leaders Share Stories of Courage, Failure and Commitment*, ed. Nick Sceats and Andrea Thompson (Wellington: Catapult Publishing, 2017); Mike Coburn, *Soldier Five: The Real Story of the Bravo Two Zero Mission* (Auckland: Mission Vista Ltd., 2004); also Alan Brosnan and Duke Henry, with Bob Taubert, *Soldiering On: The Stories of Two Former Kiwi SAS Men and their Continuing World-Wide Careers of Adventure* (Southaven: Alan Brosnan and TEES, 2002).

*Story*<sup>19</sup> is an example of an older member of the NZSOF writing his memoirs, and Craig Wilson's *Bravo Kiwi: New Zealand Soldiers, Afghanistan and the Battle of Baghak*<sup>20</sup> an example of a more recent former member of the NZSOF reflecting on his experiences.<sup>21</sup> Wilson's biography, in particular, is interesting. The book is not a reflection directly on his experience in the NZSOF, but he is frank about his emotions relating to the NZSOF's community, a representation of communal feeling shared within that community which in this thesis translates to the NZSOF's relationships in the 5SOF network (Chapter 6):

It had just sunk in that I would never work in the Special Forces (SF) again. Different emotions washed over me every few steps; first anger, then shame, then disbelief, then worry and finally a degree of acceptance. I had not been ready for this and I felt like I had been blindsided...this news was like being removed from a family, my family. It was hard to take. As I searched for reasons why, it was difficult not to be blameful. But no amount of anger and blame was going to change reality.<sup>22</sup>

Wilson also recounts taking the NZSOF's approaches to military practice and philosophy and applying them to conventional forces. This is an example of the linkages (specifically the belonging and integration characteristics outlined in Chapter 4) that exist through relationships between unconventional and conventional force elements in the NZDF network:

---

<sup>19</sup> Michael Williams, *Shooting from the Shadows: New Zealand Special Air Service, the 'Wings' Williams Story* (Waikanae: John Douglas Publishing, 2019).

<sup>20</sup> Craig Wilson, *Bravo Kiwi: New Zealand Soldiers, Afghanistan and the Battle of Baghak* (Auckland: Bateman Books, 2018).

<sup>21</sup> Alastair MacKenzie, *Pilgrim Days: From Vietnam to the SAS* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2019). MacKenzie was a member of both the New Zealand Defence Force and the United Kingdom's Special Air Service during his career.

<sup>22</sup> Wilson, *Bravo Kiwi*, 16.

I encouraged them to take on the traits that make the New Zealand Special Air Service (NZSAS) so exceptional. They worked hard and understood their jobs in detail, they took on more responsibilities at all levels, and they were professional. They understood that there was a lot more to learn, and that their enemies were to be respected. They knew how to have fun, how to defeat the boredom and remain sharp. They had discipline, both personal and professional, and we all respected each other, regardless of rank. My NZSAS comrades, whom I still revere, would be proud.<sup>23</sup>

Insights about the NZSOF's characteristics and qualities were revealed through Wilson's autobiographical recollection. The anecdotes present in biographies about the NZSOF's members are useful to the thesis in that they continue to build a picture of the NZSOF's relationships in different contexts and variations, all of which create a more holistic picture of those relationships.

International special operations forces' biographical literature is larger in size than that of the NZSOF. This should be expected considering the relative size of the NZSOF in comparison with individual and collective international peers. Those sources range from autobiographical recollections of founding members, for example Charlie Beckwith's *Delta Force: The U.S. Counter-Terrorist Unit and the Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission*,<sup>24</sup> to those of senior commanders like Peter de la Billiere's *Looking for Trouble: SAS to Gulf Command; The Autobiography*,<sup>25</sup> Stanley McChrystal's *My Share of the Task: A*

---

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>24</sup> Charlie A. Beckwith and Donald Knox, *Delta Force: The U.S. Counter-Terrorist Unit and the Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1984).

<sup>25</sup> Peter de la Billiere, *Looking for Trouble: SAS to Gulf Command; The Autobiography* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994).



*Memoir*<sup>26</sup> and William H. McRaven's *Sea Stories: My Life in Special Operations*.<sup>27</sup> More junior members also wrote biographies, for example Anthony "Harry" Moffitt's *Eleven Bats: A Story of Combat, Cricket and the SAS*.<sup>28</sup> Individuals involved in significant events in international special operations history also sometimes wrote biographies, for example Mark Owen's *No Easy Day: The Autobiography of a Navy SEAL*.<sup>29</sup> Some individuals translated their autobiographical experience into commentaries on leadership or other life lessons, for example Bram Connolly's *The Commando Way: A Special Forces Commander's Lessons for Life, Leadership and Success*<sup>30</sup> or Stanley McChrystal's *Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World*.<sup>31</sup> As with the NZSOF's biographical literature, there are some connections between information in those international sources and themes or relational characteristics in the thesis. For example, Beckwith's recounting of his experience with the United Kingdom Special Operations Forces (UKSOF) outlined how he was inspired by and brought back ideas from the UKSOF to the United States and applied those ideas during the development of the United States Special Operations Forces' (USSOF) Delta Force. That experience relates not just to the development of the 5SOF network in general (Chapter 6), but

---

<sup>26</sup> Stanley McChrystal, *My Share of the Task: A Memoir* (New York: Portfolio | Penguin, 2013).

<sup>27</sup> William H. McRaven, *Sea Stories: My Life in Special Operations* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2019).

<sup>28</sup> Anthony Moffitt, *Eleven Bats: A Story of Combat, Cricket and the SAS* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2020).

<sup>29</sup> Mark Owen with Kevin Maurer, *No Easy Day: The Autobiography of a Navy SEAL* (New York: Dutton, 2012); Mark Bowden, *The Finish: The Killing of Osama bin Laden* (London: Grove Press UK, 2012).

<sup>30</sup> Bram Connolly, *The Commando Way: A Special Forces Commander's Lessons for Life, Leadership and Success* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2020).

<sup>31</sup> Stanley McChrystal with Tantum Collins, David Silverman and Chris Fussell, *Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World* (New York: Portfolio | Penguin, 2015); Jocko Willink and Leif Babin, *Extreme Ownership: How U.S. Navy SEALs Lead and Win* (Sydney: Pan Macmillan Australia, 2020).

also to the concept of adaptive emulation as part of the commonality relational characteristic examined in Chapter 7.

Every so often, biographies of individuals outside the special operations forces' community mentions interactions with those force elements. Those sources are useful counter-perspectives to the special operations forces literature (much as the non-NZSOF interview participants for the thesis identified in Chapter 2 offer insights into the NZSOF and international special operations forces). For example, William Slim's views on the utility and organisational impact of special operations forces to the wider military in *Defeat Into Victory: Battling Japan in Burma and India, 1942-1945* reveal both a conventional commander's resistance to the concept of the need for elite force elements and an almost contradictory opinion that in some cases a particular type of unconventional unit was in fact required:

The British Army in the last war spawned a surprising number of special units and formations...I came firmly to the conclusion that such formations, trained, equipped, and mentally adjusted for one kind of operation only, were wasteful. They did not give, militarily, a worth-while return for the resources in men, material and time that they absorbed...There is, however, one kind of special unit which should be retained – that designed to be employed in small parties, usually behind the enemy, on tasks beyond the normal scope of warfare in the field.<sup>32</sup>

Slim's autobiography relates to the ebb-and-flow relationships examined between the NZSOF as unconventional force elements and other NZDF network conventional force

---

<sup>32</sup> William Slim, *Defeat Into Victory: Battling Japan in Burma and India, 1942-1945* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2000), 546-549.

elements, and sometimes the ambivalent nature of that relationship (Chapter 4). It even echoes the intra-5SOF discrepancy in size and operating philosophy between the UKSOF's interest in smaller units in comparison to the much larger units of the USSOF (Chapter 6).<sup>33</sup> Sandy Woodward's *One Hundred Days: The Memoirs of the Falklands Battle Group Commander* offers more specific individual recollections of interactions with special operations forces, for example his description of working in an operations room during planning for the Falkland Islands campaign and his somewhat bemused observation of a Special Air Service officer who was both subtle (the opaque characteristic in Chapter 3) and quietly professional (the utility characteristic in Chapter 7):

...a chap materialized, whom I did not even realize was in the Ops Room. As far as I could tell he had either come straight through the wall, which is made of steel, or out of a cupboard, although he was a bit tall for that. 'I wonder if we might be able to help out, Admiral?' he said quietly. Of course by this time I had identified my resident SAS officer, who always sat in on these meetings, but who somehow never seemed to be there. I've always thought that these people must spend at least half of their time practising the art of vanishing, just disappearing into the woodwork. You never seem able to see them, unless they want to be seen...Anyhow, I was very glad this particular officer had spoken up. It was, he said, the type of operation for which his men were ideally suited.<sup>34</sup>

Slim's and Woodward's autobiographies are examples of how biographies contribute individual relationship anecdotes to this thesis that illustrate wider themes and

---

<sup>33</sup> Asher, *The Regiment*, 362.

<sup>34</sup> Sandy Woodward with Patrick Robinson, *One Hundred Days: The Memoirs of the Falklands Battle Group Commander* (London: Harper Press, 2012), 274-275.

characteristics in the thesis. What remains missing in this literature, as in the literature for the NZSOF, is a systematic, rigorous examination of the relationships mentioned in the text.

Special operations forces biographies provide useful relational anecdotes to understand characteristics exhibited by the NZSOF or other special operations forces in their relationships. They are also a valuable insight into human thoughts and actions that are often missed in broader historical literature. Sometimes, as in Rennie's case (relating to the development of the NZSOF as force elements), those recollections are situated within a wider history of relevance to this thesis. However, they are inevitably focused on a single individual and thus unavoidably subjective because they reflect closely on personal experience. At times they expand to more theoretical discussion (as Slim does), but for the most part biographies remain directed at the individual life story rather than systematic, analytical reflections on relational events or experiences.

The gaps identified in biographical literature about the NZSOF and special operations forces contributed to the need for this thesis. Specifically, the thesis will help to address two gaps:

- The thesis examines the NZSOF's relationships in a broader conceptual and theoretical construct, rather than as individual expressions of subjective experience.
- The thesis applies systematic, analytical rigour to its subject, where biographies utilise a reflective narrative style.

### 1.1.3 Special operations forces popular literature: media commentary

The media plays a particularly important role in holding government agencies to account...It forces agencies to explain their actions, and thereby enables an intelligent and cool-headed assessment of whether these are proportionate...The publication of leaked information by the media...also enables the public to hear both sides of the story.<sup>35</sup>

Contextualising this thesis's scholarship about the NZSOF's relationships within existing literature also led the researcher to a third popular literature genre – media commentary on special operations forces, particularly that dedicated to the NZSOF. Rather than offering general or specific historical contexts for and recollections of relationships, media commentary is typically comprised of short, of-the-moment pieces. Contrastingly, there are also investigative journalism pieces constructed over longer periods of time and which present a more extensive analytical consideration of special operations forces but typically with a specific revelatory focus.<sup>36</sup> In the absence of much literature about the NZSOF (let alone their relationships), media commentary serves to fill some contemporary informational gaps about the force elements and in some instances examples of special operations forces relationships are in evidence or can be deduced from context. Media commentary also provides a critique of the role or functions of special operations forces in a variety of different scenarios as, more so than

---

<sup>35</sup> Nicola McGarrity, "Fourth estate or government lapdog? The role of the Australian media in the counter-terrorism context," *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 25, no. 2 (2011): 274.

<sup>36</sup> For example, see Jon Stephenson's work prior to his combined effort with Nicky Hager on *Hit & Run*: Jon Stephenson, "Eyes wide shut," *Metro*, May 2011, 38-49; Jon Stephenson and Simon Wilson, "Eyes wider shut," *Metro*, June 2011, 38-41.

the other two forms of popular literature discussed above, commentary is often not generated by or at the behest of the NZSOF or international special operations forces.

Media commentary can be less concerned about rigour and depth (as suggested in the quote at the start of the section) as its purpose is to initiate self-reflection in government agencies, rather than itself presenting a full case related to a particular issue. Media commentary about the NZSOF occurs in relation to many different events and issues, from operational deployments to civil emergency response, from capability development to training casualties, but none of them focus specifically on the NZSOF's relationships.<sup>37</sup> As with the mainstream histories and biographies, media commentaries

---

<sup>37</sup> "Fallen SAS trooper farewelled," *Otago Daily Times*, 06 October 2011, <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/fallen-sas-trooper-farewelled>; "Helicopter pilot killed fighting fire ex-SAS," *Otago Daily Times*, 15 February 2017, <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/helicopter-pilot-killed-fighting-fire-ex-sas>; "Key confirms SAS Afghanistan pullout," *Otago Daily Times*, 22 December 2011, <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/key-confirms-sas-afghanistan-pullout>; "Labour opposes SAS deployment," *Otago Daily Times*, 22 September 2009, <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/politics/labour-opposes-sas-deployment>; "SAS fired upon in Kabul," *Otago Daily Times*, 05 March 2010, <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/politics/sas-fired-upon-kabul>; "SAS involved in Afghan attack," *New Zealand Herald*, 18 July 2011, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/sas-involved-in-afghan-attack/5L6Y4V35JRBDE536W4KVFMRXPM/>; "SAS soldier killed in Afghan raid," *Otago Daily Times*, 21 August 2011, <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/sas-soldier-killed-afghan-raid>; "Volcanic eruption at Whakaari / White Island," *Scoop*, 15 December 2019, <https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/AK1912/S00450/volcanic-eruption-at-whakaari-white-island.htm>; "White Island eruption: Search for final two bodies continues, police confirm death of 21-year-old Australian woman," *New Zealand Herald*, 14 December 2019, [https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=12293775](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12293775); Kurt Bayer, "Army's bomb disposal callouts almost triple in the first quarter of 2018," *New Zealand Herald*, 09 May 2018, [https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=12048111](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12048111); Kurt Bayer, "NZSAS soldiers in Christchurch for snipers event responded to mosque terror attack," *New Zealand Herald*, 18 March 2019, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/nzsas-soldiers-in-christchurch-for-snipers-event-responded-to-mosque-terror-attack/JX4HFFUQRQCXRMT03H3XRD3CLY/>; Paul G. Buchanan, "Why Kiwi SAS troops must join fight against ISIS," *New Zealand Herald*, 07 January 2016; David Fisher, "Inside the NZSAS: Creating the elite soldier," *New Zealand Herald*, September 2018, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/indepth/national/inside-the-nzsas/>; Peter Greener, "Towards 2025: An interview with the Chief of Defence Force," *Line of Defence*, Summer 2018; Rob Hitchings, "The untold story of the daring NZ SAS mission to rescue UN personnel in West Timor," *Stuff*, 06 September 2020, <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/122568724/the-untold-story-of-the-daring-nz-sas-mission-to-rescue-un-personnel-in-west-timor>; Anna Leask, "Army training

provide *ad hoc* examples of those relationships, but no systematic analysis of relationships over time.

The NZSOF sometimes choose to work with the media in producing and releasing stories, in which instances the media commentary tends to be descriptive in nature, but still relatively short and lacking analytical depth.<sup>38</sup> At the other end of the spectrum, investigative journalism provides a means to release more extensive, analytical pieces of work on a particular issue or series of issues. Nicky Hager and Jon Stephenson's *Hit & Run: The New Zealand SAS in Afghanistan and the Meaning of Honour* was the most recent example of this type of media commentary, although Hager had published other similar works, such as *Other People's Wars: New Zealand in Afghanistan, Iraq and the War on Terror*.<sup>39</sup> The *Hit & Run* book built a narrative around an NZSAS operation in Afghanistan during which the authors alleged misconduct against New Zealand soldiers and in NZDF Headquarters. It constructed a broad commentary on the NZSAS capability, the New Zealand Government's use of the NZSAS in war zones, and the

---

accident: SAS soldier died after jumping from helicopter and falling height of several storeys – source," *New Zealand Herald*, 09 May 2019, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/army-training-accident-sas-soldier-died-after-jumping-from-helicopter-and-falling-height-of-several-storeys-source/J4JJ3OB5KIYFOAQP7MQQZNVVI/>; Mark Longley, "White Island eruption: E Squadron, the elite SAS unit who helped bring the bodies back," *Newshub*, 13 December 2019, <https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2019/12/white-island-eruption-e-squadron-the-elite-sas-unit-who-helped-bring-the-bodies-back-from-white-island.html>; Scott Yeoman, "Inside NZ's new SAS training facility," *New Zealand Herald*, 08 April 2016, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/inside-nzs-new-sas-training-facility/N2J4NQZF7W77YFNP6W2VX43GQU/>.

<sup>38</sup> Judith Martin, "Edge of endurance: How the SAS picks its people," *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 23 (1998): 10-16; see also Wayne Thompson, "Dive dive dive," *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 11 (1995): 5-8; Bayer, "Army's bomb disposal callouts"; Fisher, "Inside the NZSAS".

<sup>39</sup> Nicky Hager and Jon Stephenson, *Hit & Run: The New Zealand SAS in Afghanistan and the Meaning of Honour* (Nelson: Potton & Burton, 2017); Nicky Hager, *Other People's Wars: New Zealand in Afghanistan, Iraq and the War on Terror* (Nelson: Craig Potton Publishing, 2011). See also Hitchings, "The untold story".

lengths to which the authors believed multiple security actors had gone to conceal NZSAS activities and failings. At numerous times during the book connections were identified or assumed between the NZSAS and New Zealand Government and their security allies internationally, particularly the United States of America. Stephenson made similar allegations through two magazine articles in 2011.<sup>40</sup> The *Hit & Run* book, centred around Operation BURNHAM, led to a government inquiry into the allegations, which in turn led to the release of the findings and a series of recommendations in late 2020. Throughout this process, from the release of the book to the release of the report of findings, and at various times media commentary and critique was written, all of which related to the NZSOF (this subject is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7).<sup>41</sup> The *Hit & Run* example demonstrates not just a public appetite for media literature about special operations forces, but also the role of the media as an unofficial oversight mechanism in democratic states.

An increasing appetite for media literature about international special operations forces is also apparent in the thesis's review of media commentary literature. There are plenty

---

<sup>40</sup> Stephenson, "Eyes wide shut," 38-49; Stephenson and Wilson, "Eyes wider shut," 38-41. See also Nicky Hager, "No defence," *North & South*, November 2018; "SAS claims 'unfounded' – Key," *Otago Daily Times*, 10 May 2011, <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/sas-claims-unfounded-key>.

<sup>41</sup> Examples of media reporting on this event include: David Fisher, "Revealed: The military's briefing to its minister on the deadly 'Hit & Run' raid by the NZSAS," *New Zealand Herald*, 22 April 2017, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/revealed-the-militarys-briefing-to-its-minister-on-the-deadly-hit-run-raid-by-the-nzsas/2BLGUO3GO2CJUH42OT52KILMKA/>; Andrea Vance, "Defence Force unit to fight Hit and Run claims," *Stuff*, 23 June 2018, <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/104862339/defence-force-unit-to-fight-hit-and-run-claims>; "Operation Burnham report released," *Scoop*, 31 July 2020, <https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA2007/S00322/operation-burnham-report-released.htm>; Justin Giovannetti, "SAS did nothing wrong, but senior military officers misled public: report," *The Spinoff*, 31 July 2020, <https://thespinoff.co.nz/politics/31-07-2020/sas-cleared-of-major-allegations-made-in-hit-and-run-book/>.



of examples of longer-form media projects, for example Chris Masters' book on Australian special operations forces in Afghanistan or the Michael Hastings *Rolling Stone* article that led to the resignation of General Stanley McChrystal (an article that was followed by a book).<sup>42</sup> Media commentary in the short form is also plentiful and stretched over a range of international special operations topics, but almost none of them are related specifically and primarily to relationships.<sup>43</sup> International special operations forces are also the focus on media commentary on misconduct or criminal behaviours, similar to the allegations made in *Hit & Run*. In Australia, the media reported on extensive allegations and official inquiries about potentially illegal behaviour by Australian Special Air Service personnel in Afghanistan, and the United

---

<sup>42</sup> Chris Masters, *No Front Line: Australia's Special Forces at War in Afghanistan* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2017). See also Ian McPhedran, *The Amazing SAS: The Inside Story of Australia's Special Forces* (Sydney: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005); Nick Turse, *The Changing Face of Empire: Special Ops, Drones, Spies, Proxy Fighters, Secret Bases, and Cyberwarfare* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2012); Michael Hastings, "The runaway general," *Rolling Stone*, 22 June 2010, <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/the-runaway-general-20100622>; Michael Hastings, *The Operators: The Wild and Terrifying Inside Story of America's War in Afghanistan* (London: Phoenix, 2012).

<sup>43</sup> For example, Dorschner, "Quiet professionals"; Deborah Haynes, "SAS favourite ready to take on world," *The Times*, 19 November 2016, <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/world/sas-favourite-ready-to-take-on-world-jjnm5p50n>; Deborah Haynes, "Trump visit: President all fired up by SAS hostage rescue display," *The Times*, 14 July 2018, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/trump-visit-president-all-fired-up-by-sas-hostage-rescue-display-2trzw0lz0>; Thomas E. Ricks, "What Trump didn't get about Harward: A lot of what makes a special operator tick," *Foreign Policy*, 17 February 2017, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/17/what-trump-didnt-get-about-harward-a-lot-of-what-makes-a-special-operator-tick/>; Nick Turse, "U.S. Special Ops Forces deployed in 135 nations," *Huffington Post*, 24 September 2015, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nick-turse/us-special-ops-forces-135-nations\\_b\\_8189978.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nick-turse/us-special-ops-forces-135-nations_b_8189978.html); Paul Toohey, "Defence denies Aussie SAS raid in Iraq ever happened," *News Corps Australia Network*, 12 May 2016, <http://www.news.com.au/national/defence-denies-aussie-sas-raid-in-iraq-ever-happened/news-story/>; Todd South, "How Army Special Operations Command is paving the way for the next decade," *DefenseNews*, 11 October 2017, <https://www.defensenews.com/news/your-army/2017/10/11/how-army-special-operations-command-is-paving-the-way-for-the-next-decade/>.

Kingdom and United States special operations forces also have been the subjects of similar reporting.<sup>44</sup>

Like other forms of literature, media commentary supplies anecdotes about the NZSOF or international special operations forces relationships. They are mediums through which society examines and critiques special operations forces and gains access for the public to information about special operations forces that would not be otherwise available. To gain access to those sources, media commentary makes use of Official Information Act requests, confidential sources, and whistle-blowers as well as Government official sources. What is missing in this literature, as in the previous two forms, is systematic analysis of special operations forces relationships. *Ad hoc* mentions of relationships in the literature are not sufficient data for analysis by this thesis.

---

<sup>44</sup> C. August Elliott, "The abuse scandal rocking Australia's special operations forces," *Foreign Policy*, 14 August 2018, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/14/the-abuse-scandal-rocking-australias-special-operations-forces/>; Bernard Lagan, "Australia SAS chief says elite troops were guilty of Afghan war crimes," *The Times*, 30 June 2020, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/world/australia-sas-chief-says-elite-troops-were-guilty-of-afghan-war-crimes-mrsq3c8nw>; Brendan Nicholson, "How the Lindt café siege exposed army atrocities," ASPI Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 16 November 2020, <https://www.aspi.org.au/opinion/how-lindt-cafe-siege-exposed-army-atrocities>; Christopher Knaus, "Australia's entire SAS regiment must be disbanded after Brereton report, expert says," *The Guardian*, 24 November 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/nov/25/australias-entire-sas-regiment-must-be-disbanded-after-brereton-report-expert-says>; "Families of Afghan men allegedly killed by Australian SAS soldiers still asking for justice," *RNZ*, 26 November 2020, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/world/431525/families-of-afghan-men-allegedly-killed-by-australian-sas-soldiers-still-asking-for-justice>; "They are not one of us': SAS soldiers condemn war crime perpetrators," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 November 2020, <https://www.smh.com.au/national/they-are-not-one-of-us-sas-soldiers-condemn-war-crime-perpetrators-20201116-p56ezv.html>; MediaLens, "Alleged Cover-Up of Civilians Murdered by UK Special Forces in Iraq and Afghanistan," *Scoop Independent News*, 7 August 2020, <https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL2008/S00048/alleged-cover-up-of-civilians-murdered-by-uk-special-forces-in-iraq-and-afghanistan.htm>; Press Association, "British government and army accused of covering up war crimes," *The Guardian*, 17 November, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2019/nov/17/british-government-army-accused-covering-up-war-crimes-afghanistan-iraq>; Insight Investigations, "Rogue SAS unit accused of executing civilians in Afghanistan," *Sunday Times*, 2 July 2017, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/rogue-sas-unit-accused-of-executing-civilians-in-afghanistan-f2bqlc897>.

The gaps identified in the media commentary literature about special operations forces contributed to the need for this thesis. Specifically, this research will help to address three gaps in the genre:

- The thesis examines the NZSOF's relationships over longer periods of time, rather than as an of-the-moment phenomenon.
- The thesis focuses on the NZSOF's relationships, rather than sensational news items.
- The thesis examines the NZSOF's relationships in a structured, analytical, and holistic sense using publicly available source materials, rather than focusing on one particular issue and using public and non-public sources to put across a particular narrative.

#### **1.1.4 Special operations forces scholarly literature: The New Zealand Special Operations Forces**

While the importance of special operations today seems quite apparent, academic study and professional research into special operations are still in a nascent stage. It is a rare find to see a course on special operations in college curricula, or faculty members with any direct background in special operations. The fact remains that despite media attention and public fascination, there is no real research community on special operations as a field of study.<sup>45</sup>

Having reviewed the popular literature available about the NZSOF and special operations forces, the chapter turns specifically to the existing secondary special

---

<sup>45</sup> Christopher Marsh, James D. Kiras and Patricia J. Blocksome, "Special operations: Out of the shadows," in *Special Operations: Out of the Shadows*, ed. Christopher Marsh, James D. Kiras and Patricia J. Blocksome (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2020), 3.

operations forces scholarly literature to situate itself within that body of work. In terms of the NZSOF specifically, the interdisciplinary scholarly special operations forces literature is rare. The few available sources on the NZSOF are a mixture of historic and a light dusting of contemporary analysis. In New Zealand there is only one dedicated scholar writing about the NZSOF (besides the thesis's researcher), Rhys Ball.<sup>46</sup> In the case of Rhys Ball's doctoral thesis, "The platforms: An examination of New Zealand Special Air Service campaigns from Borneo 'Confrontation' to the Vietnam War, 1965-1971," the document's primary focus is on the NZSOF and includes historical accounts of the NZSOF's relationships with other entities during that period.<sup>47</sup> Ball's work is the first significant academic piece of literature with the NZSOF as its primary subject, and for that reason as well as the fact that Ball generated primary data through the access and analysis of primary written sources and interviews, the thesis broke new ground and introduced the NZSOF as a scholarly topic. Although the thesis covers only the period 1965-1971, Ball's thesis contains numerous specific examples of the NZSOF conducting relationships that are useful reference points for this work. This thesis goes beyond what Ball researched to examine the NZSOF's multiple relationships across networks. While acknowledging historic antecedents that have clearly impacted on special operations forces relationships – especially in the commonality of some of these

---

<sup>46</sup> Rhys Ball, "The platforms: An examination of New Zealand Special Air Service campaigns from Borneo 'Confrontation' to the Vietnam War, 1965-1971" (PhD diss., Massey University, 2009), <https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/1242>; Rhys Ball, "The strategic utility of New Zealand special forces," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22, no. 1 (2011): 119-141; Miriam Wharton and Rhys Ball, "New Zealand special operations forces: Subtle and strategic effect in the whole-of-government approach to New Zealand's national security," in *New Zealand National Security: Challenges, Trends and Issues*, ed. William Hoverd, Nick Nelson and Carl Bradley (Auckland: Massey University Press, 2017); Rhys Ball and Wil Hoverd, "Overseeing New Zealand's modern military operations," *New Zealand International Review* 42, no. 6 (2017): 18-21.

<sup>47</sup> Ball, "The platforms."

relationships – this thesis takes this research much further, deeper, and broader into the contemporary setting.

Ball's journal article on "The strategic utility of New Zealand special forces"<sup>48</sup> and Ball and Wharton's book chapter "New Zealand Special Operations Forces: Subtle and strategic effect in the whole-of-government approach to New Zealand's national security"<sup>49</sup> analyse the contemporary form of the NZSOF force elements. Those sources bring the study of the NZSOF into the present and begin to situate the NZSOF within the New Zealand national security literature (discussed in section 1.1.6). In them scholarly literature about the NZSOF saw a change in direction towards a more rigorous, analytical examination of the force elements. Ball and Hoverd's article "Overseeing New Zealand's modern military operations" continued that trend, in the wake of the book *Hit & Run* and during the Operation BURNHAM inquiry process discussing organisational, institutional, and political accountability of NZDF (including the NZSOF) activities.<sup>50</sup>

Like mainstream histories, scholarship about the NZSOF also exists within other literatures. For example, Grant J. Crowley's Masters thesis "New Zealand's response to the aircraft hijack incident during the 1987 coup d'état in Fiji: A study of civil-military relations in crisis" recounts this historical event to which the NZSAS was poised to respond had the political and military decision-makers agreed on a strategy.<sup>51</sup> Richard

---

<sup>48</sup> Ball, "The strategic utility of New Zealand special forces," 119-141.

<sup>49</sup> Wharton and Ball, "New Zealand special operations forces."

<sup>50</sup> Ball and Hoverd, "Overseeing New Zealand's modern military operations," 18-21.

<sup>51</sup> Grant J. Crowley, "New Zealand's response to the aircraft hijack incident during the 1987 coup d'état in Fiji: A study of civil-military relations in crisis" (Masters thesis, Massey University, 2002), <http://hdl.handle.net/10179/7154>. See also Harman, "Duel of the Davids," 17-19.

Prendergast's Masters thesis "New Zealand's role in the Afghanistan campaign" applies recent military history and operations analysis to the experience of New Zealand military forces in Afghanistan, including analysis of the NZSAS's role in that conflict.<sup>52</sup> In both these examples, analysis related to the NZSOF is situated on specific contexts, and more particularly on combat or combat-adjacent contexts. This thesis, in contrast, looks at the NZSOF in a non-conflict context and, rather than focusing on specific events, takes a much broader approach to the NZSOF's relationships by establishing networks as its framework and applying analysis across those contexts as well as within each one of them.

This thesis embraces a more comprehensive scope than has been entertained previously in scholarly literature about the NZSOF. It establishes a cross-network framework that encompasses multiple contexts rather than just a single context. Despite these differences from other work in the field, the research is able to situate itself relative to the emerging literature that places the NZSOF in the national security field, in other words taking the force elements outside of themselves and analysing them relative to other entities. One means of describing the difference in scope in comparison to the other literature on the NZSOF is to say this work includes elements of the past (the 5SOF network whose connections with the NZSOF are based strongly on historical ties), the present (the NZDF network within which the NZSOF currently reside), and the future (the evolving NZNSS network that brings the NZSOF into the emergent all-of-government approach to national security).

---

<sup>52</sup> Richard Prendergast, "New Zealand's role in the Afghanistan campaign" (Masters thesis, University of Cambridge, 2010).

The gaps identified in the special operations forces scholarly literature about the NZSOF contributed to the need for this thesis. Specifically, this research will help to address three gaps in the genre:

- The thesis adds a new piece of literature to a small field with few dedicated scholars.
- The thesis adopts a broad, cross-network approach to the NZSOF's relationships, rather than focusing on the NZSOF in only one context.
- The thesis examines the NZSOF's relationships as a new, non-combat analytical concept with which to examine the force elements, rather than focusing on combat or combat-adjacent contexts.

#### **1.1.5 Special operations forces scholarly literature: international special operations forces**

Where scholarly literature about the NZSOF is significantly lacking in breadth and depth, international special operations forces scholarly literature is more developed, although still a nascent field relative to many other academic disciplines. In the introduction to the second edition of *Understanding Modern Warfare*, Ian Speller wrote that "the conduct of war as an academic field of enquiry is not a subject that everyone is comfortable with. It requires one to study a phenomenon that many disapprove of and to think about things that some prefer to ignore...The result has been a demilitarisation of the topic within much of academia".<sup>53</sup> Speller's suggestion that the

---

<sup>53</sup> Ian Speller, "Introduction to the second edition", in *Understanding Modern Warfare*, David Jordan, James D. Kiras, David J. Lonsdale, Ian Speller, Christopher Tuck and C. Dale Walton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 1. Glyn Harper and Joel Hayward, "Introduction", in *Born to Lead? Portraits of New Zealand Commanders*, Glyn Harper and Joel Hayward, eds. (Auckland: Exisle Publishing, 2003), 12: Harper and Hayward also make this point in the New

study of warfare (and presumably of military force elements like the NZSOF) has not found a comfortable home within academia resonates with an earlier yet similar point made by Glyn Harper and Joel Hayward about the military history field in the New Zealand context:

Military history is still struggling for recognition as an academic discipline in New Zealand and remains a neglected subject in this country's universities. As a result, there are few serious scholars researching and writing in this field...<sup>54</sup>

If Speller, Harper and Hayward are correct that their fields suffer from neglect or even intentional avoidance within academia due to a dislike of the subject matter or a lack of scholars willing to struggle for recognition, such attitudes may account for the slow development of the special operations forces scholarly literature as identified by Marsh, Kiras and Blocksome.<sup>55</sup> There are, however, positive trends identified by this thesis's literature review that indicate the literature is becoming more substantive in number and maturation.

Earlier scholars writing about special operations forces often wrote into that field within or in addition to their own primary specialties; two examples of this are the strategist Colin S. Gray who included a section on "Strategy and special operations" in his book *Explorations in Strategy*,<sup>56</sup> and the political scientist Eliot A. Cohen who wrote

---

Zealand context: "Military history is still struggling for recognition as an academic discipline in New Zealand and remains a neglected subject in this country's universities. As a result, there are few serious scholars researching and writing in this field..."

<sup>54</sup> Harper and Hayward, "Introduction," 12.

<sup>55</sup> See the quote at the start of section 1.1.4 about the nascent state of the special operations forces field.

<sup>56</sup> Colin S. Gray, "Strategy and special operations", in *Explorations in Strategy* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996), 139-232. See also Colin S. Gray, *Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005), 207-208, 249; Colin S. Gray, "Handfuls of



*Commandos and Politicians: Elite Military Units in Modern Democracies*.<sup>57</sup> More recent scholars take on special operations forces as their primary area of expertise, including experts like Tone Danielsen,<sup>58</sup> James D. Kiras,<sup>59</sup> Alastair Finlan,<sup>60</sup> and Linda Robinson.<sup>61</sup> The trend towards special operations forces as a scholarly specialty in and of itself reflects the increasing maturation of the field as a stand-alone discipline and creates an atmosphere into which new scholarship can contribute. The literature review indicates

---

heroes on desperate ventures: When do special operations succeed?" *Parameters*, Spring 1999, <http://strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/Articles/99spring/gray.htm>.

<sup>57</sup> Eliot A. Cohen, *Commandos and Politicians: Elite Military Units in Modern Democracies* (Cambridge, MA: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1978).

<sup>58</sup> Danielsen's publications include: Tone Danielsen, "Making warriors in the global era: An anthropological study of institutional apprenticeship: Selection, training, education, and everyday life in the Norwegian Naval Special Operations Commando" (PhD diss., University of Oslo, 2015); Tone Danielsen, *Making Warriors in a Global Era: An Ethnographic Study of the Norwegian Naval Special Operations Commando* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2018); Tone Danielsen, "A small state's special operators, up close," *War on the Rocks*, 25 October 2018, <https://warontherocks.com/2018/10/a-small-states-special-operators-up-close/>; Tone Danielsen, "The 'Seamen's Council': A SOFish way of making decisions," in *Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, ed. Jessica Glicken Turnley, Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben Ari (London: Routledge, 2018), 91-105.

<sup>59</sup> Kiras' publications include: James D. Kiras, *Special Operations and Strategy: From World War II to the War on Terrorism* (London: Routledge, 2006); James D. Kiras, "A theory of special operations: "These ideas are dangerous"," *Special Operations Journal* 1, no. 2 (2015): 75-88; James D. Kiras, "Part V Irregular Warfare," in *Understanding Modern Warfare*, David Jordan, James D. Kiras, David J. Lonsdale, Ian Speller, Christopher Tuck and C. Dale Walton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 299-375; James D. Kiras, "'Unintended acceleration': The problematique of civil-military relations of special operations forces in the American context," in *Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, ed. Jessica Glicken Turnley, Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben Ari (London: Routledge, 2018), 74-87; Christopher Marsh, James D. Kiras and Patricia J. Blocksome, *Special Operations: Out of the Shadows* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2020); James D. Kiras, "Future tasks: Threats and missions for SOF," *Special Operations Journal* 5 (2019): 6-24.

<sup>60</sup> Finlan's publications include: Alastair Finlan, *Special Forces, Strategy and the War on Terror: Warfare by Other Means* (London: Routledge, 2008); Alastair Finlan, "A dangerous pathway? Toward a theory of special forces," *Comparative Strategy* 38, no. 4 (2019): 255-275; Alastair Finlan, "Special Forces: Leadership, Processes and the British Special Air Service (SAS)," *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Special Operations Forces* (Royal Danish Defence College, 2017): 74-87.

<sup>61</sup> Robinson's publications include: Linda Robinson, *One Hundred Victories: Special Ops and the Future of American Warfare* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2013); Linda Robinson, *Masters of Chaos: The Secret History of the Special Forces*. (New York: Public Affairs, 2004); and Linda Robinson, *The Future of US Special Operations Forces* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2013).

that the field is not yet at the point where new scholarship must deftly manoeuvre to find a niche to demonstrate original contributions to knowledge. This thesis, situated as it is specifically in the small field about the NZSOF, struggles to find literature against which to compare itself. As such, the field in the NZSOF and international special operations forces scholarship remains wide open to new research.

The dominance of United States-based scholarship continues as the researcher reviewed current literature, presumably largely due to the size of the United States and its special operations forces, but also likely as the result of that state's continued large presence in the global community that makes it a connecting hub for special operations forces and the fact that it invests in organisational entities such as the Joint Special Operations University which every year generates contributions to SOF knowledge, particularly in areas such as the global special operations forces network, strategy, and various types of operations.<sup>62</sup> In Canada, Bernd Horn and Emily Spencer

---

<sup>62</sup> Mark E. Mitchell and Doug Livermore, "Righting the course for America's special operators," *War on the Rocks*, 23 November 2020, <https://warontherocks.com/2020/11/righting-the-course-for-americas-special-operators/>; Deon V. Canyon, Paul Lieber, Michael Mollohan and Eric Shibuya, "Pacific opportunities: U.S. special operations forces engage Pacific island nations through security working group," *Indo-Pacific Defense Forum* 43, no. 2 (2018): 44-51; Marsh, Kiras and Blocksome, *Special Operations*; David Jordan, James D. Kiras, David J. Lonsdale, Ian Speller, Christopher Tuck and C. Dale Walton, *Understanding Modern Warfare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); David Tucker and Christopher J. Lamb, *United States Special Operations Forces*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020); William H. McRaven, *SPEC OPS: Case Studies in Special Operations Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Novato: Presidio, 1995); Charles T. Cleveland, James B. Linder and Ronald Dempsey, "Special operations doctrine: Is it needed?" *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016): 4-19; David C. Ellis, Charles N. Black and Mary Ann Nobles, "Thinking dangerously: Imagining United States Special Operations Command in the post-CT world," *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016): 110-129; James E. Hayes III, "Beyond the gray zone: Special operations in multidomain battle," *Joint Force Quarterly* 91 (2018): 60-66; Matthew Johnson, "The growing relevance of special operations forces in U.S. military strategy," *Comparative Strategy* 25, no. 4 (2006): 273-296; Anna Simons and David Tucker, "United States special operations forces and the war on terrorism," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 14, no. 1 (2003): 77-91; Kevin D. Stringer, "The Arctic domain: A narrow niche for Joint Special Operations Forces," *Joint Force Quarterly*, iss. 78 (2015): 24-31; Christopher Varhola, "Regional understanding and unity of effort: Applying the

are generating a significant amount of literature particularly related to special operations forces theory and culture.<sup>63</sup> This thesis, however, also acknowledges other national or regional special operations forces literatures emerging in the field.

Specifically, Nordic-based special operations forces literature appears to be a growing field and is especially relevant to scholarly literature about the NZSOF in that the Nordic literature situates itself as a small state alternative perspective to the large state special operations forces perspectives emerging from the United States of America.<sup>64</sup>

Another method of parsing the international special operations forces literature is by academic discipline. Social sciences appear to be an emerging discipline generating

---

global SOF network in future operating environments," *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016): 48-64; Paul S. Lieber, "Rethinking special operations leadership: Process, persuasion, pre-existing, and personality" (occasional paper, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2016); Linda Robinson, "The future of U.S. Special Operations Forces" (Council special report No. 66, Council on Foreign Relations, New York, 2013); Richard W. Rubright, "A unified theory for special operations" (JSOU report 17-1, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2017); Tom Searle, "Outside the box: A new general theory of special operations" (JSOU report 17-4, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2017); Robert G. Spulak, Jr., "A theory of special operations: The origin, qualities, and use of SOF" (JSOU report 07-7, Joint Special Operations University Press, Hurlburt Field, FL, 2007); Jessica Turnley, "Special operations forces as change agents" (occasional paper, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2017); Jessica Glick Turnley, "Retaining a precarious value as special operations go mainstream" (JSOU report 08-2, Joint Special Operations University Press, Hurlburt Field, FL, 2008); Francisco Wong-Diaz, "U.S. Special Operations Forces in a period of transition" (occasional paper, Center for Special Operations Studies and Research, Joint Special Operations University, 2017); Harry R. Yarger, "21st century SOF: Toward an American theory of special operations" (JSOU report 13-1, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2013).

<sup>63</sup> Bernd Horn and Tony Balasevicius, eds., *Castling Light on the Shadows: Canadian Perspectives on Special Operations Forces* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007); Bernd Horn, J. Paul de B. Taillon and David Last, *Force of Choice: Perspectives on Special Operations* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004); David Last and Bernd Horn, eds., *Choice of Force: Special Operations for Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005); Emily Spencer, ed., *Special Operations Forces: A National Capability* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2011); Emily Spencer, ed., *Special Operations Forces: Building Global Partnerships* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2012); Emily Spencer, *Thinking for Impact: A Practical Guide for Special Operations Forces* (Ottawa: Canadian Special Operations Forces Command, 2018).

<sup>64</sup> Gunilla Eriksson and Ulrica Pettersson, eds., *Special Operations from a Small State Perspective: Future Security Challenges* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

literature and this researcher expects that trend to continue in the future as special operations forces continue to evolve its culture as much as its operational philosophies.<sup>65</sup> Of particular relevance to the NZSOF after the Operation BURNHAM inquiry, but certainly an increasing presence in the international literature is the emergence of legal and ethical scholarship examining special operations forces misbehaviour, illegality, and ethics.<sup>66</sup> Special operations forces appear to be at a transition point where its old methods and norms are being challenged by disturbing revelations of personal or institutional misconduct, and those revelations are starting to be reflected in scholarly literature which attempt to grapple with the implications of those revelations.

The international special operations forces scholarly field may be relatively nascent, but the literature indicates clearly that there are positive trends demonstrating growth and maturation in a number of different niche areas. This thesis situates itself within that literature in a number of ways. It is related to the Nordic literature by being a small state's special operations forces. It is informed by the Australia, United States, Canadian, and United Kingdom literatures through the 5SOF network.<sup>67</sup> It is related to the social sciences work being done on special operations forces as observable entities in their

---

<sup>65</sup> Jessica Glicken Turnley, Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben Ari, eds., *Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the Social Sciences* (London: Routledge, 2018).

<sup>66</sup> Samantha Crompvoets, "Australia's special forces and the 'fog of culture'," ASPI The Strategist, 18 November 2020, <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/australias-special-forces-and-the-fog-of-culture/>; Bart Kennedy, "The practice of special operations: An analysis of SOF ethics" (Masters thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2019).

<sup>67</sup> Malcolm Brailey, "The transformation of special operations forces in contemporary conflict: Strategy, missions, organisation and tactics" (working paper No. 127, Land Warfare Studies Centre, Duntroon, 2005); Ian Langford, "Australian special operations: Principles and considerations" (Army research papers No. 4, The Australian Army, Commonwealth of Australia, 2014).

own right, necessarily at times apart from conflict contexts. Where this thesis really finds its unique and significant contribution to the interdisciplinary SOF scholarly literature is in its contribution of information about relatively unstudied special operations forces in a national context, namely the NZSOF. It also finds its unique contribution in adopting an original approach to examining the NZSOF, encapsulated in the conceptual framework discussed in section 1.3. No other special operations forces literature uses relationships as the central analytical concept through which to examine those force elements. The network framework was used previously in the literature when describing the global special operations forces network.<sup>68</sup> However, there is little detailed analysis of that particular network as a network, in other words, using social network theory and the language of ego node, node, relational characteristics and relational dynamic as this thesis does (explained in the conceptual framework, section 1.3).

The gaps identified in international special operations forces scholarly literature about the NZSOF contributed to the need for this thesis. Specifically, this research will help to address two gaps in the genre:

- The thesis adds a new piece of literature relating to a small state's special operations forces, rather than adding to more developed national or regional literatures.

---

<sup>68</sup> Walter L. Christman, "Enhancing the global SOF enterprise: A consortium concept" (occasional paper, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2017).

- The thesis adopts a new conceptual framework and language, one that had not been used in international special operations forces scholarly literature previously.

### **1.1.6 Special operations forces scholarly literature: interdisciplinary New Zealand national security literatures**

I know it's fun to move the counters around on the board and imagine different ways of organising functions within the context of Government. I've indulged in it myself plenty of times...The nature of service in the Defence Force is unique. Whether conscript or volunteer, full time or part-time, there is simply no equivalent anywhere in society...National security is a subject that we need to have a better conversation on as a country.<sup>69</sup>

As the literature review for this thesis progressed, it became evident that an analysis of the NZSOF could not fail to include an examination of the scholarly literature in those contexts directly impacting on the NZSOF as force elements, namely in New Zealand's own national security literatures. A discussion of those literatures in the review is grouped by the two domestic network case studies examined in this thesis – NZDF and NZNSS.

The first of those literatures, scholarly work on NZDF, could refer back to the quotes in section 1.1.5 relating to the challenge military studies faced in integrating into universities as an academic discipline. In New Zealand that literature is still quite new but is growing. Earlier studies such as James Rolfe's *Defending New Zealand* and *The*

---

<sup>69</sup> Simon Ewing-Jarvie, "Let's talk about New Zealand's national security," *Stuff*, 14 June 2016, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff-nation/assignments/share-your-news-and-views/15012668/Lets-talk-about-New-Zealands-national-security>.

*Armed Forces of New Zealand* are now being joined by newer works.<sup>70</sup> Rhys Ball's work on the NZSOF's history and more recently contemporary issues was discussed in section 1.1.4. Glyn Harper produces original work in New Zealand military history, and his work as a scholar often crosses over into mainstream histories of the type discussed in section 1.1.1.<sup>71</sup> Nina Harding's doctoral thesis "'You bring it, we'll bring it out': Becoming a soldier in the New Zealand Army" is an anthropological study that introduces a new methodological approach to research about New Zealand military experience, in particular its focus on human interaction, relationships and experience.<sup>72</sup> B.K. Greener's edited volume *Army Fundamentals: From Making Soldiers to the Limits of the Military Instrument* is the first edited volume in some time to focus specifically on the nature and experience of New Zealand soldiering that is as relevant generally for the NZSOF as it is for all other force elements within the New Zealand Army.<sup>73</sup> Greener also produced a chapter on the NZDF's role in New Zealand's foreign policy in a recent edited volume.<sup>74</sup> Vernon Bennett's doctoral thesis "Military force structures in small states: Providing for relevant and credible military capability" analyses the military

---

<sup>70</sup> James Rolfe, *Defending New Zealand: A Study of Structures, Processes and Relationships* (Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, 1993); James Rolfe, *The Armed Forces of New Zealand* (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1999).

<sup>71</sup> Glyn Harper and Joel Hayward, eds., *Born to Lead? Portraits of New Zealand Commanders* (Auckland: Exisle Publishing, 2003); Glyn Harper, *The Battle for North Africa: El Alamein and the Turning Point for World War II* (Auckland: Massey University Press, 2017); Glyn Harper and John Tonkin-Covell, *The Battles of Monte Cassino: The Campaign and its Controversies* (Auckland: Allen & Unwin, 2013); Glyn Harper, *Dark Journey: Three Key New Zealand Battles of the Western Front* (Auckland: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007); Crawford and Harper, *Operation East Timor*.

<sup>72</sup> Nina Harding, "'You bring it, we'll bring it out': Becoming a soldier in the New Zealand Army" (PhD diss., Massey University, 2016), <http://hdl.handle.net/10179/9896>.

<sup>73</sup> B.K. Greener, ed., *Army Fundamentals: From Making Soldiers to the Limits of the Military Instrument* (Auckland: Massey University Press, 2017).

<sup>74</sup> B.K. Greener, "The New Zealand Defence Force role in New Zealand foreign policy," in *Small States and the Changing Global Order*, ed. Anne-Marie Brady (New York: Springer International Publishing, 2019).

structure within which the NZSOF abide which is contextually useful to this thesis.<sup>75</sup>

These scholars have their own areas of specialty in relation to NZDF literature, but the relevance for this thesis is that the literature is emerging in its own right, into which research about the NZSOF might be situated. The uniqueness of this thesis remains its specific focus on the NZSOF, but the relationship of literature about the NZSOF to the NZDF literature could not pass without comment, particularly as one of the thesis case study networks is the NZDF network.

The second of the two domestic network case studies examined in this thesis is the NZNSS network and its goal of maintaining national security (see Chapter 5). Similar to the NZDF scholarly literature, this is a quite new but growing field in New Zealand and an examination of the literature suggests that in fact it is growing faster than the NZDF literature. In assessing the national security literature, this review is seeking intersections with the thesis topic of the NZSOF's relationships. Ball and Hoverd's article "Overseeing New Zealand's modern military operations" was discussed in section 1.1.4, but it has cross-genre relevance in that the oversight mechanisms recommended are in fact elements of the NZNSS network rather than the NZDF network (an independent inspector-general, for example, and political decision-makers). The edited volume *New Zealand National Security: Challenges, Trends and Issues* moves forward the broader conversation about national security that includes military topics, but also considers

---

<sup>75</sup> Vernon Noel Bennett, "Military force structures in small states: Providing for relevant and credible military capability" (PhD diss., Victoria University of Wellington, 2018), <http://hdl.handle.net/10063/7033>.



other agency actors and capabilities that collectively contribute to the national security network in which the NZSOF participate.<sup>76</sup>

The *National Security Journal* contains articles covering topics such as the changing New Zealand national security environment, a national security strategy, and counter-terrorism strategy.<sup>77</sup> Academic theses in the New Zealand national security field are also developing, including Rachel Butler's "Organisational scapegoats and hierarchical constraints: A critical discourse analysis of inter-agency collaboration within New Zealand's public sector," Terry Johanson's "The emperor's new clothes: New Zealand's whole of government approach to national security," and Chris Rothery's "New Zealand's national security framework: A recommendation for the development of a National Security Strategy."<sup>78</sup> More broadly, national security scholarly literature is expanding into areas associated to some degree with the NZSOF; counter-terrorism is a

---

<sup>76</sup> William Hoverd, Nick Nelson and Carl Bradley, eds., *New Zealand National Security: Challenges, Trends and Issues* (Auckland: Massey University Press, 2017).

<sup>77</sup> William Hoverd, "The changing New Zealand national security environment: New threats, new structures, and new research," *National Security Journal* 1, iss. 1 (2019), 26, <https://sites.massey.ac.nz/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2020/02/NSJ-2019-October-Hoverd.pdf>; Chris Rothery, "Time for a national security strategy," *National Security Journal* 1, iss. 1 (2019), 5, <https://sites.massey.ac.nz/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2020/02/NSJ-2019-October-Rothery.pdf>; John Battersby, Rhys Ball and Nick Nelson, "New Zealand's counter-terrorism strategy: A critical assessment," *National Security Journal* (2020), 6, <https://nationalecurityjournal.nz/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2020/06/NSJ-2020-Battersby-Ball-Nelson.pdf>.

<sup>78</sup> Rachel Butler, "Organisational scapegoats and hierarchical constraints: A critical discourse analysis of inter-agency collaboration within New Zealand's public sector" (Masters thesis, Massey University, 2015), 2, <https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/10038>; Terence Christopher Johanson, "The emperor's new clothes: New Zealand's whole of government approach to national security" (Masters thesis, Massey University, 2014), <https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/7058>; Chris Rothery, "New Zealand's national security framework: A recommendation for the development of a National Security Strategy" (Masters thesis, University of Waikato, 2018); Christopher David Swan, "The Exclusive Economic Zone: An instrument of national security?" (Masters thesis, Massey University, 2012).

good example of this, as is the connection between security and strategy.<sup>79</sup> National security literatures are spread across a number of different topics, but in an all-of-government context, any, all or none of those topics could at any time impact on the NZSOF and therefore those literatures are tangentially significant to an examination of the NZSOF's relationships.<sup>80</sup>

What the NZDF and New Zealand national security literatures do not offer is a systematic examination of the NZSOF's relationships in those contexts, nor do they use the network framework to construct their analyses of those diverse topics. Some pieces in the literature do reference the NZSOF but not generally as a primary subject. While this literature review could refer to these sources as tangential material, situating the thesis in relation to them remains problematic because there is not often direct correlation between the NZSOF and the NZDF and national security topics. As relationships between the literatures begins to be better understood, more opportunity is created to identify interconnections and build a more holistic understanding of national security in New Zealand.

---

<sup>79</sup> B.K. Greener-Barcham, "Before September: A history of counter-terrorism in New Zealand," *Australian Journal of Political Science* 37, iss. 3 (2002): 509-524; Stephen Hoadley, "New Zealand's strategic context: One or many scenarios?" *New Zealand International Review* 42, no. 6 (2017): 14-17.

<sup>80</sup> Other examples of New Zealand national security scholarly literature include: B.K. Greener, "New Zealand's military and policing efforts in the Pacific," *Australian Defence Force Journal* 117 (2008): 73-84; B.K. Greener and Ashalya Noa, "Navigating security in the Pacific," *Pacific Dynamics: Journal of Interdisciplinary Research* 4, no. 1 (2020): 31-40; Rouben Azizian and Terry Johanson, "Finding the democratic balance: Australian and New Zealand national security coordination," in *Routledge Handbook of Democracy and Security*, ed. Leonard Weinberg, Elizabeth Francis and Eliot Assoudeh (London: Routledge, 2021); Stephen Hoadley, "From defence to security: New Zealand's hard power, soft power, and smart power: Stephen Hoadley reviews New Zealand's approach to security in the 21st century," *New Zealand International Review* 32, no. 5 (2007): 18; Jim Rolfe, "New Zealand's security: Alliances and other military relationships," working paper 10/97, Centre for Strategic Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, 1997.

The gaps identified in the interdisciplinary New Zealand national security literatures about the NZSOF and special operations forces contributed to the need for this thesis. Specifically, this research will help to address two specific gaps in the genre:

- This thesis contributes specific knowledge about the NZSOF to the broader defence literature in New Zealand, supplementary to the specialties of other researchers.
- The thesis provides a mechanism by which to link the NZSOF's relationships with New Zealand national security topics, rather than attempting to situate the NZSOF in relation to scholarly work where there existed no clearly examined linkages.

## **1.2 Identified gaps in the secondary literature**

The literature review identified a number of gaps in knowledge within the four special operations forces literatures examined above. Those gaps help to situate this thesis in the field. Historic literature offers some understanding of how special operations forces, including the NZSOF, position themselves within the contemporary security environment over time, but it fails to adequately critically examine contemporary special operations forces at the necessary depth and detail that this research offers, let alone how key security nodes interact in a contemporary national and international security environment. As it pertains to special operations forces mainstream historical literature:

- The thesis examines the NZSOF as contemporary force elements, rather than as historical force elements.
- The thesis specifically focuses on the NZSOF's relationships, a topic within the genre that was not previously addressed in a systematic way.

Biographies are unavoidably subjective, typically single-person perspectives of events and experiences that often do not address more comprehensive themes and trends. Certainly, no New Zealand-authored special operations forces biography considers the importance of relationships to and for the NZSOF. As it pertains to special operations forces popular biographies:

- The thesis examines the NZSOF's relationships in a broader conceptual and theoretical construct, rather than as individual expressions of subjective experience.
- The thesis applies systematic, analytical rigour to its subject, where biographies utilise a more conversational, narrative style.

In examining media commentary, there is an absence of rigorous analysis of special operations forces with a longer temporal lens and wider scope. Media sources look at the field with an in-the-moment perspective and according to journalistic forms, whereas this thesis observes the NZSOF over a period and notes how the three key security networks developed. The thesis embraces a detailed approach to the NZSOF as force elements, relative to other actors in network contexts and is not constrained by any one event or issue. As it pertains to the special operations forces media commentary literature:

- The thesis examines the NZSOF's relationships over longer periods of time, rather than as an of-the-moment phenomenon.
- The thesis focuses on the NZSOF's relationships, rather than sensational news items.
- The thesis examines the NZSOF's relationships in a structured, analytical, and holistic sense using publicly available source materials, rather than focusing on one particular issue and using public and non-public sources to put across a particular narrative.

In the literature review, this thesis identified that there is a limited set of focused literature about the NZSOF and an even rarer application of relationships as an analytical tool by which to examine special operations forces. This thesis breaks new ground in the scholarly field about the NZSOF merely by adding another piece of literature, but it also adopts a broader scope than has been attempted previously and analyses the NZSOF in new contexts. From the special operations forces scholarly literature:

- The thesis adds a new piece of literature to a small field with few dedicated scholars.
- The thesis adopts a broad, cross-network approach to the NZSOF's relationships, rather than focusing on the NZSOF in only one context.
- The thesis examines the NZSOF's relationships as a new, non-combat analytical concept with which to examine the force elements, rather than focusing on the NZSOF in combat or combat-adjacent contexts.

International special operations forces' scholarly literature is a larger body of work by far, relative to scholarly literature about the NZSOF. It presents more opportunity for this thesis to situate itself relative to other literature in the field, more so than in the rare scholarly literature about the NZSOF. Nevertheless, the literature review identified clear gaps in that body of work where this research offers a unique contribution. The gaps identified in international special operations forces scholarly literature about the NZSOF contributed to the need for this thesis. Specifically, this research will help to address two gaps in the genre:

- The thesis adds a new piece of literature relating to a small state's special operations forces, rather than adding to more developed national or regional literatures.
- The thesis adopts a new conceptual framework and language, one that had not been used in international special operations forces scholarly literature previously.

Interdisciplinary New Zealand national security literatures are tangential fields to scholarly literature about the NZSOF. At times topics in those literatures become relevant to the NZSOF, although at no time are relationships used as an analytical concept to connect the different fields. Consequently, it was harder for the literature review to situate this thesis in relation to those fields. The gaps identified in the interdisciplinary New Zealand national security literatures about the NZSOF and special operations forces contributed to the need for this research. Specifically, this research will help to address two specific gaps in the genre:

- This thesis contributes specific knowledge about the NZSOF to the broader defence literature in New Zealand, supplementary to the specialties of other researchers.
- The thesis provides a mechanism by which to link the NZSOF's relationships with New Zealand national security topics, rather than attempting to situate the NZSOF in relation to scholarly work where there existed no clearly examined linkages.

The gaps identified above are clear, as might be expected in relation to a special operations literature that is nascent internationally and scant in New Zealand. The two research questions for this thesis were developed in response to the literature gaps and will help to contribute knowledge where those gaps exist.

The limitations and gaps in the literatures examined enable the research to contribute a novel interdisciplinary layer to the extant special operations forces scholarship. It connects the NZSOF in an interdisciplinary (bricolage) fashion to three other genres which this literature review examined. To make its contribution to knowledge, to grapple with the gaps in literature identified in the literature review, and to conceptualise and establish the scope of the thesis, a conceptual framework was created and is described in the next section.

### **1.3 Conceptual framework**

The scholarly literature about the NZSOF is minimal, and even in the international special operations forces field research is still being developed and debated.

Consequently, there is no single conceptual approach directly applicable to this research. To frame and develop answers to the research questions, the thesis develops a conceptual framework to manage the scope of the research. The framework is comprised of three concepts the rest of the thesis builds on:

- The network framework
- Relationships as an analytical concept
- The bricolage approach

These concepts are foundational components to structure the data corpus and analysis that follow. The first two concepts are derived from the research questions – networks are the frameworks within which the NZSOF’s relationships were conducted, and relationships are the primary focus of the research. The third concept, bricolage, is a holistic research approach that describes how the disparate elements of the thesis are brought together to create something unique. The research scope is defined through this conceptual framework.

### **1.3.1 The network framework**

The first component of the conceptual framework is the network framework within which the NZSOF’s relationships are examined. The network, according to W. Richard Scott and Gerald F. Davis, “has become perhaps the dominant metaphor of our time”.<sup>81</sup> In its simplest form, a network is “a relatively stable set of actors or nodes (people,

---

<sup>81</sup> W. Richard Scott and Gerald F. Davis, *Organizations and Organizing: Rational, Natural, and Open System Perspectives* (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, Inc., 2007), 278.



organizations, or sectors) linked by a set of ties (such as friendship or exchanges)".<sup>82</sup>

Figure 1-1 is a visual representation of a generic network, where the set of nodes is connected in various ways by a series of relationships. For the purposes of this research, a network is defined as an interconnected series of relationships between a relatively defined set of nodes. There are any number of networks, each quite different in character and context.<sup>83</sup> In this thesis, three key security networks are analysed; they are the NZDF network, the NZNSS network, and the 5SOF network.

Nodes are the actors interacting in relationships within networks. A node is defined as a single entity that interacts with other nodes in a network. Nodes are likely to simultaneously be participating in multiple relational networks, and due to the varying character and context of networks, a node may exhibit varying behaviours in relationships depending on the network in which it is engaged. Nodes and relationships serve to make up the composition and activity of a network. The NZSOF are collectively the ego node of the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks. The ego node is defined as the node within a network that is the primary focus of network analysis:

Egocentric network data focus on the network surrounding one node, known as the ego. Data are on nodes that share the chosen relation(s) with the ego and on relations

---

<sup>82</sup> Robyn Keast, "Network theory tracks and trajectories: Where from, where to?" in *Network Theory in the Public Sector: Building New Theoretical Frameworks*, ed. Robyn Keast, Myrna Mandell and Robert Agranoff (New York: Routledge, 2014), 15-16.

<sup>83</sup> Types of networks include but are not limited to social networks (see John Scott and Peter J. Carrington, eds., *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2011)), organisational networks (see Steven McShane and Tony Travaglione, *Organisational Behaviour on the Pacific Rim* (North Ryde: McGraw-Hill Australia, 2003)), public networks (see Robyn Keast, Myrna Mandell and Robert Agranoff, eds., *Network Theory in the Public Sector: Building New Theoretical Frameworks* (New York: Routledge, 2014); Jo Barraket, Robyn Keast and Craig Furneaux, *Social Procurement and New Public Governance* (London: Routledge, 2016)) and historical networks (see Niall Ferguson, *The Square and the Tower: Networks, Hierarchies and the Struggle for Global Power* (UK: Penguin Books, 2018)).

between those nodes. Although these networks could extend to the second-order ego network, or nodes sharing relations with nodes related to the ego (e.g., friends of friends), in practice, first-order ego networks are the most commonly studied.<sup>84</sup>

The NZSOF remain the research focus, and it is in that light that the NZDF (the NZSOF's immediate military context), NZNSS (the NZSOF's all-of-government context) and 5SOF (the NZSOF's peer context) networks are analysed. The networks themselves are not inherently ego node-driven, meaning that they are not constructed around the NZSOF. Rather, they are described as ego node networks because the construction and analytical focus of the research is on one node (the NZSOF) rather than all nodes equally. Chapter 3 conducts an ego node analysis of the NZSOF, prior to examining the networks in Chapters 4 to 6. Using a network framework is a new way to conceptualise how the NZSOF behave and feel in relation to other entities with which they interact. It also for the first time intentionally places the NZSOF at the centre of the discussion about these networks, rather than having those networks focus on bigger or more powerful nodes. Figure 1-2 is a visual representation of a generic ego node network.

---

<sup>84</sup> Alexandra Marin and Barry Wellman, "Social network analysis: An introduction," in *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis*, ed. John Scott and Peter J. Carrington (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2011), 20. See also Scott and Davis, *Organizations and Organizing*, 281; Christina Prell, *Social Network Analysis: History, Theory & Methodology* (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2012), 8, 118-119.

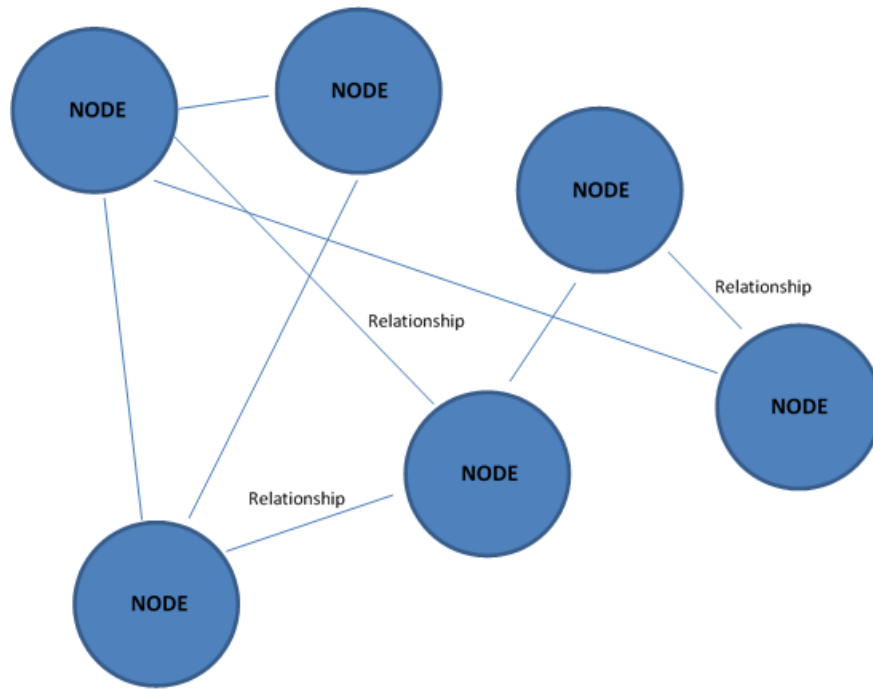


Figure 1-1: Diagram of a Generic Network

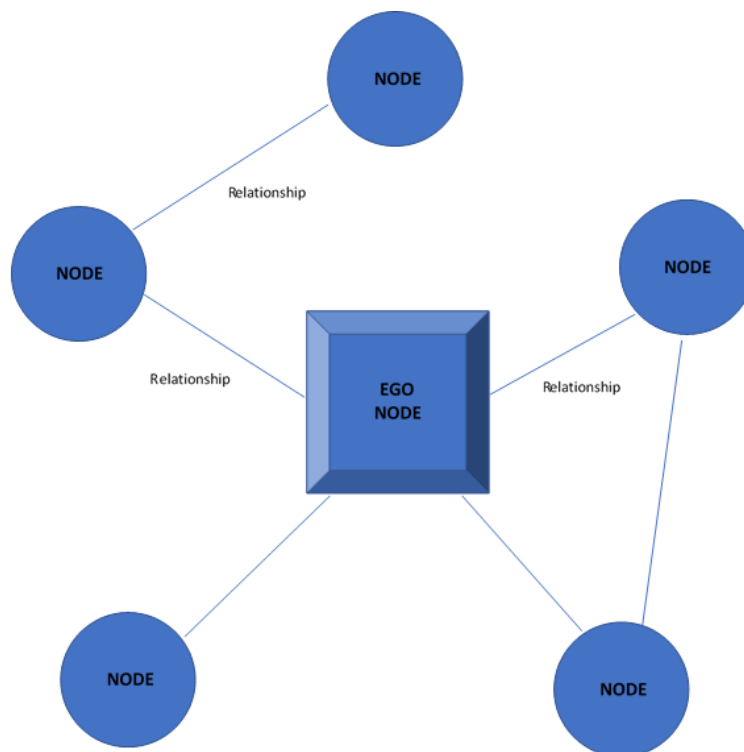


Figure 1-2: Diagram of a Generic Ego Node Network

Within the network framework, this thesis examines what happens when relationships in those networks occur – what those interactions are constructed from and their implications. The primary building block of a network relationship is called a relational characteristic. Relational characteristics are defined as frequently recurring features of a node's behaviour or feeling that define and shape its relationships in a network. Characteristics are analysed through Chapters 3 to 7. A relational dynamic is defined in this thesis as the force that results from the interplay of a node's relational characteristics in its network relationships. The dynamic is analysed in Chapter 8. In the thesis chapters, networks are the framework within which the NZSOF's relationships are analysed. Each network serves as a case study, demonstrating how the NZSOF's relational characteristics are exhibited in that context:

**Case study.** A method of studying elements of our social fabric through comprehensive description and analysis of a single situation or case; for example, a detailed study of an individual, setting, group, episode or event.

Case study research can refer to single and multiple case studies.<sup>85</sup>

The thesis identifies and analyses the NZSOF's relational characteristics in the network case studies individually (Chapters 4 to 6), then identifies two overarching relational characteristics of the NZSOF that spanned all three networks (Chapter 7). From the relational characteristics, a relational dynamic is identified that creates products which

---

<sup>85</sup> Zina O'Leary, *The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project*, 3rd ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2017), 215. See also Uwe Flick, *Introducing Research Methodology*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2015), 98, 183-184.

introduces a paradox into the NZSOF's relationships (Chapter 8). The network framework is critical to this thesis's conceptualisation of the research questions and how they are answered.

### **1.3.2 Relationships as an analytical concept**

The second component of the conceptual framework is understanding relationships as an analytical concept in order to describe and examine the NZSOF in key security networks. For the purposes of this thesis, a relationship is defined as the behaviour or feeling between two or more nodes in a network. The notion that relationships are important to how the researcher analyses the NZSOF had its genesis in Rennie's statement at the beginning of the research. Putting the NZSOF's relationships at the heart of this work is a new way to analyse the force element, and to examine whether Rennie's statement was in fact accurate some 85 years after his first experiences as a soldier and 35 years after he penned that observation.

Relationships are also important because they give the researcher a means to connect the NZSOF to other nodes. Relational language can be used to explain how and why connections are made between the NZSOF and other network nodes. To answer the first research question, the thesis analyses relational characteristics that comprised the NZSOF's relationships inherently and in three network case studies (Chapters 3 to 7).

The relational dynamics, products and paradox analysed in Chapter 8 also uses relationships as the analytical concept to underpin how the thesis goes about answering the second research question. Without that relational language to describe the analysis process, focus and structure, the researcher's use of networks as a framework does not make sense. Networks are as much about the relationships as they

are about the nodes; choosing relationships as the analytical concept in this thesis therefore makes sense.

It is suggested that one of the reasons the NZSOF are distinct is their strong emphasis on relationships as an important feature of their professionalism. The NZSOF's ability and tendency to work with partners, both military and non-military, domestically and internationally, is recognised as a significant feature of their distinctiveness.<sup>86</sup> The theme of working with others in different forms of relationships is ongoing.

"[R]elationship reciprocity" and "strong working relationship[s]" are important enough to be recognised in formal correspondence with international partners.<sup>87</sup> The NZSOF's distinctness in their relationships is paired with interdependence. The NZSOF might be distinct, but they are not independent. The importance continually placed on relationships as a key part of the NZSOF's identity and experience suggests that relationships are an appropriate and relevant analytical concept for this thesis.

### **1.3.3 The bricolage approach**

The bricolage can be described as the process of getting down to the nuts and bolts of multidisciplinary research...bricoleurs move beyond the blinders of particular disciplines and peer through a conceptual window to a new world of research and knowledge production.<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>86</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Defence White Paper 2016" (Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2016), 51; New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018" (Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2018), 35-36.

<sup>87</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDF 1045/SOC 1," demi-official letter, Special Operations Component Commander to Commander Special Operations Command Pacific, 03 June 2016.

<sup>88</sup> Joe L. Kincheloe, Peter McLaren and Shirley R. Steinberg, "Critical pedagogy and qualitative research: Moving to the bricolage," in *Critical Qualitative Research Reader*, ed. Shirley R. Steinberg and Gaile S. Cannella (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2012), 20-21.

The third component of the conceptual framework is the bricolage approach wherein the disparate elements of both the research methodology for this thesis and the content related to the research topic are examined with the intent to bring those elements together, in a new way, to create something new. It is particularly appropriate for research in emerging fields where available literature and theory is relatively scarce and the research is breaking new ground. Bricolage comes from Claude Lévi-Strauss's *The Savage Mind*, published in 1966. In that book, Lévi-Strauss defined a "bricoleur" as someone who sees the potential of "raw materials and tools" for purposes that may be far removed from their original reason for being, as opposed to an "engineer" for example who sees those same items as devised specifically for a certain purpose.<sup>89</sup> Bricolage brings together concepts from diverse fields to find meaning in data, often when that data comes from a limited or emerging field.<sup>90</sup> Bricolage is defined as an approach by which diverse concepts can be brought together and applied in a new context to create new knowledge.

In its methodological approach and in its content, this thesis demonstrates a bricolage approach to answering the research questions. First, in relation to methodology (Chapter 2), it brings together primary sources from the three security networks –

---

<sup>89</sup> Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), 17-19.

<sup>90</sup> Bricolage can occur in any number of fields including organisational and management (for example in Eva Boxenbaum and Linda Rouleau, "New knowledge products as bricolage: Metaphors and scripts in organizational theory," *The Academy of Management Review* 36, no. 2 (2011): 281), resource management (for example in Frances Cleaver, *Development through Bricolage: Rethinking Institutions for Natural Resource Management* (London: Routledge, 2012), 34), entrepreneurship (for example in Bengt Johannisson, "Towards a practice theory of entrepreneuring," *Small Business Economics* 36, no. 2 (2011): 139-140), and even higher education itself (for example in Severine Louvel, "Understanding change in higher education as bricolage: How academics engage in curriculum change," *Higher Education* 66, no. 6 (2013)).

NZDF, NZNSS, and 5SOF – and references those sources make to relationships and re-examines them together considering the new context (the NZSOF's relationships).

Third, in relation to content (Chapters 3 to 7), the thesis uses specific diverse concepts – relational characteristics – to create a holistic assessment of the NZSOF's relationships in the three key security networks. These networks may have been examined or commented on previously and in isolation (for example, discussion of being unconventional is a common theme in special operations forces literature) but never in the combination this thesis offers, and certainly not together in relation specifically to the NZSOF's relationships.<sup>91</sup>

Fourth, in the composition of the NZSOF ego node, a hint of bricolage appears.

Chapter 3 discusses the force elements of the NZSOF using a *taiaha* metaphor and summarises the history of each element. The well-established special forces element has existed in the NZSOF since the 1950s (and has its roots even earlier in World War II). Newer elements in the NZSOF, however, have a much shorter history. The explosive ordnance disposal force element was a stand-alone military entity before being transplanted into the NZSOF's environment and grafted onto the New Zealand Special

---

<sup>91</sup> Susan L. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare: Rebuilding U.S. Special Operations Forces* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997); Sean McFate, *Goliath: Why the West Doesn't Win Wars: And What We Need to Do About It* (UK: Michael Joseph, 2019), 28-29, 35, 184-185; John Taft, Ken Tovo, John Forsythe, Adam Routh and Joe Mariani, "SOF culture is the mission: Culture is key to special operations' transition to great power competition," Deloitte, 15 July 2020, <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/public-sector/ethics-in-military-leadership.html?/#>; Dennis Gyllensporre, "Contemporary hybrid warfare and the evolution of special operations theory," in *Special Operations from a Small State Perspective: Future Security Challenges*, ed. Gunilla Eriksson and Ulrica Pettersson (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 28; Ian Langford, "Finding balance between the conventional and unconventional in future warfare," The Strategy Bridge, 04 December 2018, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2018/12/4/finding-balance-between-the-conventional-and-unconventional-in-future-warfare>; Rubright, "A unified theory for special operations," 53; Danielsen, "Making warriors in the global era," 118.



Air Service (NZSAS), an example of a new concept being brought into a new context to create something new.<sup>92</sup> The Special Operations Component Command was the result of adaptive emulation, the taking of an idea from other 5SOF nodes and transplanting it in a new environment (NZDF) to create something that had not existed before (adaptive emulation is discussed again in Chapter 7).<sup>93</sup> Supporting elements are continually grafted onto the NZSOF from elsewhere in the NZDF network.<sup>94</sup> Only the commando force element was a military capability developed from within the NZSOF.<sup>95</sup> The creation or grafting of new force elements into the special operations forces are examples of bricolage.

In these examples, the research introduces elements of bricolage to the research. When creating new research, there is always an aspect of creating something unique from elements that have existed before but likely in other contexts or configurations. More particularly in a nascent field like special operations forces bricolage is an approach that can help to fill methodological or information gaps in the existing literature by taking elements from other contexts and applying them in new ways. There were distinct bricolage qualities about this thesis, as outlined above, that helped to bring the research together coherently. Having established that this thesis adopts a framework composed of three concepts – the network framework, relationships as an analytical

---

<sup>92</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "Regimental Guide," 4th ed., November 2012, 27; "The Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squadron," Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, 20 June 2012, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/photography/34665/the-explosive-ordnance-disposal-squadron>.

<sup>93</sup> Interview participant 9, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 15, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 17 November 2016, transcript.

<sup>94</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations," 3rd ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2018), 5.

<sup>95</sup> Crosby, *NZSAS*, 255-256, 379.

concept, and the bricolage approach, the following section will summarise the content of the thesis by chapter using the conceptual language that framework employs. The thesis will then introduce the NZSOF ego node in Chapter 3.

#### **1.4 Chapter summaries**

This chapter has introduced the conceptual origins of the thesis, the research goal and research question, the thesis's contribution to knowledge and its potential audience. It has investigated the existing secondary literature about and around the NZSOF to determine what is already known about the NZSOF's relationships in key security networks and to situate the research in that literature. The literature review was structured by genre, beginning with histories, and progressing through biographies, media commentary, and then special operations forces and interdisciplinary New Zealand national security literatures. These genres displayed certain limitations that when combined present gaps that this thesis will help to fill; the research will have a bureaucratic focus on the NZSOF ego node, networks, relationships, and bricolage.

The chapter then developed a conceptual framework to determine the parameters and limitations of the thesis, as well as the conceptual language to interpret answers to the research question. There were three key concepts examined. First, the network framework gave the thesis the language for the NZSOF's relationships through their context (networks), the focus of the research (the NZSOF ego node), the other entities comprising the networks (nodes), and the connections between them (relationships). Second, relationships were defined as the analytical concept through which the NZSOF

could be examined. Using relationships in this way is a new way to analyse special operations forces. Third, the bricolage approach was described as a means by which the thesis pulls together disparate elements to create a unique and significant piece of scholarly work that contributes to new knowledge in the special operations forces field. Chapter 2 will describe the research methods utilised to answer the research question. It will begin with a reflection of the researcher's experience as a hybrid emic-etic researcher and the opportunities and challenges created by that experience. It will then discuss bricolage and the nexus of networks present in the thesis which necessitates gathering information about several different network case studies. Chapter 2 will describe the primary and interview literature generated for the thesis, the former collected from existing sources and the latter collected on the researcher's initiative. The thirty-five interviews conducted specifically for the thesis are the core of the data corpus. It will then outline the thesis's methodological approach, from data collection and coding to data analysis through thematic and comparative analysis. It will conclude with an assessment of the methodology's limitations and their implications for the data gathered.

Chapter 3 will develop the foundational analytic of the NZSOF as an ego node, an analytic subsequently utilised in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. It is critical for the thesis to develop an understanding of the central entity – or node - of the thesis before turning to the networks in which it operates and is interpreted. The chapter employs an adapted metaphor, depicting the NZSOF and their parts as a *taiaha*, before discussing four key characteristics that shape the NZSOF as a collective entity. These characteristics are 'Unconventional', 'Evolutionary', 'Strategic' and 'Opaque'. The chapter

concludes by creating an evolving comparative table of the NZSOF's relational characteristics that will be built up over the next three chapters and utilised as a tool to analysis in Chapters 7 and 8.

Chapter 4 will start to answer the first research question by exploring how the NZSOF ego node conducts relationships within the first of three key security case study networks – the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) network – through a description of the network and an examination of key relational characteristics exhibited by and with the NZSOF in that network. The network is described as a hierarchical network and the chapter employs organisational structure and rank as a means to define that hierarchy. The chapter then describes four key characteristics that shape the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF network. These characteristics are 'Belonging', 'Disconnection', 'Integration' and 'Independence'. NZDF was chosen as a network case study for this thesis because the NZSOF exist within that network as force elements; they belong to, and are managed and employed by, the network in a fashion unlike the other two networks.

Chapter 5 explores how the NZSOF ego node conducts relationships within the second of three key security networks – the New Zealand National Security Sector (NZNSS) network. This network is described as an amorphous network and the chapter employs both the national security and all-of-government concepts as a means to define that amorphousness. The chapter then describes four key characteristics that shape the NZSOF's relationships in the NZNSS network. These characteristics are 'Integration', 'Collaboration', 'Siloisation' and 'Political sponsorship'. NZNSS was chosen as a network case study for this thesis because it is an evolving network for the NZSOF, a context

with lots of opportunity for the NZSOF to contribute to New Zealand's national security in new, mostly non-combat ways and involving other nodes not traditionally thought of as national security entities.

Chapter 6 will complete the set of three case study network chapters answering the first research question. It will explore how the NZSOF ego node conducts relationships within the third of three key security networks – the Five Special Operations Forces (5SOF) network – through a description of the network and an examination of key relational characteristics exhibited by the NZSOF in that network. The network is described as a community network and the chapter discusses the network's structure and community as a means to define what community looks like in that context. The chapter then describes three key characteristics that shape the NZSOF's relationships in the 5SOF network. These characteristics are 'Formalisation', 'Size' and 'Pragmatism'. 5SOF was chosen as a network case study for this thesis because there are no other networks (perhaps apart from the NZDF network, but for different reasons) with which the NZSOF have so much in common. Adding the characteristics distilled from the analysis of each network case study enabled the thesis to assess the unique features of the NZSOF's relationships in the NZNSS network but also how they compared with the NZSOF ego node characteristics and those exhibited in the other two key security networks. Table 1-3 depicts the evolving table developed through Chapters 3 to 6 in its final form, showing all fifteen key relational characteristics, divided by ego node and network.

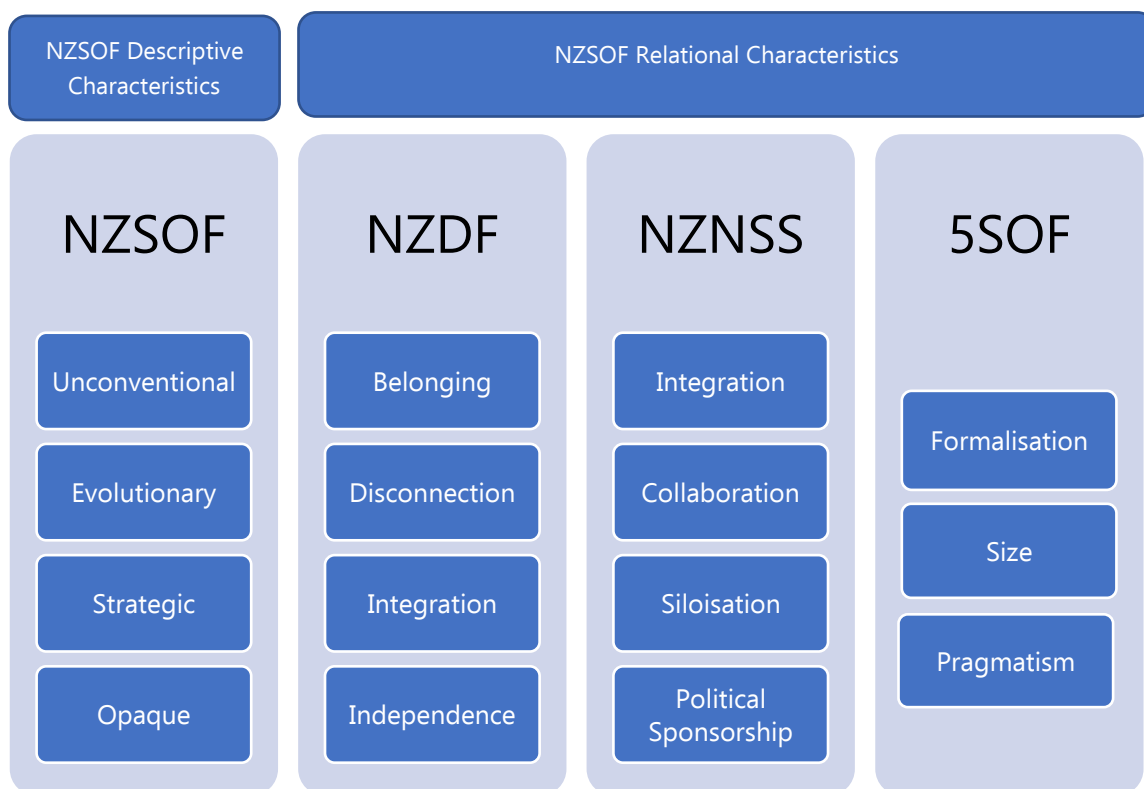


Table 1-1: The NZSOF's Characteristics (An Evolving Table)<sup>96</sup>

Chapter 7 focuses on answering the second research question by reorganising the fifteen relational characteristics identified in Chapters 3 to 6 and analysing them in relation to the two primary overarching relational characteristics. These characteristics are 'Commonality' and 'Utility' and occur constantly across all the network relationships. The fifteen characteristics from Table 1-1 are defined as subordinate characteristics for the first time in this chapter because, rather than being assembled in a simple list, they are recognised as transitory and fluid in comparison with the two overarching

<sup>96</sup> Through the coding process, the researcher identified key codes (words, phrases or ideas) that appeared frequently or that represented a particularly important point in the data. In some cases, groups of very similar codes were given a word to encapsulate all of them. These codes (or themes), in no particular order of prioritisation, are key descriptive (the NZSOF) or relational (the NZSOF in NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF) characteristics exhibited in subsequent tables. See Section 2.3.3 for a more in-depth discussion of the coding process.

characteristics which are fixed and present across all three key security networks all the time. The chapter utilises the Operation BURNHAM inquiry as an illustration of how the overarching and subordinate characteristics may appear in a specific scenario at the same time. Assessing the NZSOF's relational characteristics through the BURNHAM illustration enables the thesis to interpret the NZSOF's relationships with more nuance and to take the characteristics from being stand-alone relational phenomena into a broader picture of how they construct those relationships.

Chapter 8 will continue to answer the second half of the research question by moving on from an analysis of the NZSOF's relationships through their relational characteristics to an analysis of those relationships themselves. It will examine the relational dynamic that occurs when the NZSOF's characteristics are exhibited in those relationships, particularly in their more complex, simultaneous variations. The chapter will then analyse three products of the NZSOF's relational dynamic – 'Liminality', 'Ambiguity' and 'Tension' – and explain how those products at times can introduce paradox into the NZSOF's relationships. The chapter will conclude by suggesting the NZSOF have two possible approaches to this paradox, either resolving the situation by changing the characteristics and sacrificing relational dynamism or accepting and harnessing paradox to support their relationships, but potentially at a cost. The chapter will identify that the latter approach appears to be the one currently employed by the NZSOF and harnessing their paradox requires an alchemy to ensure those relationships remain viable.

Chapter 9 returns to the thesis topic and research questions, before thinking more broadly about the implications of the thesis findings across the NZSOF and the three

security networks examined. It will re-state the research questions in their entirety and summarise the key findings of each chapter. It will assess that the NZSOF's relationships are complex, comprised as they are of relational characteristics that are transitory and fluid, as well as a couple that are fixed and present across the three key security networks this thesis examines. It will then suggest that the complexity of those relationships contain the possibility of paradox, a paradox the NZSOF appear to have embraced in their relationships. The chapter will summarise how it has filled some of the literature gaps identified in Chapter 1. It will conclude by noting three key points the researcher would like the reader to take away from the thesis: (1) the importance of the NZSOF's self-reflection, (2) other nodes' understanding of the NZSOF, and (3) that the NZSOF's self-reflection and other nodes' understanding can create mutual respect in working relationships.



## 2: Methodology

### 2.0 Introduction

This thesis has two research questions. They are: (1) what relational characteristics shape the New Zealand Special Operations Forces' (the NZSOF) relationships in key security networks, and (2) what implications do these relational characteristics have for how the NZSOF engage in relationships with others in key security networks? To answer these, this thesis employed a qualitative methodology to gather and analyse information, underpinned by interdisciplinarity of the bricolage approach described in Chapter 1. The qualitative methodology allowed the thesis to embrace the variance, nuance, complexity, subjectivity, and unpredictability of human experience encapsulated in the NZSOF ego node's relationships in key security networks, particularly those "either entirely new or have yet to be studied."<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this methodology was to build a core of interview primary data material around which secondary and primary texts could be analysed to answer the research questions. Thirty-five senior special operations forces and government officials were interviewed for this research from both New Zealand and abroad. The thesis employed

---

<sup>1</sup> Brenda L. Moore, "In-depth interviewing," in *Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in Military Studies*, ed. Joseph Soeters, Patricia M. Shields and Sebastiaan Rietjens (London: Routledge, 2014), 124-125; Colin S. Gray, *The Strategy Bridge: Theory for Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 37; Betina Hollstein, "Qualitative approaches," in *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis*, ed. John Scott and Peter J. Carrington (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2011), 406. See also John Scott, *Social Network Analysis*, 3rd ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Inc., 2013), 3 relating to the value of the qualitative approach in "describing network structure and development."

a process of thematic and comparative analysis to code the interview data and to produce key themes that defined the relational characteristics described in Chapters 3 to 7 and the relational dynamics in Chapter 8. From that analysis of material, the thesis developed answers to the research questions and arrived at its key findings.

## 2.1 The emic-etic researcher

Through a significant period of the research undertaken, the researcher needed to balance the scholarly requirements of research with an understanding of her own positioning relative to her subject. She did so by recognising her hybrid emic-etic state, sitting between the notions of emic and etic approaches to research.<sup>2</sup> An emic approach was defined as an 'insider' approach; the emic researcher is one who exists within the subject being examined and speaks from that place of deep knowledge and association.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, an etic approach was defined as an 'outsider' approach; the etic researcher is one who exists outside of the subject being examined and speaks as an external observer from a certain distance.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Kenneth L. Pike, *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior*, 2nd ed., rev. ed. (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1967). See also Alastair Finlan, "A dangerous pathway? Toward a theory of special forces," *Comparative Strategy* 38, no. 4 (2019): 256.

<sup>3</sup> Pike, *Unified Theory*, 37. See also Tone Danielsen's description of 'SOFish' in Norwegian Marinejegers as "an emic term": Tone Danielsen, "Making warriors in the global era: An anthropological study of institutional apprenticeship: Selection, training, education, and everyday life in the Norwegian Naval Special Operations Commando" (PhD diss., University of Oslo, 2015), 24-25.

<sup>4</sup> Pike, *Unified Theory*, 37. See also Ryan J.A. Murphy, "Finding the emic in systemic design: Towards systemic ethnography," Proceedings of RSD7, Relating Systems Thinking and Design 7, 23-26 October 2018, <http://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/2750>.

Emic and etic research identities and approaches can co-exist. Betty Jane Punnett et. al. described an “emic-etic-emic research cycle” where the research approach flowed from one state to another at different stages.<sup>5</sup> Of course, a researcher identifying both with an emic and an etic approach to their scholarship negotiates certain internal tensions. Nina Boyd Krebs defined such individuals as “edgewalkers”, those who hold both identities within themselves simultaneously (the thesis will return to the edge-walker concept in relation to the NZSOF ego node in Chapter 8).<sup>6</sup> This type of layered, bricolage research identity may be complicated and carries a risk of some discomfort to the researcher.<sup>7</sup> Simultaneously, it offers an opportunity to build a new perspective of the subject under discussion.

The researcher experienced a hybrid emic-etic identity while researching and writing the thesis. For some time during the writing of the thesis, the researcher was employed as an analyst within the NZDF and the NZSOF’s community – in effect an “emic” researcher.<sup>8</sup> Being an emic researcher offered opportunities for better access to source materials with which to answer the research questions, but also challenges in that it was hard to retain objectivity and avoid undue bias shaped by her experience of being a

---

<sup>5</sup> Betty Jane Punnett, David Ford, Bella L. Galperin and Terri Lituchy, “The emic-etic-emic research cycle,” *AIB Insights* 17, no. 1 (2017): 4. See also Asa Bergman and Monica Lindgren, “Navigating between an emic and an etic approach in ethnographic research: Crucial aspects and strategies when communicating critical results to participants,” *Ethnography and Education* (2018): 478; Fiona Beals, Joanna Kidman and Hine Funaki, “Insider and outsider research: Negotiating self at the edge of the emic-etic divide,” *Qualitative Inquiry* 26, no. 6 (2020): 595-596.

<sup>6</sup> Nina Boyd Krebs, *Edgewalkers: Defusing Cultural Boundaries on the New Global Frontier* (Far Hills: New Horizon Press, 1999), xiii, 9. See also Beals, et. al., “Insider and outsider research,” 597.

<sup>7</sup> Krebs, *Edgewalkers*, 9.

<sup>8</sup> Complicated even further by the researcher being a woman and a civilian in a predominantly male and uniformed environment, which means that within the “emic” status the researcher was also in some senses an “etic” participant.

public service organisation, and specifically NZDF, employee. The researcher was also an independent scholar producing a piece of work bound by theory, methodology, objective standards, and analytical expectations – an “etic” researcher. Being an etic researcher offered opportunities to research the NZSOF with an objective academic approach and break new ground, but also challenges in that it was difficult to make available source materials that are not generally available to an external researcher. This was one reason that the research focuses on relationships across contemporary networks, rather than operations or strategic questions. In this methodology, the researcher feels it is important to understand the hybrid emic-etic position of the researcher relative to this research subject, and the challenges and potential bias inherent in her inside / outside position. To this end, the research questions were answered by combining (a bricolage effect) emic inside perspectives and knowledge with etic outsider scholarly conventions and parameters.

## **2.2 Bricolage and a nexus of networks**

Chapter 1 examined the bricolage approach as one of the three conceptual pieces underpinning and shaping this thesis and how it would go about answering the research questions. Bricolage is particularly appropriate for research in new or emerging fields where available literature and theory is relatively scarce and the research is breaking new ground. To build answers to the research questions, material and methodological approaches had to be gathered relevant to the NZSOF and the three case study networks – the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), the New Zealand National Security System (NZNSS) and special operations forces of Australia, Canada,

the United Kingdom, and the United States of America (5SOF). This type of bricolage was realised in the nexus created by combining an assessment of the NZSOF ego node together with the assessments of the three key security networks. Examining the NZSOF's relationships in key security networks did not neatly fit the parameters of a single network context. While the NZSOF ego node, as a military force element, naturally sat within both the NZDF and 5SOF networks, the NZSOF's engagement with the NZNSS network added a third relational context. Across all three networks and the NZSOF ego node lay answers to the research questions. Finding and analysing that nexus was a key feature of the research process.

### **2.3 Sourcing primary and interview literature**

Sources for this research took three forms:

(1) Secondary literature provided generally *contextual knowledge* from the literature review in Chapter 1 and was indirectly related to the research subject in that they offered anecdotes or small items of knowledge to the research or created an image of the world within which the research is couched.

(2) Primary literature was generally *established knowledge* where organisational thinking about the NZSOF and their relationships had developed to the point where it was codified and written down.

(3) Interviews were generally *evolving knowledge*, the voices of individual participants who speak from their own knowledge and experience about the NZSOF's relationships

and where the data could change either during an interview or subsequently because it was generated from the complexity and variance of a human mind.

The secondary literature has been reviewed in Chapter 1. This section will discuss the primary literature and interviews. It will then discuss the coding and analytical process to generate assessed data for use in the thesis. The entirety of the data corpus was collected in an intentional manner, but with the ability to incorporate secondary literature encountered as well.

### **2.3.1 Primary literature**

As discussed in Chapter 1, the secondary literature revealed gaps that this thesis could fill in terms of understanding the NZSOF's relationships. Consequently, the purpose of the primary literature search was to examine what written materials were publicly available relating to relationships in the NZSOF ego node and as they were exhibited in the three case study security networks. These documents were generated by the entities, agencies or organisations directly related to the NZSOF, NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF categories.<sup>9</sup> Primary literature was described above as *established knowledge*, where organisational thinking about the NZSOF and their relationships had developed to the point where it was codified and written down into doctrine and / or policy. They were documents "made by someone for some purpose and became relevant for the research only through the researcher's interpretations."<sup>10</sup> In this context, the researcher was looking for the relevance of primary literature created by the entities, agencies or

---

<sup>9</sup> Uwe Flick, *Introducing Research Methodology*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2015), 153.

<sup>10</sup> Flick, *Introducing Research Methodology*, 154.

organisations under examination in the thesis, but specifically as it related to the NZSOF ego node and their relationships in the three key security networks. This literature also had the potential to offer contextual or tangential knowledge that could assist in building a picture of the ego node and network categories within which the NZSOF's relationships occur. Uwe Flick reminds the researcher that this type of information is limited and analysing the information should take into account authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning:

Many official or private documents are meant only for a limited circle of recipients who are authorized to access them or who are addressed by them. Official documents allow conclusions about what their authors or institutions they represent do or intend, or how they evaluate. Documents are produced for a certain purpose – such as to substantiate a decision or to convince a person or an authority. But that also means that documents represent issues in only a limited way.<sup>11</sup>

To ascertain the credibility of the literature, the researcher focused on organisational websites and documentation.<sup>12</sup> Sourcing these documents were also limited to publicly available information and strategic level information, or information that could be obtained through official processes. An emphasis on strategic information, rather than operational or tactical data, was applied because the likelihood of finding strategic level public information was greater than at the operational or tactical levels, and it corresponded to the focus of the thesis which was a higher-level examination of relationships in non-conflict situations. It also corresponded to the level of interviews

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 154.

<sup>12</sup> Zina O'Leary, *The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project*, 3rd ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2017), 267.

conducted and the fact that most interview participants were senior individuals who were able to speak publicly about and reflect on their experience as it related to the thesis research questions. With those priorities and limitations in mind, the primary literature comprised organisational information displayed on websites, strategies and plans, doctrine, and media releases.

Finding information directly relevant to the NZSOF's relationships was the first research priority for primary literature, although as an NZDF force element the research inevitably encompassed the NZDF network-relevant literature as well. The search for this information occurred simultaneously with the secondary literature search to identify the gaps in literature the thesis could fill. The NZDF website has changed over the period of this research, as has the public information displayed about the NZSOF on that website.<sup>13</sup> The information was also limited and general in nature. The researcher went back to the website numerous times throughout the research, particularly after the website design and content was changed. The current format of the website contains publications, including Briefings to the Incoming Minister on the change of Government, high-level doctrine, strategies and plans, service sites, and media releases.<sup>14</sup> The Defence Careers website also contained some information about

---

<sup>13</sup> The former webpage within the NZDF website was at the following address: New Zealand Defence Force, "New Zealand's Special Operations Forces," accessed 10 March 2018, <http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/about-us/nzsof/>. The re-developed NZDF website is: New Zealand Defence Force | Te Ope Kātua o Aotearoa, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf>. The information on the NZSOF within that website is a small paragraph at: New Zealand Defence Force | Te Ope Kātua o Aotearoa, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/about-us/>.

<sup>14</sup> New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Introducing Defence: A Briefing for the Incoming Minister," December 2017, <http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/corporate-documents/briefing-for-incoming-minister/briefing-for-incoming-minister.htm>; New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "2020 Briefing to Incoming Minister of Defence / Ngā Whakamārama kit e Minita te Kāhui Kaupapa Waonga," 15 December 2020,



the NZSAS role.<sup>15</sup> A few NZDF documents were obtained by request, for example the speech notes of Chief of Defence Force Lieutenant General Timothy Keating to the New Zealand Defence Command and Staff College in 2017, and two higher education papers on strategy written by officers of the NZSOF (also interview participants for this

---

<https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/publication/Defence-BIM.pdf>; New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-D New Zealand Defence Doctrine," 4th ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2017); New Zealand Defence Force, "Defence Force Order 35: New Zealand Defence Force Response to Civilian Harm" (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2020); New Zealand Defence Force, "Annual Report 2019 for the year ended 30 June 2019" (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2019); New Zealand Defence Force, "Annual Report 2020 for the year ended 30 June 2020" (Wellington: New Zealand Defence Force, 2020); New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDF Strategic Plan 2019-2025: Operationalising Strategy25," 11 March 2020, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/Publications/NZDF-Strategic-Plan-2019-2025.pdf>; New Zealand Defence Force, "Foresight Report: Oceania," 1st ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2017); New Zealand Defence Force, "Future Land Operating Concept 2035: Integrated Land Missions," 2nd ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2018); New Zealand Defence Force, "Future Operating Concept Out to 2050," 1st ed. (Wellington: New Zealand Defence Force, 2018); New Zealand Army, "Way of the New Zealand Warrior" (New Zealand Army, 2020); New Zealand Army, "Army25: Chief of Army's Brief" (New Zealand Army, 2019); New Zealand Defence Force, "Women in the NZDF," November 2019; Air Force | Te Tauaarangi o Aotearoa, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/air-force/>; Army | Ngati Tumatauenga, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/army/>; Navy | Te Taua Moana o Aotearoa, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/navy/>; "1 NZSAS Regiment Support Squadron," *Army News*, November / December 2018; Jim Bliss, "Maximising our warfighting capabilities," *Army News*, November / December 2018; Timothy Keating, "CDF's Five," *Army News*, May 2014; Wiremu Moffitt, "A message from WO JFNZ," *Army News*, September 2019; Wiremu Moffitt, "SMA.NET," *Army News*, May 2020; Evan Williams, "A message from Deputy Chief of Army: Reputation and relationships – it works both ways," *Army News*, October 2019; New Zealand Defence Force, *F4NZ: Force for New Zealand Magazine*, December 2018; New Zealand Defence Force, "New Zealand Defence Force Response to Whakaari / White Island Eruption Dec. 2019," accessed 15 February 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/publication/New-Zealand-Defence-Force-Response-to-Whakaari-White-Island-Eruption-Dec-2019.pdf>; New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDF enacts rules around civilian harm reports," 11 February 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/news/nzdf-enacts-rules-around-civilian-harm-reports/>; New Zealand Defence Force, "Report of the inquiry into Operation Burnham released: A statement from Air Marshal Kevin Short," accessed 15 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/news/report-of-the-inquiry-into-operation-burnham-released/>; New Zealand Defence Force, "A statement from Chief of Army MAJGEN John Boswell," accessed 12 February 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/news/a-statement-from-chief-of-army-majgen-john-boswell/>.

<sup>15</sup> "NZSAS," Defence Careers, accessed 11 January 2021, <https://www.defencecareers.mil.nz/army/careers/browse-roles/nzsas/>.

thesis) while studying at the United States Army War College.<sup>16</sup> The Ministry of Defence website also contained some useful information relating to the NZSOF or contextual New Zealand defence matters.<sup>17</sup> These websites and documents were contextually relevant for the thesis and in some cases included short passages about the NZSOF specifically.

It became clear in examining the NZDF literature that there was little information specifically available about the NZSOF and that information relating to relationships were the sort of general statements like the Rennie quote that inspired this research. Where possible and accessible through NZDF processes, the researcher was able to request portions of strategic-level documentation for use in the thesis. This primary literature included strategic plans, doctrine, an indicative sample of correspondence and a 1st New Zealand Special Air Service Regiment (1 NZSAS Regt) regimental guide, all literature internally produced by the NZSOF ego node.<sup>18</sup> These materials were

---

<sup>16</sup> Timothy Keating, "CDF Address to Staff Course – Graduation," speech notes, 06 December 2017; Rian McKinstry, "New Zealand's geopolitics and its security challenge," strategy research project, United States Army War College, 2018; Christopher Parsons, "A force for good," strategy research project, U.S. Army War College, 2015.

<sup>17</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Defence | Manatū Kaupapa Waonga, accessed 15 February 2021, <https://www.defence.govt.nz>; New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Defence White Paper 2016" (Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2016); New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018" (Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2018); New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Implementing Recommendation 1 of the Operation Burnham Inquiry Report: Appointment of the Expert Review Group and Terms of Reference," 17 December 2020, <https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/publication/operation-burnham-inquiry-expert-review-group-appointment>; New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Terms of Reference – Government Inquiry into Operation Burnham: Expert Review Group to Review of NZDF's Organisational Structure and Record-Keeping and Retrieval Processes," 07 October 2020, <https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/publication/operation-burnham-inquiry-terms-of-reference-review-of-organisational-structure-and-record-keeping-and-retrieval-processes>;

<sup>18</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "1910/5/4 Transformation of New Zealand's Special Operations Forces," minute, 04 February 2007; New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations," 2nd ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2012); New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations," 3rd ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2018); New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDF

relatively few in number and usually offered only general statements about relationships, akin to that which was evident in the NZDF primary literature search.<sup>19</sup> The limitations reiterated in the primary literature therefore indicated the importance of the interviews conducted for the thesis which would not only provide more detail to the concept of the NZSOF's relationships, but would also offer a human perspective rather than organisational language.

The process used for the sourcing of the NZSOF ego node and NZDF network literature was reproduced secondly for the 5SOF network. Again, the researcher began with open-source organisational websites and found the sorts of information available replicated those found on the NZDF website.<sup>20</sup> Some 5SOF nodes publicly released more information than others; for example, the USSOF have quite a number of documents available (for example, a commander's posture statements to the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, a USSOCOM Fact Book, the USSOCOM "Tip of

---

1045/SOC/1," demi-official letter, 03 June 2016; New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDF 3140/SOC/1 New Zealand Special Operations Forces Strategic Plan dated 15 Aug 17," minute, 15 August 2017; New Zealand Defence Force, "Regimental Guide," 4th ed., November 2012; Special Operations Component Commander, "PASSWG-Oceania: SOCC Mihi and Opening Remarks," remarks, 11 July 2016; "New Zealand Special Air Service Group," NZSAS Association Archives, ND; "The Special Air Service Historical Notes," NZSAS Association Archives, ND; New Zealand Defence Force, "69/1/22 Part 3 NZSAS Squadron Training. NZSAS basis for planning," 20 March 1978; New Zealand Defence Force, "69/1/22 Part 3 NZSAS Squadron Training. The maintenance of operational standards 1978-1979," April 1978.

<sup>19</sup> The Operation BURNHAM inquiry's process did involve the declassification and publication of a significant number of organisational (including the NZSOF) documents. The researcher did not use this information for two reasons: (1) the focus of the inquiry was on an operational level issue and therefore did not have a strategic focus, and (2) as part of the NZSOF at the time the researcher was requested not to access that information as part of the inquiry process.

<sup>20</sup> "Special Air Service Regiment," The Australian Army, 14 December 2016, <https://www.army.gov.au/our-people/units/special-operations-command/special-air-service-regiment>; Canadian Special Operations Forces Command, Government of Canada, 14 November 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/special-operations-forces-command/corporate/organizational-structure.html>; United States Special Operations Command, accessed 21 October 2019, <https://www.socom.mil/>.

the Spear” magazine, and a miscellany of articles and press releases), while the UKSOF have none (not even a general website, apart from some vague information about UK Special Forces and the UKSAS reserves).<sup>21</sup> As with the NZSOF and NZDF information, details about relationships consisted of general statements with little specificity and certainly almost nothing about relationships with New Zealand or the NZSOF specifically. This information provided some further knowledge for network context but was clearly limited in its usefulness to the thesis focus.

The NZNSS primary literature was gathered around the middle of the research process and towards the end of the process, particularly as the thesis moved from a focus on the NZSOF’s relationships with 5SOF nodes to a focus encompassing NZDF and NZNSS as well. Websites were a core source of primary literature, including for documents such as legislation and the Operation BURNHAM inquiry report, which stand on their own,

---

<sup>21</sup> United States Special Operations Command, “Statement of General Raymond A. Thomas, III, U.S. Army, Commander, United States Special Operations Command before the House Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities,” 15 February 2018, [https://www.socom.mil/Documents/Posture%20Statements/2018%20USSOCOM%20Posture%20Statement\\_HASC%20Final.pdf](https://www.socom.mil/Documents/Posture%20Statements/2018%20USSOCOM%20Posture%20Statement_HASC%20Final.pdf); United States Special Operations Command, “Statement of General Raymond A. Thomas, III, U.S. Army, Commander, United States Special Operations Command before the Senate Armed Services Committee,” 04 May 2017, <https://www.socom.mil/pages/posture-statement-sasc.aspx>; United States Special Operations Command, “Fact Book 2021,” [https://www.socom.mil/FactBook/2021%20Fact%20Book\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.socom.mil/FactBook/2021%20Fact%20Book_FINAL.pdf); United States Special Operations Command, “Tip of the Spear,” December 2020, <https://www.socom.mil/latesttots>; United States Special Operations Forces, “Articles,” accessed 11 March 2021, <https://www.socom.mil/public-affairs/command-information/articles>; United States Special Operations Command, “Press Releases,” accessed 11 March 2021, <https://www.socom.mil/Pages/pressreleases.aspx>; “UK Special Forces,” GOV.UK, accessed 14 November 2019, <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/directorate-of-special-forces>; “UK Special Forces (Reserve): 21 & 23 Special Air Service (SAS),” Army, accessed 14 November 2019, <https://www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/corps-regiments-and-units/uk-special-forces-reserve/21-23-sas-r/>; “Special Forces (SAS Reserve),” Army, accessed 11 March 2021, <https://apply.army.mod.uk/roles/infantry/sas-reserve>.

but access to them was easiest via the internet.<sup>22</sup> In particular, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) website was important to the research as that

---

<sup>22</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Defence, accessed 15 February 2021; New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Defence White Paper 2016"; New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018"; New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Implementing Recommendation 1"; New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Terms of Reference"; Jacinda Ardern, "Opening keynote: A vision for global New Zealand," accessed 19 June 2020, <https://nziaa.org.nz/Portals/285/documents/lists/259/Opening%20Keynote%20speech%20Prime%20Minister%20Jacinda%20Ardern.pdf>; Andrew Hampton, "Speech: Cyber security in a Covid-19 world," 03 August 2020, <https://www.gcsb.govt.nz/news/cyber-security-in-a-covid-19-world/>; John Key, "New Zealand's place in the world," 03 May 2016, <http://www.nziaa.org.nz/past-events.aspx>; Ron Mark, "Minister of Defence: Speech for the Shangri-La Dialogue; Singapore," Beehive.govt.nz, 09 June 2018, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/minister-defence-speech-shangri-la-dialouge-singapore>; *Defence Act 1990*, Public Act: 1990 No. 28, date of assent: 01 April 1990, <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1990/0028/latest/DLM204973.html>; *Education and Training Act 2020*, Public Act: 2020 No. 38, date of assent: 31 July 2020, <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2020/0038/latest/LMS170676.html>; *Public Service Act 2020*, Public Act: 2020 No. 40, date of assent: 06 August 2020, <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2020/0040/latest/LMS106159.html>; "COVID-19," National Cyber Security Centre, accessed 22 January 2021, <https://www.ncsc.govt.nz/covid-19/>; "Lance-Corporal Bill (Willie) Apiata," New Zealand History | Nga korero a ipurangi o Aotearoa, accessed 15 February 2021, <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/page/nz-victoria-cross-recipients#apiata>; "Rannerdale World War One Commemorative Centre Regimental Dinner," WW100 – New Zealand's First World War Centenary Programme, 02 March 2015, <https://ww100.govt.nz/rannerdale-world-war-one-commemorative-centre-regimental-dinner>; "The Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squadron," Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, 20 June 2012, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/photography/34665/the-explosive-ordnance-disposal-squadron>; "Whakaari / White Island event response," Whakatane District Council, accessed 08 February 2021, <https://www.whakatane.govt.nz/whakaari-white-island-event-response>; Mark Burton, "Opening of Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand," 02 July 2001, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/opening-headquarters-joint-forces-new-zealand>; Phil Goff, "Presentation of the US Presidential Unit Citation," Beehive.govt.nz, 24 May 2007, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/presentation-us-presidential-unit-citation>; Chris Hipkins, "Public Service undergoes biggest shake-up in 30 years," Beehive.govt.nz, 26 June 2019, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/public-service-undergoes-biggest-shake-30-years>; Inquiry into Operation Burnham, accessed 15 February 2021, <https://operationburnham.inquiry.govt.nz>; Basil Keane, "Riri – traditional Māori warfare – Rākau Māori – Māori weapons and their uses," Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, 20 June 2012, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/riri-traditional-maori-warfare/page-3>; Ron Mark, "New armoured vehicles for New Zealand Army," Beehive.govt.nz, 08 July 2020, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new-armoured-vehicles-new-zealand-army>; Ministry of Health | Manatū Hauora, accessed 25 January 2021, <https://www.health.govt.nz/>; New Zealand Customs Service | Te Mana Ārai o Aotearoa, accessed 25 January 2021, <https://www.customs.govt.nz/>; New Zealand Intelligence Community | Te Rōpū Pārongo Tārehu o Aotearoa, accessed 22 January 2021, <https://www.nzic.govt.nz/>; New Zealand Police, accessed 22 January 2021, <https://www.police.govt.nz/>; Te Kawa Mataaho | Public Service Commission, 05 October 2020, <https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/>.

agency serves a facilitation and coordination function for the NZNSS network and therefore documentation relevant to the network and its specific goal of national security (see Chapter 5) could be found at that address.<sup>23</sup> Primary literature for this network was important for understanding the functioning of the network and its *ad hoc* nature. However, information about relationships between the nodes in the network only existed in piecemeal fashion in documents. As with the NZSOF ego node, and the NZDF and 5SOF networks, it became clear that a detailed understanding of NZNSS network relationships in general and certainly of the NZSOF's relationships in those networks was a significant gap in knowledge that this thesis would fill.

The primary literature sourced for this research was both important and insufficient. Understanding the networks themselves – their composition and goals and values – was important information to build a picture of the context within which the NZSOF's relationships occur. What was also evident was that the documentation could not provide an answer to the research questions or even much specific detail about network relationships or the NZSOF's relationships in those networks. Combining primary and secondary literature could offer some knowledge on which conclusions could be built, but they had to be supplemented by the core of the data corpus, which came from interviews with subject matter experts.

---

<sup>23</sup> Counter-Terrorism Coordination Committee, "Countering terrorism and violent extremism national security overview," ODESC: Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination, accessed 15 February 2021, <https://dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2020-02/2019-20%20CT%20Strategy-all-final.pdf>; Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, "National Security System Handbook," August 2016, <https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2017-03/dpmc-nss-handbook-aug-2016.pdf>; Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet | Te Tari o te Pirimia me te Komiti Matua, accessed 22 January 2021, <https://dpmc.govt.nz>.

### 2.3.2 Interviews with subject matter experts

It is your interviewees' voice that you are seeking, and it is their voice that needs to be drawn out.<sup>24</sup>

The analysis of secondary and primary literature about the NZSOF and their relationships in the three key security networks identified gaps in the literature that this thesis could fill. That analysis led to the formulation of interview questions to provide information relevant to answering the research questions (a list of interview questions and a short discussion of how the questions evolved over time may be found at Appendix A).<sup>25</sup> Interviews were described as 'evolving knowledge', the voices of individual participants who speak from their own knowledge and experience about the NZSOF's relationships and where the data could change either during an interview or subsequently because it was generated from the complexity and variance of a human mind. In a chapter on in-depth interviewing, Brenda Moore makes the point that in this kind of interview "the primary objective is to learn how subjects perceive an event."<sup>26</sup> Lindsay Clutterbuck and Richard Warnes further observe that interviewing officials involved in the research subject gives the researcher insights into the subject and

---

<sup>24</sup> O'Leary, *Doing Your Research Project*, 239.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 258: O'Leary notes the importance of reviewing, reflecting on and modifying observation methods. This process of reflexivity undertaken in relation to the interview process and questions led the researcher to making amendments to the question list to better reflect how the research subject was evolving.

<sup>26</sup> Moore, "In-depth interviewing," 124. See also Pushkala Prasad, *Crafting Qualitative Research: Working in the Postpositivist Traditions* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2005), 25: "Within this [symbolic interactionist] tradition, interviews are typically in-depth and meaning-centred. In other words, they ask fewer questions about "what" is or was taking place and more questions about "how" interviewees make sense of specific situations."



indirectly into adjacent issues, “in a way that cannot easily be achieved by any other means.”<sup>27</sup> The purpose of interviews completed for this thesis was to obtain “original primary source material” that gave greater detail about how individuals involved in the key security networks examined perceived the NZSOF’s relationships beyond the limitations of secondary and publicly-available official sources.<sup>28</sup> They provided the human voice, unfiltered by organisational phrasing and context (primary literature) or external observation and opinion (secondary literature).

Thirty-five interviews were conducted and approved by the participants for use in the thesis. Table 2-1 gives a list of the interview participants (including an interview code, name and / or appointment, and date of interview).

<b><i>Participant Code</i></b>	<b><i>Name or Appointment</i></b>	<b><i>Date of Interview</i></b>
Interview participant 1	COL Robert Gillard <i>Special Operations Component Commander, NZDF</i>	11 August 2016
Interview participant 2	MS Sheryll Boxall <i>Senior Futures Analyst, NZDF</i>	25 August 2016
Interview participant 3	LTGEN (rtd.) Rhys Jones <i>Former Chief of Defence Force, NZDF</i>	23 September 2016
Interview participant 4	WO1 Danniell Broughton <i>Warrant Officer of the Defence Force, NZDF</i>	26 September 2016
Interview participant 5	INSPECTOR Nicholas Brown <i>Manager, Command and Emergency Management, New Zealand Police</i>	27 September 2016

<sup>27</sup> Lindsay Clutterbuck and Richard Warnes, “Interviewing government and official sources: An introductory guide,” in *Conducting Terrorism Field Research: A Guide*, ed. Adam Dolnik (London: Routledge, 2013), 15.

<sup>28</sup> Clutterbuck and Warnes, “Interviewing government and official sources,” 17.



<b>Participant Code</b>	<b>Name or Appointment</b>	<b>Date of Interview</b>
Interview participant 6	MR (COL, NZ Army Reserves) Michael Thompson <i>Director, International Branch, New Zealand Ministry of Defence (MOD)</i>	28 September 2016
Interview participant 7	MAJGEN Timothy Gall <i>Commander Joint Forces New Zealand, NZDF</i>	10 October 2016
Interview participant 8	LTCOL Rian McKinstry <i>Director, Institute for Leader Development, NZDF</i>	10 October 2016
Interview participant 9	BRIG Christopher Parsons <i>Deputy Chief of Army, NZDF</i>	10 October 2016
Interview participant 10	MS Ingrid Harder <i>Director Strategy and Governance, NZDF</i>	14 October 2016
Interview participant 11	MAJGEN Peter Kelly <i>Chief of Army, NZDF</i>	17 October 2016
Interview participant 12	BRIG John Boswell <i>Assistant Chief Strategic Commitments and Engagements, NZDF</i>	21 October 2016
Interview participant 13	LTGEN Timothy Keating <i>Chief of Defence Force, NZDF</i>	28 October 2016
Interview participant 14	RADM John Martin <i>Chief of Navy, NZDF</i>	04 November 2016
Interview participant 15	COL (rtd.) James Blackwell <i>Chief Executive, Kauri Group Companies</i>	17 November 2016
Interview participant 16	MR M <i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Official</i>	22 November 2016
Interview participant 17	LTCOL S <i>Special Operations Deputy Commander, NZDF</i>	30 November 2016
Interview participant 18	WO1 W <i>Regimental Sergeant Major, 1 NZSAS Regt, NZDF</i>	01 December 2016
Interview participant 19	LTCOL D <i>Commanding Officer, 1 NZSAS Regt, NZDF</i>	02 December 2016

<b>Participant Code</b>	<b>Name or Appointment</b>	<b>Date of Interview</b>
Interview participant 20	MR P <i>Staff Officer, NZNSS</i>	05 December 2016
<i>Release of Hit &amp; Run book - - March 2017</i>		
Interview participant 21	Officer E <i>Special Operations Liaison Officer, Canadian Special Operations Forces</i>	21 April 2017
Interview participant 22	CAPT L <i>Special Operations Liaison Officer, NZDF</i>	08 June 2017
Interview participant 23	LTCOL D <i>Special Operations Liaison Officer, United States Special Operations Forces</i>	27 June 2017
Interview participant 24	LTCOL (rtd.) Michael Mollohan <i>Multi-national engagement, Special Operations Command Pacific, United States Special Operations Forces</i>	20 September 2017
Interview participant 25	AIRCDRE Darryn Webb <i>Air Component Commander, NZDF</i>	13 October 2017
Interview participant 26	CDRE James Gilmour <i>Maritime Component Commander, NZDF</i>	17 October 2017
Interview participant 27	MAJ N <i>Staff officer, NZDF</i>	26 October 2017
Interview participant 28	MR Anthony Smith <i>Assessments Manager, Asia and Middle East, National Assessments Bureau (NAB), DPMC</i>	08 December 2017
Interview participant 29	MR Howard Broad <i>Deputy Chief Executive Security and Intelligence, DPMC</i>	09 January 2018
Interview participant 30	HON Mark Mitchell <i>Opposition spokesperson for Defence, National Party, New Zealand Parliament</i>	14 February 2018
Interview participant 31	Army officer (rtd.) Robert Mackie <i>Operations Manager, National Security Systems Directorate, DPMC</i>	15 February 2018

<b>Participant Code</b>	<b>Name or Appointment</b>	<b>Date of Interview</b>
Interview participant 32	LTCOL J <i>Special Operations Liaison Officer, United Kingdom Special Operations Forces</i>	30 April 2018
Interview participant 33	LTCOL C <i>Commanding Officer, 1 NZSAS Regt, NZDF</i>	08 May 2018
Interview participant 34	WO1 Shane Vooght <i>Command Sergeant Major, Army General Staff, NZDF</i>	07 June 2018
Interview participant 35	SGT Anthony Moffitt <i>SF recruiter, Australian Special Operations Forces (just completed Team Commander, Special Air Service Regiment)</i>	30 June 2018

Table 2-1: Interview Participants<sup>29</sup>

All interview participants contributed to this thesis as individuals and their responses to the thesis subject and interview questions were their own personal views. Their responses did not necessarily reflect the official positions of the agencies, organisations, or countries by which they were employed. All participants consented to the use of their interview content for the purposes of this research. Participants who did not wish their names to be made public have remained anonymous in accordance with Massey University's Human Ethics Committee requirements. A high-risk ethics application was submitted, and the research was reviewed and approved both by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 15 / 47 and the

<sup>29</sup> Data accurate at time of interview.

NZDF's Organisational Research and Development Branch: 5000 / PB / 5 / 3 NZDF

Special Operations Forces Research, minute, 02 June 2015.<sup>30</sup>

Interview participants were selected using "intensity sampling", which is "[t]he process of selecting or searching for rich or excellent examples of the phenomenon of interest. These are not, however, extreme or deviant cases...Intensity sampling can allow the researcher to select a small number of rich cases that provide in depth information and knowledge of a phenomenon of interest."<sup>31</sup> This form of selection was chosen because, like the size of its literature, the NZSOF are a small community of force elements, with a small number of subject matter experts. The advantage of intensity sampling to collect data from subject matter experts, and the reason why the interview data in this thesis is referenced by interview code rather than name, is to "focus less on the interviewees' personalities and more on their expertise in a specific area."<sup>32</sup> Following Flick's summation of A. Bogner and W. Menz's work on interviewing experts, this thesis used its expert interviews for a combination of reasons:

...for exploration (1) for orientation in a new field in order to give the field of study a thematic structure and to generate hypotheses...The systematizing expert interview (2) can be applied to collect context information complementing insights coming from applying other methods...Theory-generating expert interviews (3) aim at developing a

---

<sup>30</sup> Boddy / Wharton, "RE: HEC: Southern B Application – 15 / 47," letter, 29 July 2015; New Zealand Defence Force, "5000 / PB / 5 / 3 NZDF Special Operations Forces Research," minute, 02 June 2015.

<sup>31</sup> D. Cohen and B. Crabtree, "Intensity sampling," Qualitative Research Guidelines Project, July 2006, <http://www.qualres.org/HomeInte-3810.html>.

<sup>32</sup> Flick, *Introducing Research Methodology*, 141.

typology or a theory about an issue from reconstructing the knowledge of various experts...<sup>33</sup>

The interviews served to explicitly orient the special operations forces field of research specifically to the NZSOF and their relationships in key security networks, to gather data that resonates with and contextualises the data from secondary and primary literature, and to form a foundation for reconstructing the interview participants' knowledge into a cohesive, structured narrative about the NZSOF's relationships, their construction through relational characteristics, and their implications for the NZSOF and other nodes within the three security networks examined.

The professional acquaintance of the researcher with several interview participants meant approaching and successfully conducting interviews was an easier process than may have been possible for a researcher outside of the NZSOF's community.<sup>34</sup>

Therefore, the selection of interview participants also contained an element of convenience sampling, where individuals chosen are those "who are conveniently available to participate in study."<sup>35</sup> This was one of the reasons the original thesis focus on relationships between the NZSOF and 5SOF nodes was expanded to incorporate the NZDF and NZNSS networks as well; the access to 5SOF interview participants was limited.

Generally, the approach for an interview was made by the researcher, although in a few instances interview participants were identified and approached through an already

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 141.

<sup>34</sup> Clutterbuck and Warnes, "Interviewing government and official sources," 19.

<sup>35</sup> John Dudovskiy, "Convenience sampling," Business Research Methodology, <https://research-methodology.net/sampling-in-primary-data-collection/convenience-sampling/>.

engaged participant – the snowball technique.<sup>36</sup> An approach was generally made in person or via an email contact, then followed up with a formal letter which included an information sheet about the research and the participant's rights as determined by the Massey University Human Ethics requirements, a list of indicative interview questions, and two forms that would be filled out during the process – a consent form and a transcript release form. The time and location of the interview was then decided in correspondence between the researcher and the interview participant as it suited the participant.

The interviews were semi-structured, which "allowed the interviewee to expound on the topic in her [or his] own words."<sup>37</sup> The semi-structured interview allowed the researcher to target the NZSOF's general subject and topic (network) areas of the thesis, but also allowed the interview participants to bring their expertise to bear on the research and, if they chose, to offer unique and interesting insights to further shape the thesis's understanding of the NZSOF's relationships in key security networks. Using semi-structured interview techniques allows for the:

...use of a flexible structure. Interviewers can start with a defined questioning plan, but will shift in order to follow the natural flow of conversation. Interviewers may also deviate from the plan to pursue interesting tangents...The advantage here is being able

---

<sup>36</sup> Clutterbuck and Warnes, "Interviewing government and official sources," 20, 23-24; Heather L. Johnson, "Listening to migrant stories," in *Research Methods in Critical Security Studies: An Introduction*, ed. Mark B. Salter and Can E. Mutlu (London: Routledge, 2013), 68: "My policy interviews were scheduled, primarily, using cold call and snowballing (reference) strategies."

<sup>37</sup> Moore, "In-depth interviewing," 118. See also Flick, *Introducing Research Methodology*, 140-141.

to come away with all the data you intended but also interesting and unexpected data that emerges.<sup>38</sup>

In line with O'Leary's interpretation of semi-structured interviews, participants were asked about a range of topics, including relationships in general, relationships between the NZSOF and nodes in the three key security networks, relational characteristics, and national security. They were invited to answer the questions, or take tangents, in any manner they chose, and the researcher also asked supplementary questions where a participant's response prompted a thought or other query:

...particularly when interviewing government and security officials, the use of a semi-structured interview format has proven to be particularly effective. While this relies on a set of questions drawn up and prepared in advance of the interview, it also allows the interviewer the flexibility of introducing additional questions as required to develop or clarify any response or topic of conversation detailed by the interviewee. This often results in additional useful data and a better clarification of issues.<sup>39</sup>

The interviews generally ran between 30 minutes and 1.5 hours, depending on how much the participants had to say; the timing was not prescriptive. Each interview (bar two, at their request) was recorded on a dictaphone and transcribed by the researcher. Participants had the opportunity during the interview to ask for the recording to be turned off at any time if they had comments to make that would not be transcribed.<sup>40</sup> Transcriptions, once completed, were referred to each interview participant for their review. They had the opportunity to review and change any detail of the transcription

---

<sup>38</sup> O'Leary, *Doing Your Research Project*, 240.

<sup>39</sup> Clutterbuck and Warnes, "Interviewing government and official sources," 17-18.

<sup>40</sup> O'Leary, *Doing Your Research Project*, 247: see O'Leary's summary of the advantages and disadvantages of audio recording.

to accurately reflect their views and give their approval for the amended transcript material to be used in the thesis. The two interview participants who requested not to be recorded reviewed and approved the researcher's notes from the interview.

Recorded electronic files, interview transcriptions and consent forms were stored in a secure location at the researcher's home or work office in a password protected Ironkey USB device and a locked cabinet.<sup>41</sup>

As the ego node and focus of the thesis, the largest group of interview participants were either current or former members of the NZSOF (12 participants). Because of the limitations of access to sources (in this case, individuals who have extensive experience in the field and can comment publicly about their work), the participants tended to be more senior officers and warrant officers working at the strategic level. As Clutterbuck and Warnes note, individuals at the more senior levels have more experience with, and knowledge of, the issues around accessibility of information and authorisation to speak publicly, and that experience provided more protection to the participant when they contributed to this thesis:

The information and knowledge is often at the very least, sensitive in its nature or may well be 'classified' and hence subject to strict rules and regulations governing its use and disclosure. If the information is classified, they are forbidden from divulging it to anyone unauthorized to receive it. Very often, they are forbidden from speaking to others about their work at all, or they may choose not to do so in order to lessen the chances of an inadvertent leak or misrepresentation of information.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> This information was included on the interview participants' information sheet. See also Flick, *Introducing Research Methodology*, 35.

<sup>42</sup> Clutterbuck and Warnes, "Interviewing government and official sources," 15-16.



They were also speaking with a researcher who was similarly familiar with organisational processes and authorisation expectations. Interview participants from the NZSOF provided substantive and invaluable expertise and experience to the research data.

The remaining interview participants were selected as individuals with subject matter expertise in their relative networks (NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF) who had interacted with the NZSOF and whose reflections could function as a counterbalance to the NZSOF's perspective. This was a key point in a thesis focused heavily on one particular experience – the NZSOF – and conducted by a researcher who has worked for some time in that community.<sup>43</sup> Participants represented the following agencies, organisations, or countries:

- NZSOF (12 participants)
- NZDF (10 participants)
- Other NZNSS Government agencies, for example the New Zealand Police and MFAT (8 participants)
- 5SOF (5 participants):
  - AUSOF (1 participant)
  - CASOF (1 participant)
  - UKSOF (1 participant)
  - USSOF (2 participants)

---

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 18.

Interview participants were thus both “government policy makers and officials...or...‘practitioners’ who are part of the police, military [or other] structures of the state.”<sup>44</sup> The intensity and convenience sampling methods and constraints of the doctoral thesis meant that the participant list remained relatively small and focused on the strategic level thinking about the NZSOF.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, the participant data robustly represents the core senior leadership of the NZSOF’s community over the past two decades.

Tables 2-2 to 2-5 present the demographic break-down of the interview participants in four different variations: network, rank, civilian / uniform, and gender. The demographic data is relevant as of the time of interview. Variation and cross-over does occur for some participants (for example, one interview participant is a Colonel in the Reserve Forces, but in his current role and subject matter expertise for the interview is a civilian outside of the NZDF). In these instances, a choice has been made to record the data based on the participant’s primary role as at the time of interview. Table 2-3 leads with Army ranks. This is a break with convention, where military services are usually listed in order of their relative age (in New Zealand – Navy, Army and then Air Force). Leading with Army ranks has been chosen in this case because the NZSOF (although it recruits from all three services and civilians) is an Army force element.

---

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>45</sup> Moore, “In-depth interviewing,” 126: “It is not always possible for researchers to interview desirable subjects.”

Having three types of sources, and varying types of identification and collection techniques relevant to those source types, ensured that the data corpus for the research was wide and identified the key sources in the field.

### **2.3.3 Coding, and thematic and comparative analysis**

Having collated the data corpus, an inductive thematic coding process was applied to the data relating to each network case study.<sup>46</sup> In this process data was examined 'line-by-line' "to build up categories of understanding."<sup>47</sup> Interview transcripts, unlike other sources, were assigned a code which is used instead of names or other identifying features in footnotes. The purpose of this transcript coding was to remove the focus from the individual and place it on the comments and what could be inductively drawn from those comments.<sup>48</sup> The coding process for all sources, including interviews, that followed from initial data collection was that described by Michael McGuire and Robert Agranoff where (1) each data item was broken down into individual data extracts in a process of open coding, which then became named codes, based on common words or concepts; (2) overarching themes (which become relational characteristics in the thesis) were created from groups of minor codes that were similar to each other in a process of axial coding; (3) comparative themes were identified as similar or dissimilar between

---

<sup>46</sup> Sebastiaan Rietjens, "Qualitative data analysis: Seeing the patterns in the fog of civil-military interaction," in *Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in Military Studies*, ed. Joseph Soeters, Patricia M. Shields and Sebastiaan Rietjens (London: Routledge, 2014), 133. Kathy Charmaz, Robert Thornberg and Elaine Keane, "Evolving grounded theory and social justice inquiry," in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 5th ed., ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Inc., 2018), 424: described by Charmaz, Thornberg and Keane as "label[ling] segments of data with terms to summarize, categorize, and account for these segments."

<sup>47</sup> O'Leary, *Doing Your Research Project*, 332.

<sup>48</sup> Michael Knights, "Conducting field research on terrorism in Iraq," in *Conducting Terrorism Field Research: A Guide*, ed. Adam Dolnik (London: Routledge, 2013), 120, 154.

the nodes in each security network, and between the security networks themselves; and (4) key examples in each theme's data set were chosen to represent and describe that theme (characteristic) in the final thesis text in a process of selective coding.<sup>49</sup>

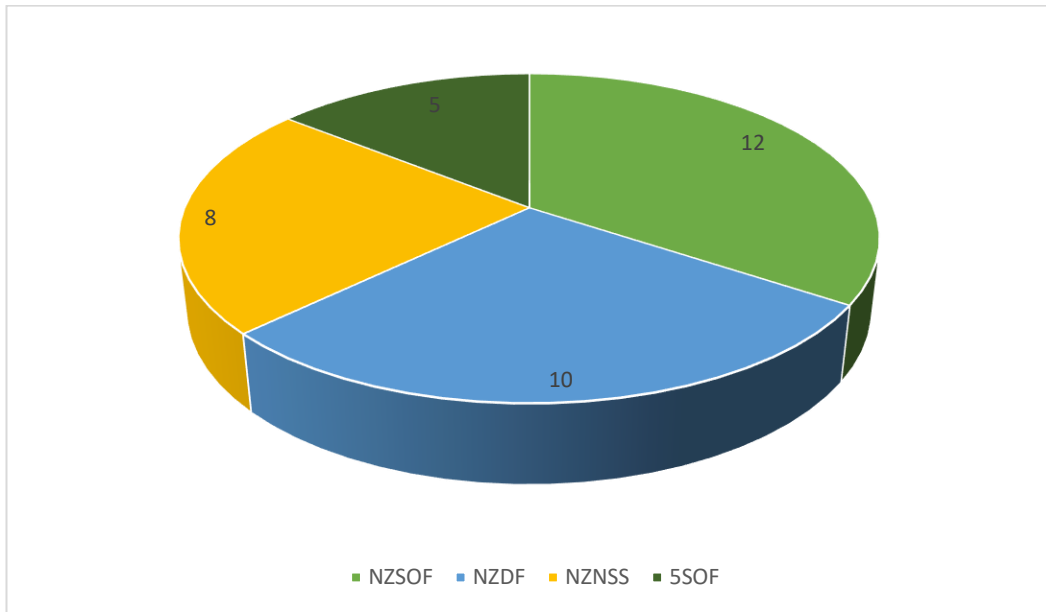


Table 2-2: Interview Demographics by Network

---

<sup>49</sup> Michael McGuire and Robert Agranoff, "Network management behaviors: Closing the theoretical gap," in *Network Theory in the Public Sector: Building New Theoretical Frameworks*, ed. Robyn Keast, Myrna Mandell and Robert Agranoff (New York: Routledge, 2014), 143; Moore, "In-depth interviewing," 122; Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using thematic analysis in psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 87-93; Flick, *Introducing Research Methodology*, 179-184; O'Leary, *Doing Your Research Project*, 334.

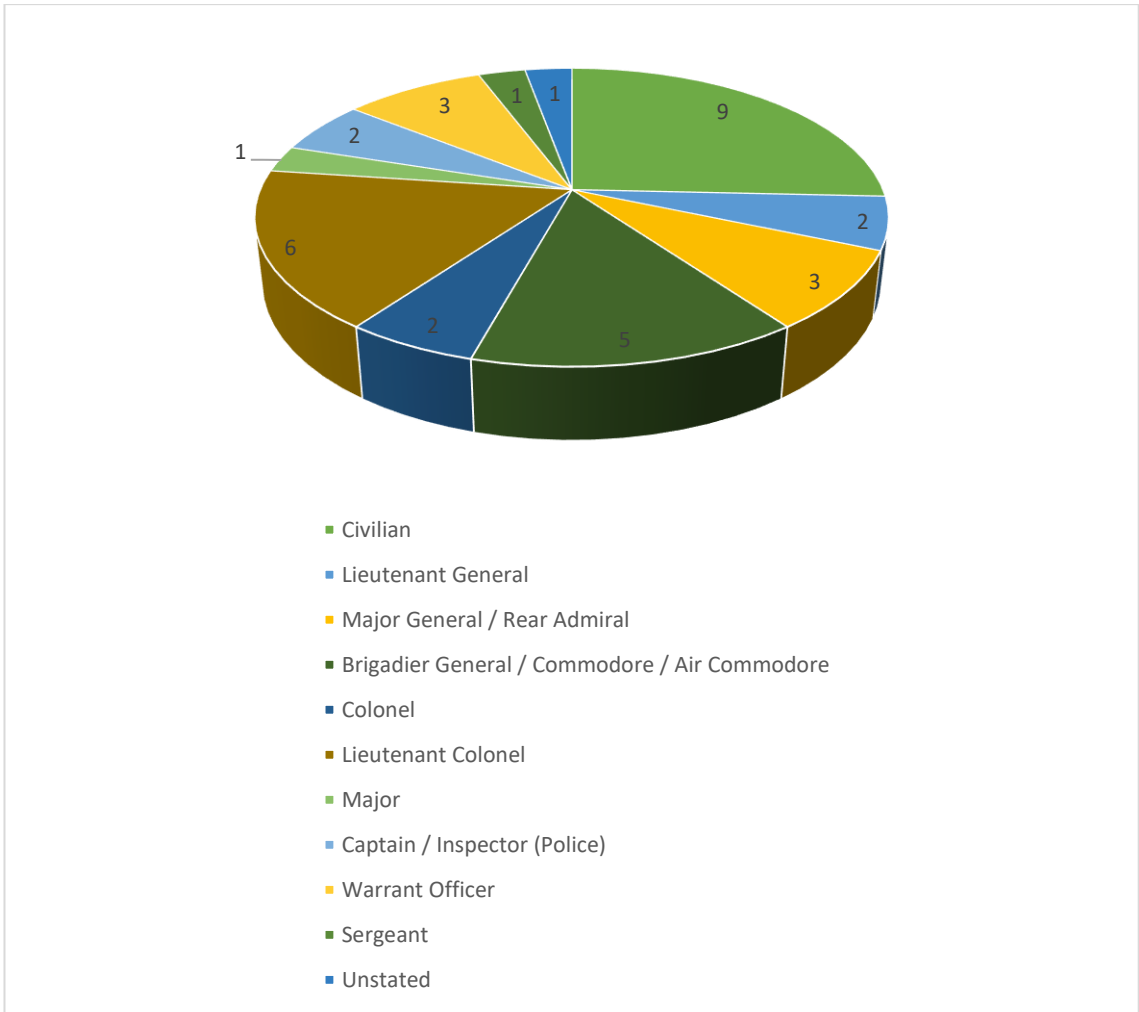


Table 2-3: Interview Demographics by Rank

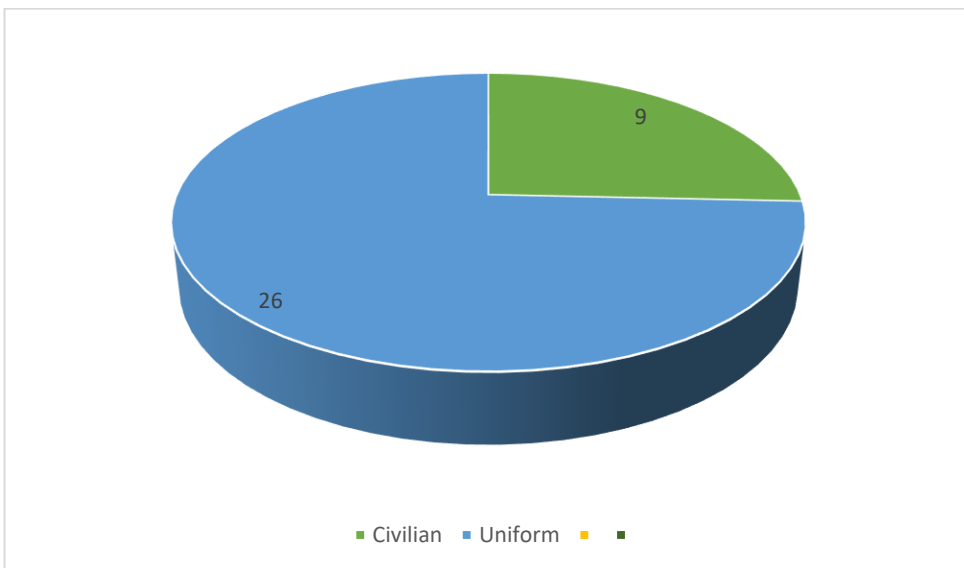


Table 2-4: Interview Demographics by Civilian / Uniform

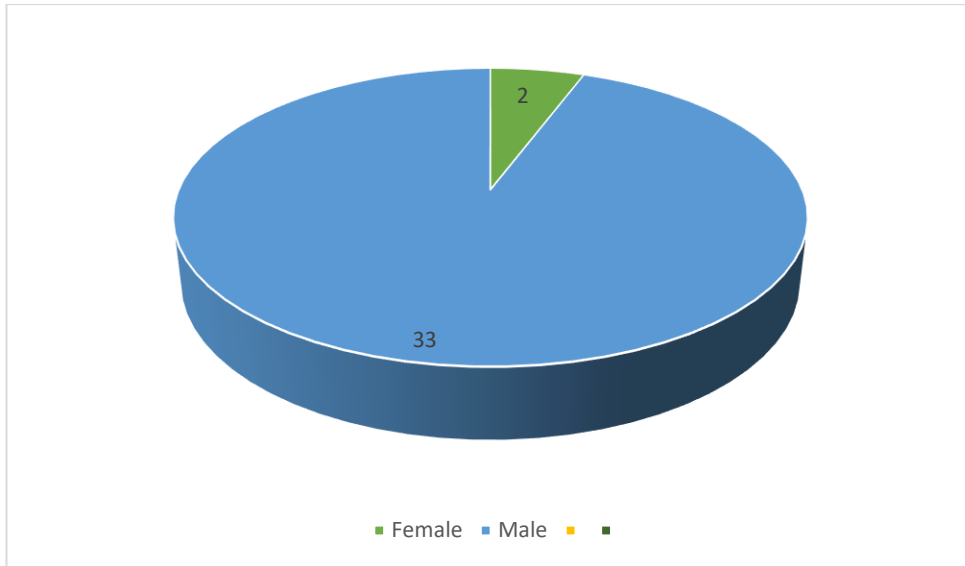


Table 2-5: Interview Demographics by Gender

The coding process outlined enabled the data corpus to be organised and categorised in such a way that enabled an ordered assessment of key characteristics and concepts for the NZSOF's relationships, and similarities and dissimilarities between networks or between relational characteristics. Coding enabled the thematic analysis of the research methodology, situated in grounded theory where theory was generated inductively from the data, in order to "cast aside all preconceived notions and simply let the data tell the story."<sup>50</sup> It also established a foundation for the comparative analysis of characteristics and concepts that constructed the core of the thesis: "...coding includes the constant comparison of phenomena, cases, concepts, and so on and the formulation of questions that are addressed to the text."<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> O'Leary, *Doing Your Research Project*, 143, 340; Flick, *Introducing Research Methodology*, 178, 263.

<sup>51</sup> Flick, *Introducing Research Methodology*, 179.

Thematic and comparative analysis were approaches used “to create new understandings by exploring and interpreting complex data from sources”.<sup>52</sup> Coding encompassed the first steps in the inductive analytical process used in this thesis, situated in grounded theory. Analysis throughout the methodological process involved a “...constant comparative method’ to explore each data source in relation to those previously analysed.”<sup>53</sup> For coding, comparative analysis was employed to examine themes (the NZSOF’s relational characteristics) in relation to each other, to determine similarities and dissimilarities. The results of this analysis may be seen progressively in Chapters 3 to 7, where relational characteristics are built from a foundational assessment of the NZSOF’s general characteristics, through individual sets of the NZSOF’s relational characteristics exhibited in each network, to the identification of overarching characteristics and the subordinate role of the individual network sets of characteristics. During the more abstract, theoretical analytical phase, comparative analysis of characteristics across networks generated assessment of how overarching and subordinate relational characteristics created relational dynamics within the NZSOF’s relational approach. The results of this analysis then led to a deeper exploration of this analysis that may be seen progressively across Chapters 7 and 8.

Thematic analysis is “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data”, and is useful for a range of different disciplinary frameworks, hence its utility for a project not closely aligned to any particular academic discipline.<sup>54</sup> In the case of this thesis, inductive thematic analysis was particularly useful in

---

<sup>52</sup> O’Leary, *Doing Your Research Project*, 324.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 340.

<sup>54</sup> Braun and Clarke, “Using thematic analysis in psychology,” 79, 81.

examining a subject in the nascent special operations forces research field. Thematic analysis was critical in the coding stage, from open coding through to selective coding, using inductive logic to identify and build on themes that became the NZSOF's relational characteristics in the thesis as well as other important concepts such as the terms central to the conceptual framework discussed in Chapter 1.<sup>55</sup> In later analytical stages, thematic analysis remained central when creating a broad theoretical picture of the NZSOF's relationships.<sup>56</sup> Thematic and comparative analysis together combined the data corpus in such a way as to examine the NZSOF's relationships and draw conclusions in a meaningful way.

## **2.4 Limitations of the methodology**

There are several limitations of this methodology. First, the thesis is constructed around access to public service information that is generated in an environment with conditions around information, including official information not publicly available and permissions for public service employees to speak publicly about their work. While the researcher has had the advantage of working in the environment of the research subject, those conditions still applied, for example in limiting interview participants to senior personnel of the NZSOF or 5SOF liaison officers or having to request access to information not otherwise publicly available. Constraints on the amount and type of information available for analysis impacted on the scope of the research questions and findings.

---

<sup>55</sup> O'Leary, *Doing Your Research Project*, 330.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 335-336; Flick, *Introducing Research Methodology*, 182.



Second, in attempting to achieve a level of detail about the NZSOF's relationships the research required the input of subject matter experts on the NZSOF and special operations forces generally. The number of individuals with that expertise is small in New Zealand and access to international experts was limited by the difficulties of geographical distance; therefore, the interview participant list was limited and answers to the research questions will reflect that limitation.

Third, the research methodology intentionally imposed a limitation on the thesis by concerning itself with the NZSOF's relationships in key security networks for the most part as they manifest outside of operational or conflict environments. The researcher recognises that relationships conducted in these environments may or may not exhibit the same kind (or variations) of the relational characteristics, dynamics and paradox examined in this thesis. However, to manage the scope of research, to enable best access to source materials, and to create a foundational understanding of the NZSOF as the ego node in these networks, the methodology was intentionally limited in its scope when addressing the research questions.

Fourth, most of the interviews conducted specifically for this research were concluded prior to the release of Nicky Hager and Jon Stephenson's book *Hit & Run: The New Zealand SAS in Afghanistan and the Meaning of Honour*, and the subsequent Government-commissioned inquiry into accusations of the NZSOF's alleged misconduct on Operation BURNHAM and related matters.<sup>57</sup> Because some further

---

<sup>57</sup> Nicky Hager and Jon Stephenson, *Hit & Run: The New Zealand SAS in Afghanistan and the Meaning of Honour* (Nelson: Potton & Burton, 2017); "Report of the Government Inquiry into Operation Burnham and related matters," Inquiry into Operation Burnham, July 2020, <https://operationburnham.inquiry.govt.nz/assets/IOB-Files/Report-of-the-Government-Inquiry-into-Operation-Burnham-print-version.pdf>.

interviews were conducted afterwards, it is possible that responses given to interview questions and in qualitative reflection may have been different or more circumspect had those interviews taken place during or after the inquiry was conducted. This situation reflects Moore's observation that "[t]he data collected by interviews are not always reliable and may not yield the same results when duplicated."<sup>58</sup> Given the researcher's identity as a hybrid emic-etic researcher who both belonged to and was conducting research outside of the NZSOF's force elements, interview participants may have felt more, or less, comfortable discussing frank opinions, and instead reverted to an official position in answer to a question.<sup>59</sup>

## **2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has described the methodological considerations of this thesis that gather, organise, and analyse its interview data drawn from thirty-five special operations forces and senior security officials. It reflected on the researcher's hybrid emic-etic research experience and the implications of that position relative to the research subject and recognising possible bias in the work. It then discussed how the thesis's conceptual bricolage approach was expressed where the answers to the research questions were found in the nexus of networks. The chapter then outlined the methodological approach, from the collection and coding of primary and secondary written materials as

---

<sup>58</sup> Moore, "In-depth interviewing," 125.

<sup>59</sup> Clutterbuck and Warnes, "Interviewing government and official sources," 18. For a counter-point, see Prasad, *Crafting Qualitative Research*, 25: In the feminist tradition the researcher's closeness to the subject is neither avoidable nor necessarily desirable; "Indeed, feminist scholars like Reinharz have even explicitly called for a "mutuality of recognition" between researchers and their subjects, and an awareness that research is jointly produced by both parties."

well as interviews specifically conducted for the thesis, to thematic and comparative analysis of the data corpus. The chapter concluded with an assessment of the thesis's limitations and their implications for answering the research questions. Having examined the research methodology, Chapter 3 will begin to examine the results of the collection, coding, and analysis processes.

## 3: Understanding the New Zealand Special Operations

### Forces

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter sets out to do two principal tasks. First, in Section I the chapter utilises the metaphor of the *taiaha* (Māori weapon) to describe the historical development of the five force elements that constitute the contemporary NZSOF (Special Forces, Commandos, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Supporting Forces and the Special Operations Component Command).<sup>1</sup> Second, Section II develops a conceptual understanding of the four key relational characteristics of the NZSOF ego node that will be utilised later in the thesis. They are 'Unconventional', 'Evolutionary', 'Strategic' and 'Opaque'. The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise the NZSOF ego node by defining and developing an understanding of specific force elements within the ego node and how they are conceptually understood.

---

<sup>1</sup> To mitigate any suggestion of cultural appropriation, the researcher consulted with the Kaitohutohu NZDF | NZDF Māori Cultural Adviser about the appropriateness of the *taiaha* metaphor in this context and as it is used in the thesis. The advice given was that the *taiaha* has been used previously within the NZDF crest and in the crest of HMNZS Matataua, which is comprised of a combination of divers, a hydrographic team and logistic support. The Kaitohutohu NZDF also guessed that the Army might also have used the *taiaha* within its 'warrior ethos' concept. He advised that he had no issues with the use of the *taiaha* to describe the different force elements of the NZSOF. Our correspondence was also reviewed by the Senior NZDF Māori Cultural Adviser, who did not proffer any further comment. See Kaitohutohu NZDF | NZDF Māori Cultural Adviser / Miriam Wharton, emails, 25 January – 18 February 2021.

## Section I

### 3.1 The *taiaha* metaphor: Understanding the NZSOF through their history and force elements

Military force elements, defined as military entities that directly contribute to the delivery of military outputs, typically have a relatively fixed organisational structure because they belong to a strongly hierarchical, public agency construct; this is certainly often an accurate explanation of the NZSOF.<sup>2</sup> It is conventional to describe force elements like the NZSOF by labelling their various parts. Figure 3-1 gives a diagrammatic representation of the NZSOF's hierarchical structure, which includes the five force elements of the contemporary NZSOF – Special Forces, Commandos, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Supporting Forces, and the Special Operations Component Command.

To develop the thesis's understanding of the NZSOF through the various force elements beyond their hierarchical structure, this chapter will employ a more creative descriptive method. The NZDF, of which the NZSOF are a part, strives to project a bicultural identity that combines Māori and European traditions. This identity is called Te Ope Kātua O Aotearoa, Aotearoa New Zealand's Defence Force.<sup>3</sup> The New Zealand Army, the NZSOF's parent military service, is Ngāti Tūmataunga (the Tribe of the War

---

<sup>2</sup> The 'force element' definition is adapted from New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-D New Zealand Defence Doctrine," 4th ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2017), 82.

<sup>3</sup> "A Force for New Zealand," New Zealand Defence Force, accessed 09 December 2020, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/>.

God Tu).<sup>4</sup> The Army also projects bicultural heritage and identity. In the spirit of bicultural identity and the intent of the public service (to which the NZSOF belong) to “understand Māori perspectives”, this thesis proposes that the NZSOF can be described using a metaphor adapted from an international symbol for special operations forces – “the tip of the spear”.<sup>5</sup> In this adaptation of that metaphor, the NZSOF can be described via the imagery of a *taiaha*, a traditional Māori staff used in close-quarters combat (see Figure 3-2).<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> “New Zealand Army,” New Zealand Defence Force, accessed 09 December 2020, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/army/>; Richard Taylor, *Ngati Tumatauenga: Tribe of the War God* (Napier, NZ: Heritage New Zealand, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> The imperative to understand Māori perspectives comes from public service legislation: *Public Service Act 2020*, Public Act: 2020 No. 40, date of assent: 06 August 2020, <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2020/0040/latest/LMS106159.html>, 16; “Mō mātou | About Us,” Te Kawa Mataaho | Public Service Commission, 05 October 2020, <https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/about-us/>. The phrase “tip of the spear” can be found in a number of documents across the world, although it is most common in the United States of America: United States Special Operations Command, “SOCOM 2020: Forging the Tip of the Spear,” <https://www.scribd.com/doc/259630856/SOCOM-2020-Strategy-Forging-the-Tip-of-the-Spear>. For other uses of this phrase see Hans Ilis Alm, “Swedish Special Operations Forces: How it all started,” in *Special Operations from a Small State Perspective: Future Security Challenges*, ed. Gunilla Eriksson and Ulrica Pettersson (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 20; Richard D. Clarke, “Advance policy questions for Lieutenant General Richard D. Clarke, USA, Nominee for Commander, United States Special Operations Command” (04 December 2018), [https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/clarke\\_apqs\\_12-04-18](https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/clarke_apqs_12-04-18), 14. “Linked to such fearlessness and high levels of expertise is a **spearhead role** [emphasis mine];” in Jeremy Black, ed., *Elite Fighting Forces: From the Praetorian Guard to the Green Berets* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2011), 6. The phrase can also be used for other military force elements, such as “single-seat jet fighters” in Interview participant 26, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 17 October 2017, transcript.

<sup>6</sup> Basil Keane, “Riri – traditional Māori warfare – Rākau Māori – Māori weapons and their uses,” Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, 20 June 2012, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/riri-traditional-maori-warfare/page-3>.

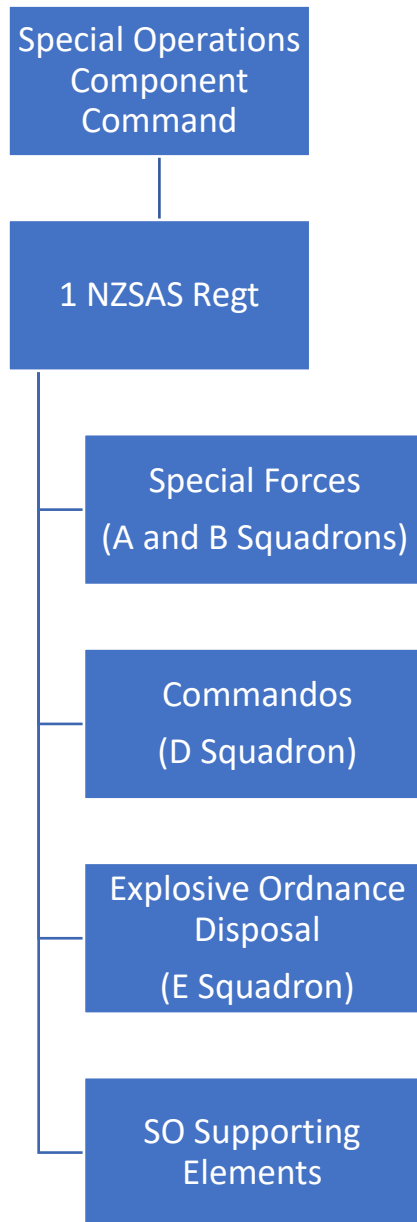


Figure 3-1: The NZSOF's Force Element Structure

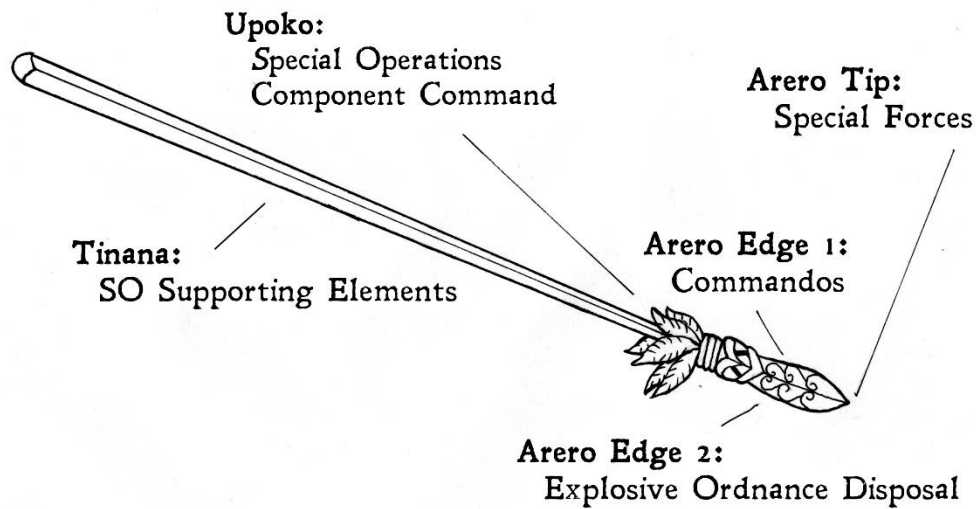


Figure 3-2: The NZSOF as a *Taiaha*<sup>7</sup>

The *taiaha* has three principal parts that can represent elements of the NZSOF. The three parts of the *taiaha* are the body (*tinana*), the head (*upoko*) and the tongue (*arero*).<sup>8</sup> The tip of the *arero* may be thought of in the NZSOF as the special forces personnel who are "selected and trained to special levels for the conduct of strategic, and when required, operational (and tactical) level operations."<sup>9</sup> They are the most comprehensively and rigorously selected and trained of all the force elements of the NZSOF and are expected to be capable of carrying out all types of special operations when required. Special forces are the force element most thought of in a traditional conception of special operations forces. In New Zealand they are the individuals who

<sup>7</sup> Reproduced with permission of Emma Weakley, illustrator.

<sup>8</sup> Keane, "Rākau Māori – Māori weapons and their uses."

<sup>9</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations," 2nd ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2012), 76.



have been 'badged', a ceremony at the conclusion of an intensive selection cycle that gives them "the right to wear the sand-coloured beret with the NZSAS winged dagger cap badge."<sup>10</sup> Special forces, the tip of the *arero*, are the NZSOF's historical core capability.

Special forces in New Zealand have a long history compared to the other force elements of the NZSOF and have evolved from the establishment of the NZSAS in 1955 until the incorporation of other capabilities that subsequently widened the scope of the force element. As such, the 1st New Zealand Special Air Service Regiment (1 NZSAS Regt) was in the past much smaller than it is today. The modern core of the Regiment (almost entirely the force element labelled 'special forces' in this thesis) had its genesis in World War II. In that wartime environment, new and innovative military and paramilitary force elements were deemed necessary. The United Kingdom's Prime Minister Winston Churchill, for example, wanted an unconventional force element that could "go and set Europe ablaze".<sup>11</sup> This resulted in the establishment of the guerrilla-type Special Operations Executive (SOE). In the United States of America, a need to conduct "intelligence and clandestine operations" like those carried out by the SOE resulted in the establishment of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), a forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).<sup>12</sup> Amongst the creation of other unconventional force elements a junior British Scots Guards officer, David Stirling, proposed a new

---

<sup>10</sup> W.D. Baker, *Dare to Win: The Story of the New Zealand Special Air Service* (Nashville: The Battery Press Inc., 1987), 16. See also "NZSAS," Defence Careers, accessed 11 January 2021, <https://www.defencecareers.mil.nz/army/careers/browse-roles/nzsas/>.

<sup>11</sup> David Horner with Neil Thomas, *In Action with the SAS* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2009), 22.

<sup>12</sup> "What was OSS?" Central Intelligence Agency, accessed 22 June 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/intelligence-history/oss/art03.htm>.

military force element to his superiors.<sup>13</sup> This new initiative became the Special Air Service (SAS), created in 1941 as a “band of raiders” that “would leapfrog the front line and take the battle directly into the enemy camp.”<sup>14</sup> Enabling the British SAS to get behind those front lines by providing transport and navigational services, as well as conducting direct action raids themselves, during operations in the African desert were units such as the Long Range Desert Group (LRDG), populated in part by New Zealanders.<sup>15</sup>

Experiencing the SAS and LRDG operations at close quarters during World War II gave New Zealanders an indication of what that type of force element might provide in a combat environment. When in 1955 New Zealand was considering making a contribution to the Far East Strategic Reserve and British efforts in Malaya, previous wartime experience and British encouragement to consider an SAS-type force resulted in the formation of a New Zealand Special Air Service (NZSAS) squadron in June of that year.<sup>16</sup> The New Zealand squadron served as part of the British SAS unit in Malaya from 1955 until 1957, when it returned to New Zealand and disbanded.<sup>17</sup> It was re-established in October 1959, strongly supported by Frank Rennie, who was tasked in

---

<sup>13</sup> Ben Macintyre, *SAS Rogue Heroes* (UK: Penguin Books, 2017), 5-25.

<sup>14</sup> Ken Connor, *Ghost Force: The Secret History of the SAS* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998), 7; Macintyre, *SAS Rogue Heroes*, 22, 24.

<sup>15</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, “Regimental Guide,” 4th ed., November 2012, 9-10; Brendon O’Carroll, *Kiwi Scorpions: The Story of the New Zealanders in the Long Range Desert Group* (Devon: Token Publishers, 2000); Brendon O’Carroll, *Barce Raid: The Long Range Desert Group’s Greatest Escapade* (Wellington: Ngaio Press, 2005); Brendon O’Carroll, *The Long Range Desert Group in the Aegean* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword Military, 2020).

<sup>16</sup> Ron Crosby, *NZSAS: The First Fifty Years* (North Shore: Viking, 2009), 50-52; New Zealand Defence Force, “Regimental Guide,” 12-13.

<sup>17</sup> Alastair MacKenzie, *Special Force: The Untold Story of 22nd Special Air Service Regiment (SAS)* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 49; Baker, *‘Dare to Win’*, 66.

1958 with “undertak[ing] a feasibility study on the reactivation of the...Squadron.”<sup>18</sup> In 1962 the squadron was deployed to Thailand at that state’s request as part of a broader South-East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) effort to contain a suspected communist expansion through Laos into Thailand.<sup>19</sup> From that point the NZSAS was involved in a number of mid-twentieth century deployments related to unrest and open conflict in South-east Asia, including in Borneo from 1965 to 1966, and more extensively in South Vietnam from 1968 to 1971.<sup>20</sup> These deployments early in NZSAS history predominantly focused its role in an expeditionary, “jungle warfare” framework.<sup>21</sup> It built a strong reputation for its tracking skills as part of that type of role.<sup>22</sup> Later operations in Bougainville in 1997 and East Timor from 1999 to 2001 maintained its expeditionary role in the South Pacific and South-east Asia, while its work in Kuwait (1998) and Afghanistan (from 2001) introduced a desert element to its overseas experience.<sup>23</sup> Special forces, or the tip of the *arero*, have since the creation of special operations forces in New Zealand in the twentieth century, resided at the heart of that force element, but in the twenty-first century the balance of ‘badged’ special forces soldiers to additional special operations forces soldiers of different, yet complementary, capabilities changed.

---

<sup>18</sup> Crosby, *NZSAS*, 122; Frank Rennie, *Regular Soldier: A Life in the New Zealand Army* (Christchurch: Willsonscott Publishing International Ltd., 2012), 253.

<sup>19</sup> Crosby, *NZSAS*, 129.

<sup>20</sup> Rhys Ball, “The platforms: An examination of New Zealand Special Air Service campaigns from Borneo ‘Confrontation’ to the Vietnam War, 1965-1971” (PhD diss., Massey University, 2009), 49-96, 153-387, <https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/1242>.

<sup>21</sup> Crosby, *NZSAS*, 244.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 295.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 297-303, 303-308, 317-344, 345-394.

Today, the contemporary form of the NZSOF includes not just special forces but also two additional specialist force elements, the commandos of D Squadron and the explosive ordnance disposal capabilities of E Squadron. Their inclusion in the NZSOF is an example of how that set of relatively fixed, distinct military force elements nevertheless have experienced change and evolution. In the *taiaha* metaphor, the commando and explosive ordnance disposal force elements comprise the two edges of the *arero*. The commandos are responsible specifically for counter-terrorist operations.<sup>24</sup> Explosive ordnance disposal personnel manage not only improvised explosives and devices, but also chemical, biological, radiological and conventional explosive devices (CBRE).<sup>25</sup> These elements “support [special forces], conduct independent...special operations and, when required, support conventional operations”, and are specialised components that are distinct from any other type of military capability, further supporting the narrative of the NZSOF as distinctive in a holistic sense.<sup>26</sup>

Next to special forces, the counter-terrorist team currently known as ‘the commandos’ have the longest history within the NZSOF. One of the long-standing capabilities the NZSAS has maintained was a counter-terrorist (“black”) role but it was an integrated set of skills (for example, snipers) for special forces personnel alongside the expeditionary “green” role.<sup>27</sup> Internationally, terrorism in the 1970s was becoming a significant

---

<sup>24</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, “Regimental Guide,” 23.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 27; “The Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squadron,” Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, 20 June 2012, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/photography/34665/the-explosive-ordnance-disposal-squadron>.

<sup>26</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, “NZDDP-3.12,” 2nd ed., 78.

<sup>27</sup> Crosby, *NZSAS*, 379.

security threat. In 1972, terrorists took hostages and killed Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympic Games.<sup>28</sup> In 1980, the British SAS was part of resolving a terrorist take-over of the Iranian Embassy in London.<sup>29</sup> In New Zealand, NZSAS Major D.G. Shattky recalled that Prime Minister Robert Muldoon was in relatively close proximity to a bombing in Sydney during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 1978 and this event, as well as a terrorist hijacking of a train in Holland in 1977, “clearly prompted Defence to give the task [of establishing a dedicated ‘special warfare’ counter-terrorist capability] urgent priority.”<sup>30</sup> By 1978, the NZSAS was preparing for the creation of the Counter Terrorism Team within its structure.<sup>31</sup> Counter-terrorism typically has a domestic rather than an expeditionary focus, although in 1987 New Zealand came close to deploying what was presumably this type of capability to Fiji in response to an aircraft hijacking.<sup>32</sup> In the midst of personnel departures in the early twenty-first century, the problem of adequately covering both the “black” and “green” roles with the resources available to the NZSAS became acute. Conceptual and structure development of the counter-terrorist capability moved progressively from a non-committal “brigad[ed]...reconnaissance platoon from the regular battalions” to a permanently resourced Counter Terrorist Tactical Assault Group (CTTAG) with NZSAS-trained personnel who would be posted to the NZSAS for counter-terrorism purposes.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 254.

<sup>29</sup> Connor, *Ghost Force*, 226-235.

<sup>30</sup> Crosby, *NZSAS*, 254.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 255-259.

<sup>32</sup> See Grant J. Crowley, “New Zealand’s response to the aircraft hijack incident during the 1987 coup d’état in Fiji: A study of civil-military relations in crisis” (Masters thesis, Massey University, 2002), <http://hdl.handle.net/10179/7154>. See also Richard Harman, “Duel of the Davids: The standoff of 19 May,” *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 22 (1998): 17-19.

<sup>33</sup> Crosby, *NZSAS*, 379-380.

CTTAG was established in December 2005, and then developed again into the current form of the force element as D Squadron (CDO), 1 NZSAS Regt in December 2009, the NZSOF's "black role" specialists.<sup>34</sup> The commando element comprises the first of two edges of the *arero* in the *taiaha* metaphor.

Explosive ordnance disposal, like the commandos, has a significant domestic counter-terrorism response capability, as its role in disarming explosive devices during the March 2019 terror attack in Christchurch demonstrated.<sup>35</sup> Explosive ordnance disposal is the role of E Squadron (EOD), which was created as a stand-alone NZDF squadron in August 2005, but was incorporated into 1 NZSAS Regt in 2009.<sup>36</sup> Over and above its activities in connection to counter-terrorism and explosive ordnance, it has also been involved in responses to natural disaster emergencies, such as the 2019 Whakaari / White Island eruption.<sup>37</sup> Both commandos and explosive ordnance disposal, the blade edges of the *arero*, are now vital and integrated force elements of the NZSOF in the twenty-first century.

Crucial to the expanding concept of special operations forces in New Zealand is the addition of supporting capabilities attached specifically to support the *arero* parts – these supporting capabilities are the *tinana* of the NZSOF. The supporting forces collective element is comprised of "elements that can bridge the gap between special

---

<sup>34</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "Regimental Guide," 23.

<sup>35</sup> "Christchurch mosques terror attack: 49 dead," *Otago Daily Times*, 15 March 2019, <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/christchurch-mosques-terror-attack-49-dead>.

<sup>36</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "Regimental Guide," 27.

<sup>37</sup> Mark Longley, "White Island eruption: E Squadron, the elite SAS unit who helped bring the bodies back," *Newshub*, 13 December 2019, <https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2019/12/white-island-eruption-e-squadron-the-elite-sas-unit-who-helped-bring-the-bodies-back-from-white-island.html>.

and conventional forces”, those that are trained to work alongside other elements of the NZSOF.<sup>38</sup> They may include intelligence, logistics, medical, legal, communications, administration, training and education, or other personnel. The extent to which the NZSOF retain these elements within their own community versus reaching into the wider NZDF network for those elements has changed over time. 1 NZSAS Regt currently has a broader structural scope and responsibility for personnel than do other, conventional Army regiments:

...it recruits, selects, trains, sustains, deploys and then redeploys personnel at a unit level (so below Formation level). So it’s a force generator, force provider, but it also has Army and Defence-like service requirements. It feeds, administrates, it career-manages, it manages the garrison and that’s very different to a lot of units across Defence.<sup>39</sup>

This is another example of how the NZSOF generally retain fixed organisational structures – 1 NZSAS Regt is identified as a regiment alongside other Army regiments – but contains within that structure elements that make it both distinct and unique.

The final NZSOF force element is the Special Operations Component Command (also referred to as the Special Operations Command New Zealand), represented in the *taiaha* metaphor as the *upoko*. This force element was first established as the Directorate of Special Operations (DSO) in August 2008, which then became the Component Command in July 2015.<sup>40</sup> The creation of the Command gave the NZSOF a

---

<sup>38</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, “NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations,” 3rd ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2018), 5.

<sup>39</sup> Interview participant 18, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 01 December 2016, transcript.

<sup>40</sup> Miriam Wharton and Rhys Ball, “New Zealand special operations forces: Subtle and strategic effect in the whole-of-government approach to New Zealand’s national security,” in *New*

formal presence at the strategic level of the NZDF, that in turn gave the NZSOF not only a much closer connection to the political and military strategic levels, but also the opportunity to more effectively integrate how special operations forces could be used with other military and all-of-government entities.<sup>41</sup> The Component Command, as the *upoko* in the *taiaha* metaphor, provides strategic direction to, command and management of the other NZSOF force elements.

The NZSOF are collectively a node defined by their structure and by their functions as military force elements. In organisational documentation, the NZSOF are identified as being the primary military actors in the domain of "irregular activity".<sup>42</sup> Irregular activity is defined as:

...the use or threat of force by irregular forces, groups, or individuals, frequently ideologically or criminally motivated, to effect or prevent change as a challenge to governance and authority. It comprises criminality, disorder, insurgency, and terrorism.<sup>43</sup>

This thesis does not draw much of a distinction between 'irregular activity' (or 'irregular warfare') and 'special operations'; what is important to note is that these types of activities are all materially different from those that are associated with more traditional or regular warfare.<sup>44</sup>

---

*Zealand National Security: Challenges, Trends and Issues*, ed. William Hoverd, Nick Nelson and Carl Bradley (Auckland: Massey University Press, 2017), 224.

<sup>41</sup> Wharton and Ball, "New Zealand special operations forces," 225-226.

<sup>42</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-D," 4th ed., 32.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>44</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-D," 4th ed., 31. The NZSOF can also have a role to play in more traditional or regular warfare when directed by military leadership.



The NZSOF are assigned as the principal military force elements responsible for addressing irregular activities.<sup>45</sup> Doctrine states that “regular forces may also operate in an irregular manner, so as to destabilise and defeat irregular actors”.<sup>46</sup> This thesis makes a distinction between “regular” and “irregular” forces, as opposed to “conventional” and “unconventional” forces. For the purposes of this thesis “irregular forces” are defined as “Armed individuals or groups who are not members of the regular armed forces, police, or other internal security forces.”<sup>47</sup> Consequently, “regular forces” are armed individuals or groups who are members of the regular armed forces, as the NZSOF are part of the NZDF. The thesis predominantly uses the terminology of “conventional” and “unconventional” (see Section 3.2.1) to better draw a distinction between the NZSOF and other “regular force” elements within the NZDF. In reference to NZDDP-D’s quote above, however, the NZSOF are identified as regular forces that have a specific responsibility for special operations, which may be thought of as irregular activities:

Special Operations Forces (SOF) are selected military personnel who are organised, equipped and trained to command, plan, conduct and support special operations.<sup>48</sup>

As formal, hierarchically fixed force elements within the NZDF, the NZSOF are clearly regular military force elements, but are also force elements that need to be capable of

---

<sup>45</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, “NZDDP-D,” 4th ed., 32: Although “NZDDP-D” does note that it is possible for “regular forces [to] also operate in an irregular manner, so as to destabilise and defeat irregular actors”.

<sup>46</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, “NZDDP-D,” 4th ed., 32.

<sup>47</sup> U.S. Army TRADOC, “Irregular forces,” in “Irregular Forces” (Fort Leavenworth: Training and Doctrine Command G2, 2010), Glossary-4, [https://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/security%20topics/Potential%20Adversaries/content/pdf/1.08%20IrregularForcesTRADOC\\_G2\\_Hdbk\\_1.08\\_20dec10.pdf](https://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/security%20topics/Potential%20Adversaries/content/pdf/1.08%20IrregularForcesTRADOC_G2_Hdbk_1.08_20dec10.pdf).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 15.

evolution in their function to address irregular opponents because those opponents also evolve. As such, the NZSOF maintain a unique breadth and depth of training, equipping and readiness that enables them to conduct this function.<sup>49</sup> It is these demands that set them apart from other force elements in the NZDF. They are designed specifically to undertake special operations that address irregular activity:

Special operations are focused, often discreet operations of an unorthodox and frequently high-risk nature, undertaken to achieve significant strategic objectives that are outside the current capability of conventional forces.<sup>50</sup>

In this definition, special operations are identified as being outside what other regular military force elements (“conventional forces”) could achieve in their current state.<sup>51</sup>

This does not necessarily mean that conventional forces never (or could never) conduct special operations, but it does mark the NZSOF’s general distinctness and distinct utility to the NZDF network, an observation discussed in Chapter 4.

## **Section II**

### **3.2 General characteristics of the NZSOF**

The NZSOF collectively is an ego node that has evolved over time but has also a distinct sense of self. This chapter argues that the NZSOF are military force elements that have

---

<sup>49</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Defence, “Defence White Paper 2016” (Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2016), 47; New Zealand Ministry of Defence, “Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018” (Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2018), 35-36.

<sup>50</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, “NZDDP-3.12,” 3rd ed., 9.

<sup>51</sup> Note the inclusion of the word “current”, which suggests that given time, conventional forces could develop to be able to achieve what special operations forces do at the present moment. Presumably at that point, special operations forces would have moved on to work in other spaces and on other tasks that maintain the accuracy of the definition of a “special operation”.

identifiable general characteristics that inform their relationships. In this section, the thesis will briefly develop and analyse four key characteristics that define the NZSOF ego node. The characteristics identified and examined here will be utilised later in the thesis in Chapters 7 and 8, in order to understand how relational characteristics identified in the subsequent key security networks drawn from Chapters 4-6 are conceptually contextualised. The four characteristics that are identified and analysed in this section are 'Unconventional', 'Evolutionary', 'Strategic' and 'Opaque'.

### 3.2.1 Unconventional

Special operations forces in this thesis are referred to as 'unconventional forces' (in contrast to 'conventional forces' which refers to force elements not included in the special operations forces community).<sup>52</sup> Unconventional is the first general characteristic that is used to analyse the NZSOF.<sup>53</sup> Its contrast with, but not necessarily and increasingly only infrequently divorced from, being conventional will be discussed further in Chapter 4.<sup>54</sup> Unconventional is mentioned here as a reference to the fact that

---

<sup>52</sup> 'Unconventional' is one of several terms used to designate special operations forces and the types of activity they are employed for. Other terms include 'irregular', 'non-traditional', 'unorthodox' or even 'special' in the sense of being outside of the norm. See Sean McFate, *Goliath: Why the West Doesn't Win Wars: And What We Need to Do About It* (UK: Michael Joseph, 2019), 29, 37-38. See also Alastair Finlan, "A dangerous pathway? Toward a theory of special forces," *Comparative Strategy* 38, no. 4 (2019): 262; "In contrast to elite conventional forces, SF are truly unconventional *non-confluent warfare* units that are fundamentally different in size, organization, culture, character, outlook, and mission orientation..." 'Conventional forces' are also referred to as 'regular forces' or 'general purpose forces'.

<sup>53</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-3.12," 2nd ed., 11; Interview participant 2, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 25 August 2016, transcript; Interview participant 3, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 23 September 2016, transcript; Interview participant 14, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 04 November 2016, transcript; Interview participant 21, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 21 April 2017, interview notes.

<sup>54</sup> Ian Speller, "Introduction to the second edition," in *Understanding Modern Warfare*, David Jordan, James D. Kiras, David J. Lonsdale, Ian Speller, Christopher Tuck and C. Dale Walton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 8, 9. See also Ian Langford, "Finding balance

even as the NZSOF are situated firmly inside the NZDF's organisational structure, there are elements of their structure and function (as described in Section I) that place them outside of some of the norms of the organisation.<sup>55</sup> Dennis Gyllensporre describes special operations – and the forces that conduct them presumably – as “support[ing] conventional military operations in unconventional ways.”<sup>56</sup> In this research, ‘unconventional’ is defined as an intentional deviation from a military norm or norms as determined by the majority of practitioners in the NZDF, in contrast to ‘conventional’, which is defined as a military norm or norms as determined by the majority of practitioners in the NZDF. The NZSOF's unconventional characteristic is codified in military doctrine in references to unorthodoxy and achieving objectives “outside the current capability of conventional forces,” which includes non-conflict activity.<sup>57</sup> To work “beyond” or outside some of the abilities, parameters and perhaps limitations of commonly accepted military norms, set the NZSOF apart as distinctive military force elements.<sup>58</sup> Being ‘unconventional’ can create the possibility of disconnection between

---

between the conventional and unconventional in future warfare,” The Strategy Bridge, 04 December 2018, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2018/12/4/finding-balance-between-the-conventional-and-unconventional-in-future-warfare>: “Future warfare will be increasingly blended with conventional and unconventional approaches. Military forces should strengthen their future unconventional warfare capability by acknowledging the changing character of warfare and the need to balance their forces as an effective strategy in an era of persistent conflict.”

<sup>55</sup> Tone Danielsen describes a similar phenomenon in the Norwegian Marinejegers, although she suggests a clearer separation than I do. Tone Danielsen, “Making warriors in the global era: An anthropological study of institutional apprenticeship: Selection, training, education, and everyday life in the Norwegian Naval Special Operations Commando” (PhD diss., University of Oslo, 2015), 118: “Unconventional units do not fit in the conventional structure. It is part of the unit’s history and part of their self-presentation. Marinejegers were ‘matter out of place.’”

<sup>56</sup> Dennis Gyllensporre, “Contemporary hybrid warfare and the evolution of special operations theory,” in *Special Operations from a Small State Perspective: Future Security Challenges*, ed. Gunilla Eriksson and Ulrica Pettersson (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 28.

<sup>57</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, “NZDDP-3.12,” 3rd ed., 9.

<sup>58</sup> Interview participant 1, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 11 August 2016, transcript; Interview participant 8, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand,

the NZSOF and others in key security networks that do not carry that designation. To resolve the need to conduct relationships with others that are dissimilar (caused by the relationship and disjunction between the conventional and unconventional military force elements) to itself, the NZSOF require the ability to be flexible in how they approach, negotiate, align and realign, and interact with other network nodes.

### 3.2.2 Evolutionary

Evolutionary is the second general characteristic used to analyse the NZSOF. Evolution represents a special operations force's ability to change.<sup>59</sup> Change may occur in the variety of tasks the NZSOF could be asked to focus on at any given time, for example in "capability, communications, C4ISR, the whole gambit, weapons systems...[all the way to] interagency relationships."<sup>60</sup> Alongside expeditionary and domestic counter-terrorist tasks the NZSOF's capabilities encompass strategic reconnaissance, countering transnational crime, training indigenous forces, and more.<sup>61</sup> The NZSOF's evolutionary

---

10 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 9, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 18, 01 December 2016; Interview participant 19, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 02 December 2016, transcript.

<sup>59</sup> Bernd Horn, "The evolution of SOF and the rise of SOF power," in *Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, ed. Jessica Glicken Turnley, Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben Ari (London: Routledge, 2018), 20; Matthias Fiala, "Déjà vu: The shared history of SOF – Switzerland as a case study," *CTX9*, no. 2 (2019): 39; Bernd Horn, "The Canadian Special Operations Forces' Legacy," in *Special Operations Forces: A National Capability*, ed. Emily Spencer (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2011), 47. Evolution in special operations forces like the NZSOF occurs within a broader trend of military evolution over time. See Finlan, "A dangerous pathway?," 259.

<sup>60</sup> 'C4ISR' stands for 'Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance'. Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 11, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 17 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 13, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 28 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 18, 01 December 2016.

<sup>61</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 2, 25 August 2016; Interview participant 3, 23 September 2016; Interview participant 4, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 26 September 2016, transcript; Interview participant 5, interview by

characteristic would enable the ego node, as small as it is, to adapt as required to its broad range of tasks. As discussed above, the evolution of the NZSOF's structure to incorporate specialist commando and EOD capabilities is an example of structural as well as functional change. Possible future tasks might include cyber activities or capacity building and stabilisation activities in the Pacific and beyond.<sup>62</sup>

Accommodating additional tasks like these or replacing older tasks with newer ones would in either case constitute change that requires evolution on the part of the NZSOF.

Evolution may also occur in where the NZSOF place their professional focus. As military force elements, it is logical that proficiency in combat remains the most important measure of the NZSOF's relevance. Zeev Drory et. al.'s comment about the preeminent importance of combat effectiveness articulates a keen focus on this professional skill: "In the military, reputations are built on professionalism (the effectiveness of military practices) but above all on kinetic success in combat".<sup>63</sup> The NZDF's (and therefore the NZSOF's) strategic focus on combat resonates with Drory et. al.'s statement: "Our

---

Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 27 September 2016, transcript; Interview participant 6, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 28 September 2016, transcript; Interview participant 7, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 12, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 21 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 14, 04 November 2016; Interview participant 20, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 05 December 2016, transcript. See also David Fisher, "Inside the NZSAS: Creating the elite soldier," *New Zealand Herald*, September 2018, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/indepth/national/inside-the-nzsas/>; New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018," 36; "NZSAS," Defence Careers; "The Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squadron," Te Ara.

<sup>62</sup> Interview participant 14, 04 November 2016; Interview participant 16, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 22 November 2016, transcript.

<sup>63</sup> Zeev Drory, Eyal Lewin and Eyal Ben Ari, "Special forces, ethos and technology: The case of Israel's Haruv Reconnaissance Unit," in *Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, ed. Jessica Glicken Turnley, Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben Ari (London: Routledge, 2018), 209.

[NZDF] primary purpose is to provide the Government-of-the-day with an armed force ready and able to perform in combat."<sup>64</sup> Interestingly, Sean McFate aligned the dominance of combat as a professional focus with conventional warfare: "Conventional war is state-on-state fighting in which the primary instrument of power is brute force and battle determines everything."<sup>65</sup> His suggestion that unconventional forms of combat are so labelled as a snub to the types of war "the West" dislikes fighting in fact presents opportunities for unconventional force elements like the NZSOF to re-imagine what combat or non-combat tasks might mean for them, and how they are weighted as priorities, because they are less constrained by being conventional forces. The NZSOF interview participants for the thesis did not disagree about the importance of "direct action" (combat) tasks but they were equally as interested in non-combat areas for professional focus, using phrases like "pre-crisis", "post-crisis", "prevent", "phase zero" and "support and influence".<sup>66</sup> The irritation of some interview participants with being labelled solely as some variant of "brute force" (McFate's words) with a heavy combat focus indicates a desire to be seen as capable of being more and moving professional focus beyond just combat.<sup>67</sup>

Significant evolution is accepted in the NZSOF (and by other nodes) as a normal state of affairs, and as a unique characteristic that can benefit the rest of the NZDF as well.<sup>68</sup>

---

<sup>64</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "F4NZ: Force for New Zealand Magazine," December 2018, 3.

<sup>65</sup> McFate, *Goliath*, 28-29.

<sup>66</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 8, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 15, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 17 November 2016, transcript; Interview participant 18, 01 December 2016.

<sup>67</sup> Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016; Interview participant 19, 02 December 2016; Interview participant 27, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 26 October 2017, transcript.

<sup>68</sup> Wiremu Moffitt, "SMA.Net," *Army News* (May 2020), 2: "SOF culture is formed through a blend of strong values and shared experiences, often attained through a selection process, some form

For the NZSOF to evolve beyond just combat capabilities is not a particularly revolutionary concept; rather it is an expected characteristic of the NZSOF that occurs naturally, as the quote below suggests:

...you've gotta have some sort of agile type organisation that can reinvent itself, can change its focus, can shift off one way of operating and completely go in another direction to try and stay one beat ahead, or if not, fast following on these emerging trends and threats that come out. Within any military construct you want to be able to have some element of your force that can do that. And certainly I think that's a role of SOF.<sup>69</sup>

Alongside the notion of being unconventional, the NZSOF must be ready to evolve their skill sets, often at short notice. One interview participant noted the NZSOF have "alley-cat skills", which suggests that the NZSOF have the ability, but also a propensity to adapt in the moment and use whatever is at hand to achieve an objective in a short space of time. The same interview participant also described the NZSOF members as "jacks-of-all-trades", again a suggestion that the NZSOF can adapt, adopt or shift into whatever role is required of them.<sup>70</sup> Use of evolutionary terms when referring to the NZSOF such as innovation, agility, flexibility and adaptation are fairly common, and are also used by the ego node itself and represented in the NZSOF's mottos such as the Component Command's "innovative and agile" and 1 NZSAS Regt's "who dares wins".<sup>71</sup>

---

of shared discomfort or the many evolutions that follow." Also Interview participant 2, 25 August 2016; Interview participant 3, 23 September 2016; Interview participant 7, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 12, 21 October 2016; Interview participant 14, 04 November 2016.

<sup>69</sup> Interview participant 8, 10 October 2016.

<sup>70</sup> Interview participant 32, interview by Miriam Wharton, Canberra, Australia, 30 April 2018, interview notes.

<sup>71</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 8, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 9, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016; Interview participant



To be evolutionary may mean that the NZSOF have the opportunity, as well as the ability, to adapt to fast-changing security environments; an ability which may in fact be required of the military hierarchy or by Government policy to remain relevant.<sup>72</sup> The NZSOF's evolutionary characteristic is a way to continually prove their utility to network partners in national and international contexts.

### 3.2.3 Strategic

Strategic is the third general characteristic that defines the understanding of the NZSOF. In the context of the thesis, strategic is defined to mean the NZSOF have a connection not just to their immediate relational partners but also to the wider context of national, regional, and global actors, activities and trends.<sup>73</sup> Being strategic is a claim about the NZSOF's utility that give them a definable place in the security and military sectors relative to others. Often, being 'strategic' is defined as being connected with high levels of authority whether that be in a military or a political context:

---

15, 17 November 2016; New Zealand Defence Force, "Regimental Guide," 11; "NZSAS," Defence Careers.

<sup>72</sup> Emily Spencer, "The special operations forces mosaic: A portrait for discussion," in *Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, ed. Jessica Glicken Turnley, Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben Ari (London: Routledge, 2018), 28. Concern about evolving to remain relevant is certainly present in the wider international special operations forces community. Emma Moore and Stewart Parker, "Adapting the image and culture of special operations forces," War on the Rocks, 22 July 2020, <https://warontherocks.com/2020/07/adapting-the-image-and-culture-of-special-operations-forces-for-the-missions-of-the-future/>: "Current special operations forces are simply too homogenous and too focused on kinetic operations to succeed in the coming war for influence." As Alastair MacKenzie noted of the British SAS, evolution can also be required as a result of changes in policy. See MacKenzie, *Special Force*, 249-250.

<sup>73</sup> For example, "NZSAS," Defence Careers: "provide assistance to other New Zealand government agencies in the conduct of national strategic objectives."

...it is the best of the military and as such it should be commanded at the highest level.

It should be given access to the highest levels of intelligence, and it should be resourced appropriately to deliver those effects.<sup>74</sup>

Certainly, this characteristic of 'strategic' situates the NZSOF close to decision-makers in New Zealand. The value the NZSOF place on being able to advise and receive direction directly from senior leaders is an important connection (discussed further in Chapter 5) that enables the NZSOF to make the claim of being a "force of choice" or "force of economy".<sup>75</sup> This sense of strategic allows the NZSOF to be in the forefront of decision-makers' minds should they wish to achieve a 'strategic' military or political effect.

The strategic characteristic is used as a descriptor of the type of activities, effects or outcomes the NZSOF believe themselves to be equipped and used for.<sup>76</sup> A 'strategic' effect can be achieved through the NZSOF's action (or inaction).<sup>77</sup> 'Strategic' can refer to the performance of tasks, or even a general awareness of the broader national and

---

<sup>74</sup> Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016. Also referred to in Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 9, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016; Interview participant 17, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 30 November 2016, transcript; Interview participant 19, 02 December 2016. See also Crosby, *NZSAS*, 315-316; Simon Anglim, "British special forces in the 2020s: Still a national asset," *Military Strategy Magazine* 7, iss. 1 (2020): 46.

<sup>75</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016; Interview participant 17, 30 November 2016. See also James D. Kiras, "A theory of special operations: "These ideas are dangerous"," *Special Operations Journal* 1, no. 2 (2015): 85; Bernd Horn and Emily Spencer, "Force of choice: SOF as a foreign policy enabler," in *Special Operations Forces: Building Global Partnerships*, ed. Emily Spencer (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2012), 2; Bernd Horn, J. Paul de B. Taillon and David Last, *Force of Choice: Perspectives on Special Operations* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004); Horner, *In Action with the SAS*, 308.

<sup>76</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-3.12," 2nd ed., 36: "Employed for Strategic Objectives".

<sup>77</sup> See the title in Wharton and Ball's book chapter which equates strategic effect with the NZSOF: Wharton and Ball, "New Zealand special operations forces." Also Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 9, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016; Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016; Interview participant 17, 30 November 2016.

geopolitical contexts within which they might operate.<sup>78</sup> Using 'strategic' as a descriptor for the NZSOF has traditionally been a way to position the node and their capabilities in front of decision-makers. It is a particularly ambitious point of view for small, scarce military force elements, and the application of the 'strategic' characteristic to the NZSOF may not be agreed upon by other network nodes when considered in those broader contexts, nor accepted or tolerated by those nodes, as discussed in Chapters 4, 5, 7 and 8.

### **3.2.4 Opaque**

No one ever really talks about what they do and so the exposure you get is really through the media, so I don't get any understanding through my work channels around what the Special Forces do...My sense of SOF is that it operates in isolation from the rest of the NZDF.<sup>79</sup>

The fourth key characteristic used to define the NZSOF is opaque. Opaque is typically a characteristic identified by other network nodes rather than by the NZSOF themselves. Opaque in the thesis describes a general inability by those who interact with the NZSOF to understand or perceive what the NZSOF might offer as force elements, or what their underlying motivations may be when they engage in relationships, either because the NZSOF choose this to be the case or because other nodes choose it. Examples of this characteristic are manifested in instances from the relatively simple, such as a lack of communication or a geographical headquarters location (that means the NZSOF are less reliant on other force elements to support them), to operational security reasons,

---

<sup>78</sup> Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016; Interview participant 18, 01 December 2016.

<sup>79</sup> Interview participant 10, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 14 October 2016, transcript.

to the more psychologically complex, such as a perceived tendency to cultivate an element of mystique or an intentional act of deception or obscurantism.<sup>80</sup> Despite evidence that the opaque characteristic can create disconnection in the NZSOF's relationships with others, this is not generally the case.<sup>81</sup> There are varying degrees of the opaque characteristic to the NZSOF as perceived by relational network partners, and varying reactions to those perceptions. Some nodes may feel a significant measure of distance between themselves and the NZSOF, while others may feel much closer and have more confidence in their understanding of the NZSOF.<sup>82</sup>

Being opaque can generate disinterest about the NZSOF in some partners along with an assumed acceptance that they cannot know much (if anything) about the NZSOF, so they won't try to breach that particular wall of exclusion.<sup>83</sup> It becomes an accepted

---

<sup>80</sup> Interview participant 2, 25 August 2016; Interview participant 3, 23 September 2016; Interview participant 7, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 20, 05 December 2016; Interview participant 25, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 13 October 2017, transcript. See also AWE, "Framing SOF intelligence," in *Special Operations from a Small State Perspective: Future Security Challenges*, ed. Gunilla Eriksson and Ulrica Pettersson (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 173. Alastair Finlan calls the term "special forces" an "opaque description" of these military units: Finlan, "A dangerous pathway?," 255.

<sup>81</sup> Interview participant 7, 10 October 2016: "We try and run just about everything we do SF-wise in siloes whereas most of it there's no reason why it needs to be particularly compartmentalised except for that mystique reason. There's no particular operational reason why it needs to be." Interview participant 16, 22 November 2016: "...I would say there's a low level of understanding about the security sector. And some of that is required but a lot of it I think is not. So there is this mystique around it and these hushed conversations and things, they don't really help I think that wider conceptualisation...I don't think the average person in MFAT would have any clue what SOF do."

<sup>82</sup> Interview participant 3, 23 September 2016; Interview participant 32, 30 April 2018. Also Interview participant 31, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 15 February 2018, transcript; Interview participant 34, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 07 June 2018, transcript.

<sup>83</sup> Interview participant 5, 27 September 2016; Interview participant 6, 28 September 2016; Interview participant 7, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 10, 14 October 2016; Interview participant 16, 22 November 2016; Interview participant 20, 05 December 2016; Interview participant 30, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 14 February 2018, transcript; Interview participant 34, 07 June 2018.

“blind spot” in partners’ knowledge.<sup>84</sup> Sometimes individuals are surprised by what they discover when the opaque characteristic disperses; for example, one interview participant expressed surprise at the level of danger to which the NZSOF are exposed during training, a fact she learned when working on a business case for the NZSOF’s new Battle Training Facility.<sup>85</sup> Sometimes relational partners are more concerned with finding a proper balance between transparency and being opaque, rather than merely dwelling on the consequences of being opaque by itself.<sup>86</sup> The fundamental challenge the NZSOF’s opaque characteristic presents is the degree to which being opaque must be balanced by transparency. As a general characteristic being opaque is mostly accepted by the NZSOF’s partners when there is no requirement for a need to know about the force elements or their activities, but if those partners do have a requirement then they will assume that knowledge will be forthcoming, for example if the Ministry of Foreign Affairs needs to know enough detail to allocate resources to the NZSOF’s activities.<sup>87</sup> To resolve a degree of intentional or unintentional opaqueness perceived by other network nodes requires an ability to understand the degree to which the NZSOF’s own sense of self must be communicated effectively to others. If being opaque is deemed necessary in a given instance, that necessity must be explained. If opaqueness is unnecessary, relationships will be enhanced through increased transparency. Opaque cannot be discounted as a general characteristic just because it is generally perceived more by other network nodes than by the NZSOF themselves; general characteristics

---

<sup>84</sup> Interview participant 10, 14 October 2016.

<sup>85</sup> Interview participant 2, 25 August 2016.

<sup>86</sup> Interview participant 30, 14 February 2018.

<sup>87</sup> Interview participant 28, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 08 December 2017, transcript.

defining the NZSOF and their sense of self are formed and evolve as the result of internal change but equally by the relationships and connections it continues to form and maintain with other nodes in key security networks.

### **3.3 Conclusion**

The purpose of this chapter has been to contextualise the NZSOF by defining and developing the thesis's understanding of the NZSOF through their physical force elements and how they may be conceptually understood. In this chapter, the thesis has set out to do two principal tasks. First, it used the metaphor of a Māori *taiaha* to describe the historical development of the five force elements that constitute the NZSOF (Special Forces, Commandos, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Supporting Forces, and the Special Operations Component Command). Second, leveraging off the *taiaha* metaphor, the chapter developed a conceptual understanding of four key characteristics of the NZSOF – 'Unconventional', 'Evolutionary', 'Strategic' and 'Opaque' – that will be utilised later in the thesis.

These four key characteristics are determined by both the NZSOF and by other network nodes. Table 3-1 lists the relational characteristics displayed generally by the NZSOF that have been analysed in this chapter. It is an evolving comparative table which will be built up through Chapters 4-6, and it will be an important tool for the thesis's later chapters to examine overarching relational characteristics and dynamics across all three of the NZSOF's key security networks.

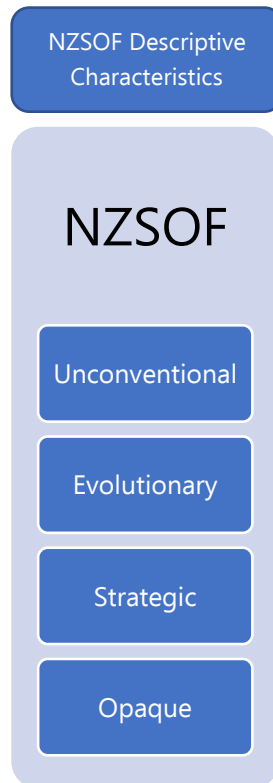


Table 3-1: The NZSOF's Characteristics (An Evolving Table)

This chapter has also introduced the NZSOF ego node as (collectively) distinct military force elements with definable features and general characteristics. The NZSOF ego node is a comparatively small collective entity with an historical special forces core, based on operational experiences since before 1955 when they were first established, but also with newer force elements. The way the NZSOF have added and changed the composition of their components demonstrates their ability to evolve over time. The general characteristics of the NZSOF ego node described in the chapter are acknowledged both by the NZSOF and other network nodes to a greater or lesser degree. To this end, importantly they have relational implications for the NZSOF. These key characteristics enable or challenge the NZSOF in their relationships with others, and therefore present the NZSOF choices about where a balance can be found. The NZSOF

ego node as a collective entity is distinct. In the following three chapters, the thesis will describe in more detail how the NZSOF engage in relationships with dissimilar but vitally important partners in key security networks.



## 4: New Zealand Defence Force, the NZSOF's Hierarchical Network

### 4.0 Introduction

Organisations, and in particular Defence organisations, are human enterprises and so relationships within those sorts of workplaces are essential. The relationships need to be underpinned by trust and credibility and understanding and patience and also be guided by a set of principles and or values. And so relationships within any organisation, but more importantly particularly within an organisation which expects people to act selflessly, to protect or work with others in that organisation or outside that organisation, are essential.<sup>1</sup>

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) is the first of the three key relational networks for the NZSOF examined in this thesis. In this chapter, NZDF is analysed as a hierarchical network. A hierarchical network is defined in the thesis as one where nodes are placed above or below other nodes; it is a structure in which rank often conveys the power and prestige of each node relative to other nodes.<sup>2</sup> In Section I, the chapter describes how hierarchy is demonstrated in the NZDF network – the two types of hierarchy examined are organisational structure and military ranks. In Section II, the chapter develops a conceptual understanding of four key relational characteristics of the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF network. They are 'Belonging', 'Disconnection',

---

<sup>1</sup> Interview participant 14, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 04 November 2016, transcript.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Alan Page Fiske, "The four elementary forms of sociality: Framework for a unified theory of social relations," *Psychological Review* 99, no. 4 (1992): 691.

'Integration' and 'Independence'. The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise the NZSOF ego node's relationships by understanding the NZDF network and how the NZSOF's relationships within it can be conceptually understood.

## Section I

### 4.1 Analysing the NZDF network as a hierarchy

...a hierarchy is just a special kind of network...<sup>3</sup>

Established state militaries are predominantly hierarchical networks.<sup>4</sup> They feature a cascading series of organisational nodes (for example, headquarters and units), and rank levels that uniformed individuals hold. The NZDF is a typical example of this network type. Its hierarchical nature is embedded in the legislation that governs the organisation, as well as in how the organisation itself is structured.<sup>5</sup> However, even in a traditional military hierarchical network, the organisational structure is not entirely simple. This chapter shows how the NZSOF's place within the NZDF network demonstrates how network complexity leads to a potentially complex series of relationships within the hierarchy.

---

<sup>3</sup> Niall Ferguson, *The Square and the Tower: Networks and Hierarchies and the Struggle for Global Power* (UK: Allen Lane, 2017), 39, 122.

<sup>4</sup> Tone Danielsen, *Making Warriors in a Global Era: An Ethnographic Study of the Norwegian Naval Special Operations Commando* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2018), xx: "Armed Forces are structured as a classic hierarchy."

<sup>5</sup> *Defence Act 1990*, Public Act: 1990 No. 28, date of assent: 01 April 1990, <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1990/0028/latest/DLM204973.html>, 5-6.

#### 4.1.1 Organisational structure

At first glance, the NZDF network is a relatively straightforward hierarchy. Within the holistic network there are three services – the Royal New Zealand Navy (hereafter referred to as ‘the Navy’), the New Zealand Army (hereafter referred to as ‘the Army’) and the Royal New Zealand Air Force (hereafter referred to as ‘the Air Force’).<sup>6</sup> The Defence Act 1990 states that these three services together are the “Armed Forces” of the country.<sup>7</sup> Placing the NZSOF within that simple hierarchy, 1 NZSAS Regt is a regiment (a type of unit) that belongs to the Army (Figure 4-1 gives examples of some other regiments in the NZ Army Order of Battle as of 2018). In simple terms, the NZDF structure and 1 NZSAS Regt within it would look as depicted at Figure 4-2.

On a surface level this depiction of the NZDF hierarchical network adheres to the simplest form of network described by Keast in Chapter 1, where a network is “a relatively stable set of actors or nodes...linked by a set of ties”.<sup>8</sup> NZDF nodes are connected to each other by a generally established, accepted format of organisational relationships. However, when one looks closer, the simple NZDF hierarchy is not sufficient for examining the complexity of the military organisation, nor the NZSOF’s

---

<sup>6</sup> “A Force for New Zealand,” New Zealand Defence Force, accessed 09 December 2020, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/>.

<sup>7</sup> *Defence Act 1990*, 7. See also Christopher Tuck, “Future land warfare,” in *Understanding Modern Warfare*, David Jordan, James D. Kiras, David J. Lonsdale, Ian Speller, Christopher Tuck and C. Dale Walton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 131: “Armies are made up of many different systems: myriad units, organisations, command arrangements, multiple communications nets, logistic structures and so on.”

<sup>8</sup> Robyn Keast, “Network theory tracks and trajectories: Where from, where to?” in *Network Theory in the Public Sector: Building New Theoretical Frameworks*, ed. Robyn Keast, Myrna Mandell and Robert Agranoff (New York: Routledge, 2014), 15-16.

place within that hierarchy. There are two significant deviations from the simple hierarchy that will be noted here.

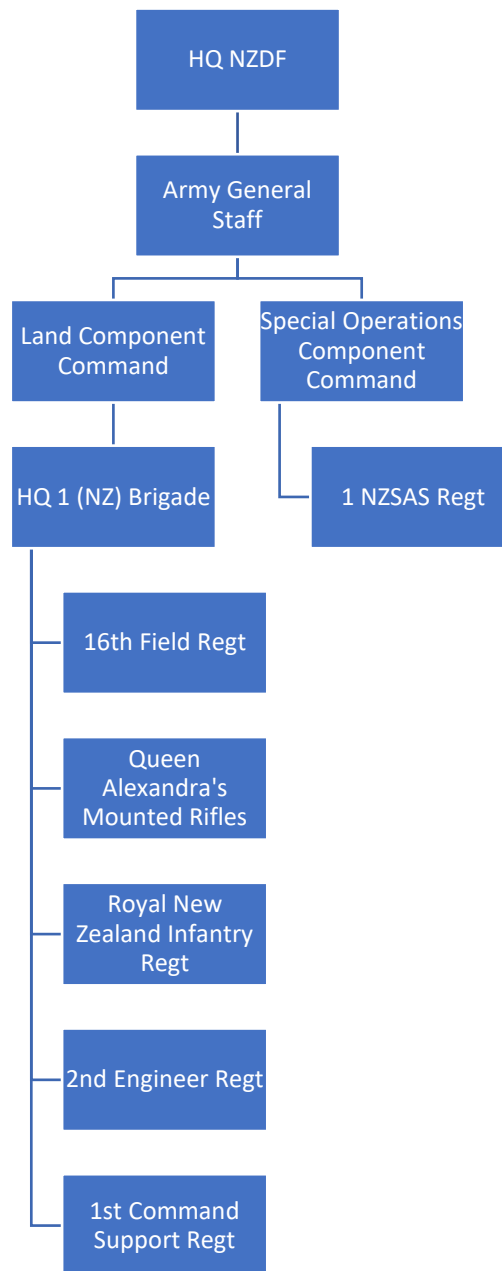


Figure 4-1: Regiments in New Zealand Army Order of Battle<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZ Army Order of Battle," accessed 23 November 2018, <http://army.mil.nz/about-us/who-we-are/structure/default.htm> [website no longer accessible].

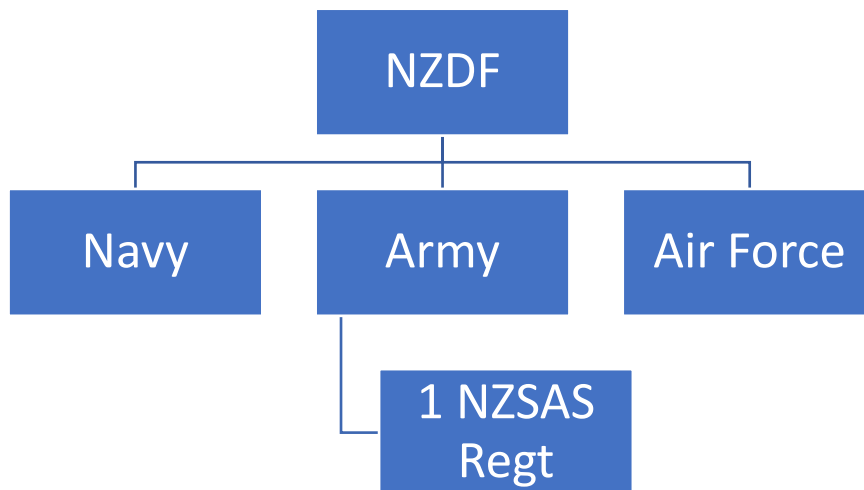


Figure 4-2: Simple NZDF Hierarchy Structure

First, the three services are not the only force elements of the NZDF at that level; the fourth force element is not a service, but rather a combination of elements of those services – the Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand (HQJFNZ).<sup>10</sup> The Defence Act refers to “joint forces” or “a joint force comprising members of 2 or more Services”.<sup>11</sup> HQJFNZ is the force element that manages those joint forces. The Special Operations Component Command is a subordinate command of that headquarters and therefore hierarchically is aligned with a different NZDF force element than 1 NZSAS Regt (HQJFNZ and the Army respectively), despite the Command being 1 NZSAS Regt’s directly superior element in the NZSOF. The Special Operations Component Commander reports primarily to the Commander Joint Forces New Zealand for operational tasks, but for different tasks undertaken by the NZSOF also reports directly

<sup>10</sup> Mark Burton, “Opening of Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand,” 02 July 2001, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/opening-headquarters-joint-forces-new-zealand>.

<sup>11</sup> *Defence Act 1990*, 17.

to the Chief of Defence Force, the Vice Chief of Defence Force (capability development), and the Chief of Army (raising, training, and sustaining forces) (see Figure 4-3).<sup>12</sup>

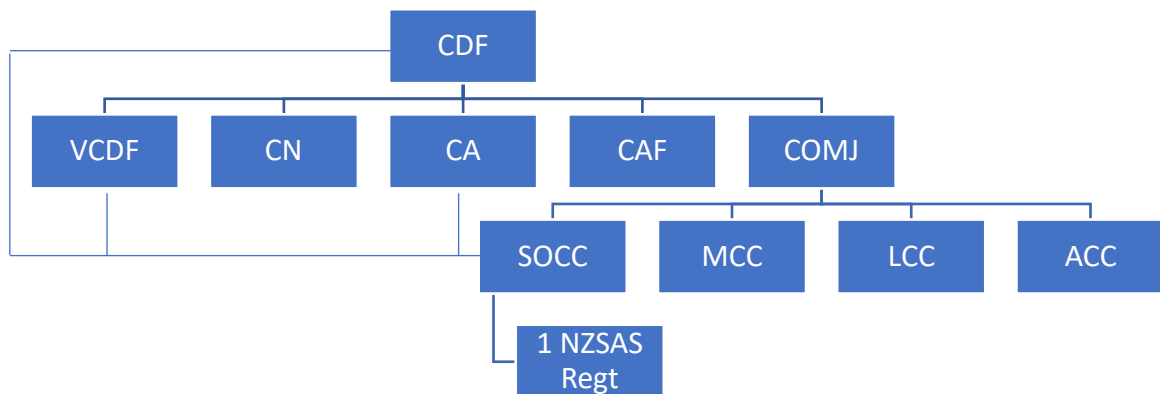


Figure 4-3: The NZSOF's Command and Control Arrangements

Second, despite its hierarchically subordinate position to the Army, 1 NZSAS Regt recruits from all three services (as well as from the civilian population outside of the NZDF) and therefore also has certain ties to the Navy and Air Force services. 1 NZSAS Regt and the Special Operations Component Command must also work with these other services in the joint environment. These are not direct hierarchical relationships (although rank equivalencies do introduce a degree of hierarchy between the service

---

<sup>12</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "New Zealand's Special Operations Forces Command and Control diagram," accessed 10 March 2018, <http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/about-us/nzsof/nzsof-command-and-control.htm> [website no longer accessible].

nodes), but they are significant relationships in their own right that the NZSOF absolutely need to maintain.<sup>13</sup> The more complex hierarchical set of relationships and additional force elements have been added to the original simple NZDF hierarchical diagram above to visually display how complexity is very quickly introduced to the NZDF network when a fuller understanding of the range of parts is understood, and when the variety of the NZSOF's relationships are understood and taken into account (see Figure 4-4).

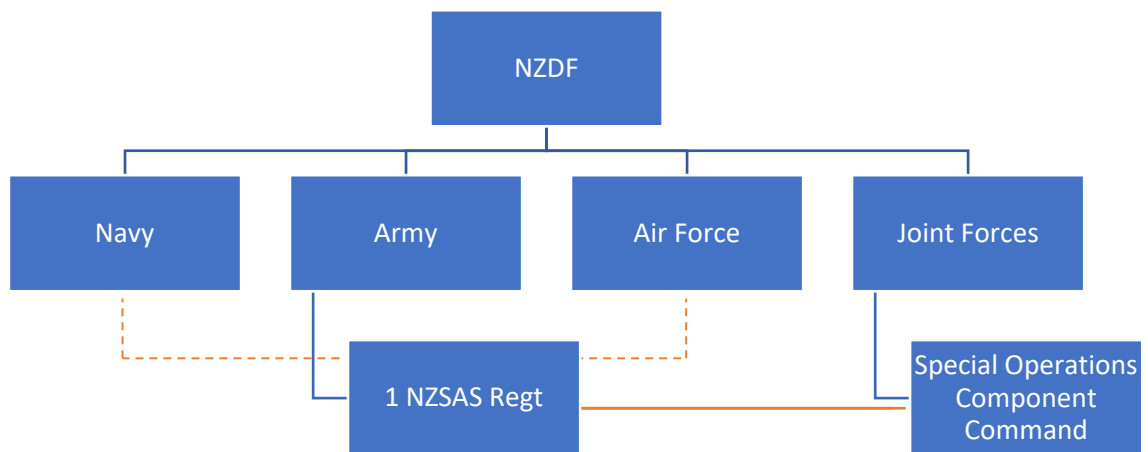


Figure 4-4: Added Complexity in the NZDF Hierarchy

<sup>13</sup> The Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand force element and the 1 NZSAS Regt links to the other services are not the only deviations from a simple hierarchical model. Other deviations include the fact that the services comprise both regular forces and reserve forces (see *Defence Act 1990*, 10), and the significant contingent of Defence civilians that are fully integrated with the services and various other force elements of the NZDF, but are not defined as 'Armed Forces' under the Defence Act 1990 (see *Defence Act 1990*, 7). See also New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "2020 Briefing to Incoming Minister of Defence / Ngā Whakamārama ki te Minita te Kāhui Kaupapa Waonga" (15 December 2020), <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/publication/Defence-BIM.pdf>, 37.

Complexity in organisational structure as demonstrated above may foster unpredictability in the NZSOF's relationships within the NZDF network as they must continually negotiate, align and realign themselves in relation to others. Perhaps this complexity of formal hierarchical relationships explains why when it comes to special operations forces (either the NZSOF or international special operations forces), more "informal practices always exist in parallel and are complementary."<sup>14</sup> Mie Augier and Andrew W. Marshall comment that "organizations have become more complex, and their interaction less about big hierarchical organizations to more decomposed, flexible, and fluid ones."<sup>15</sup> Their point is that hierarchy is not the final, simplistic characteristic of even organisations like military institutions, rather there are relational dynamics that shape the organisation. Relationships are more complex than simple organisational charts would suggest, and they are movable feasts that change all the time: "Inside any large corporation there are networks quite distinct from the official 'org.chart'."<sup>16</sup> The importance of more informal connections and relationships should not be forgotten, even as the importance of hierarchy defines the NZDF network.

#### **4.1.2 Ranks**

A second type of hierarchy evident in militaries like the NZDF is a cascading series of ranks individuals in the Armed Services (the Navy, Army and Air Force) hold. Ranks place individuals in positions of seniority or subordination relative to other individuals

---

<sup>14</sup> Tone Danielsen, "A small state's special operators, up close," War on the Rocks, 25 October 2018, <https://warontherocks.com/2018/10/a-small-states-special-operators-up-close/>.

<sup>15</sup> Mie Augier and Andrew W. Marshall, "The fog of strategy: Some organizational perspectives on strategy and the strategic management challenges in the changing competitive environment," *Comparative Strategy* 36, no. 4 (2017): 281.

<sup>16</sup> Ferguson, *The Square and the Tower*, xxiii.



in the hierarchy. While a single rank structure is simple and straightforward – one rank is either higher or lower than another rank – complexity in this form of hierarchy is immediately apparent in the NZDF network. The NZDF has different sets of rank structures for the three services; each service also has two parallel rank structures, one for commissioned (officers) personnel (see Table 4-1) and one for non-commissioned (enlisted) personnel (see Table 4-2). Complexity is also introduced by the position an individual might hold. For example, there are several Warrant Officers across the NZDF and the three services of equivalent hierarchical ranks. However, the Warrant Officer of the Defence Force is the most senior Warrant Officer in the network and therefore holds a superior position to other Warrant Officers in the network.<sup>17</sup>

It is also possible to see rank's hierarchical simplicity and complexity in the NZSOF's relationships with other network nodes. At a simple level, the NZSOF collectively is an Army service node, and therefore its members wear Army ranks (as depicted in Figures 4-5 and 4-6 above). Sharing rank structures is a point of commonality between Army nodes and the NZSOF ego node. At a complex level, like the NZDF-wide Warrant Officer example, the NZSOF also demonstrate how rank complexity can be shown in the position an individual might hold. For example, there are several Component

---

<sup>17</sup> New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "2020 Briefing to Incoming Minister of Defence," 38; "About us (Our leaders)," New Zealand Defence Force, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/about-us/>; "About us (Our leadership)," Navy, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/navy/about-us/>; "About us (Our leadership)," Army, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/army/about-us/>; "About us (Our leadership)," Air Force, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/air-force/about-us/>.

Commanders in the NZDF of which the Special Operations Component Commander (who commands the NZSOF) is one.<sup>18</sup>

RNZN	NZ Army	RNZAF
Vice Admiral	Lieutenant General	Air Marshal
Rear Admiral	Major General	Air Vice-Marshal
Commodore	Brigadier (General)	Air Commodore
Captain	Colonel	Group Captain
Commander	Lieutenant Colonel	Wing Commander
Lieutenant Commander	Major	Squadron Leader
Lieutenant	Captain	Flight Lieutenant
Sub Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Flying Officer
Ensign	Second Lieutenant	Pilot Officer

Table 4-1: NZDF Commissioned Ranks<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Miriam Wharton and Rhys Ball, "New Zealand special operations forces: Subtle and strategic effect in the whole-of-government approach to New Zealand's national security," in *New Zealand National Security: Challenges, Trends and Issues*, ed. William Hoverd, Nick Nelson and Carl Bradley (Auckland: Massey University Press, 2017), 224.

<sup>19</sup> Simon Ewing-Jarvie, "Rima tekau," UNCLAS: A Blog on New Zealand's National Security and Other Favourite Topics, 23 August 2018, <https://unclas.com/2018/08/23/rima-tekau/>.

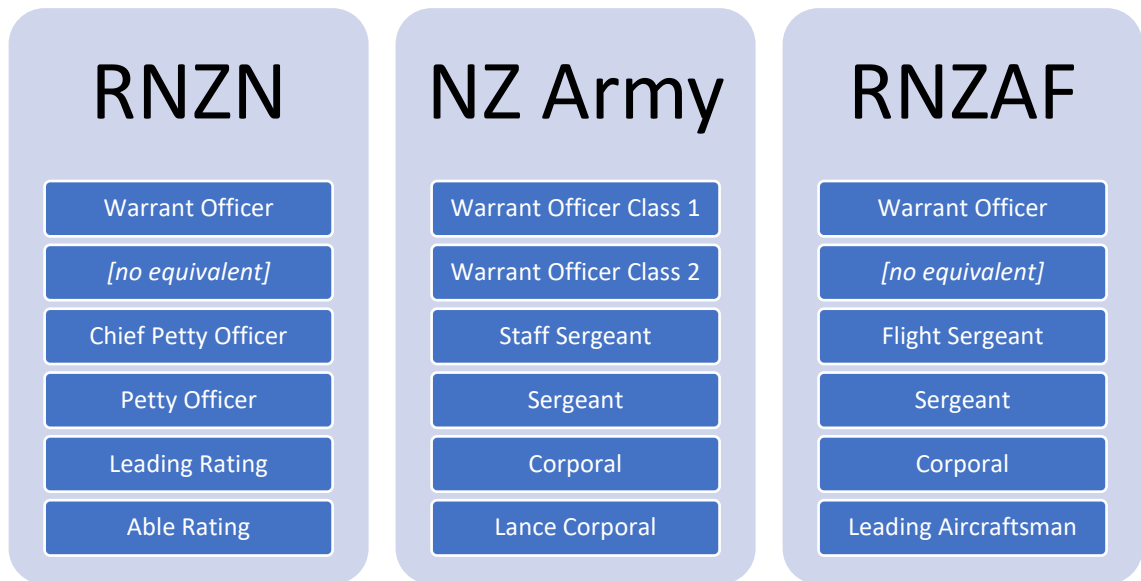


Table 4-2: NZDF Non-Commissioned Ranks<sup>20</sup>

These are organisationally hierarchically equivalent positions. However, the Maritime, Land and Air Component Commanders hold an equivalent rank to each other (Commodore, Brigadier and Air Commodore respectively), but the Special Operations Component Commander holds a subordinate rank (Colonel).<sup>21</sup> The NZSOF share the simplicity and complexity of the NZDF network’s rank structure and in that way create “a set of expectations that people understand where they stand, and...levels of responsibility”.<sup>22</sup> Through their adherence to rank in either their most broadly

<sup>20</sup> Ewing-Jarvie, “Rima tekau.” UNCLAS.

<sup>21</sup> “About us (Our leadership),” Navy; “About us (Our leadership),” Army; “About us (Our leadership),” Air Force; Interview participant 1, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 11 August 2016, transcript. See also “NZDF supports British Army’s counter-poaching operation,” Medium, 30 April 2019, <https://medium.com/@nzdefenceforce/nzdf-supports-british-armys-counter-poaching-operation-23752481c2e2>. It is possible the Special Operations Component Commander was deliberately assigned the lower rank because the position did not represent a service but rather a second-tier node in the network (the NZSOF as the ego node being hierarchially subordinate to the Army node). There are other conceivable explanations for the lower rank, for example to keep its relative power in the NZDF network subordinate to the more senior decision-making levels of the network.

<sup>22</sup> Interview participant 14, 04 November 2016.

understood or their complex forms the NZSOF demonstrate how they remain a part of the hierarchical network.

This shared understanding of rank and commonality supports network relationships.

The NZDF is inescapably a hierarchical network. Its cascading series of organisational force elements and rank levels demonstrate this fact, and relationships within the network (including the NZSOF's relationships) are inevitably shaped by the NZDF's hierarchical structure and norms and quirks. Where relationships become nuanced and require ongoing negotiation, alignment and realignment occurs when elements of complexity are introduced to this hierarchy. The NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF network encompass both the simple hierarchies of the network and multiple levels of complexity; the combination of these factors requires the NZSOF to continually manage the complexity and dynamism of their relationships.

## **Section II**

### **4.2 Relational characteristics: The NZSOF in NZDF**

In NZDF, the NZSOF exist within an organisation that tries to acknowledge the fluidity of relationships and relational characteristics within its hierarchical structure; hierarchy may constrain, but it does not prevent the ongoing negotiation and realignment of the NZSOF's relationships. In such an environment, we can expect to see degrees of variation in how the NZSOF relate to other nodes in the network and the sorts of characteristics that define those interactions over time.

This section develops and analyses four key relational characteristics that the NZSOF exhibit when they interact with other nodes in the NZDF network. The characteristics examined here will be compared with the NZSOF's relational characteristics identified in the other two key security networks examined in Chapters 5 and 6 and utilised later in the thesis in Chapters 7 and 8. The four characteristics that are identified and analysed in this section are 'Belonging', 'Disconnection', 'Integration' and 'Independence'.

#### **4.2.1 Belonging**

The people within NZSOF, they're quite similar in the fact that they're driven, they speak their mind and they're prepared to back themselves. That can seem quite intimidating with relationship building, but it's just the nature of the people here. But I have to say that we are very professional and the ability to have a full and frank discussion, it's good but then everyone gets behind what the decision is, carry on, and that's the importance of relationships. Professional respect trumps personal like every time...<sup>23</sup>

In this thesis belonging is defined as the state or act of a node being comfortable in a place of its choosing and where it is accepted by other nodes. Belonging to the NZDF network is fundamentally a recognition that the NZSOF exist collectively as a node within the NZDF, having "a shared sense of belonging to the same collectivity [community]..."<sup>24</sup> The NZSOF remain integrally tied to the wider hierarchical network (as do international SOF entities in their own hierarchical networks): "We all report to non-SOF bosses at one level or another..."<sup>25</sup> Examples of hierarchy provided above –

---

<sup>23</sup> Interview participant 19, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 02 December 2016, transcript.

<sup>24</sup> Alan Collins, ed., *Contemporary Security Studies*, 5th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 461.

<sup>25</sup> Interview participant 23, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 27 June 2017, transcript.

organisational structure and rank – demonstrate how the force elements of the NZSOF are connected structurally to the rest of the organisation (1 NZSAS Regt to the Army service, for example) and wear the same (or equivalent) identifying rank as other nodes. Culturally, the NZSOF are often indistinguishable from other NZDF nodes,<sup>26</sup> whether that be in wearing the same uniform, or the adherence to commonly held organisational values – courage (*Tū Kaha*), commitment (*Tū Tika*), comradeship (*Tū Tira*) and integrity (*Tū Maia*)<sup>27</sup> – or to common expressions of biculturalism.<sup>28</sup> Belonging is a cultural characteristic, one which is developed and maintained by connections to other nodes within the NZDF network.

Belonging is not necessarily static, just as a hierarchy is not necessarily a fixed prescriptive network structure. For the NZSOF to belong to the NZDF network and other nodes within it does not require the NZSOF to remain static forever. Rather, belonging allows for change which occurs in tandem, in cooperation with, or with acceptance from those other nodes. This is an example of the NZSOF's inherent evolutionary characteristic, as discussed in Chapter 3, and is manifested in their relationships in this key security network. In effect, if the NZSOF's commonality with other nodes in the network remains unchanged,<sup>29</sup> change in other areas does not need to reduce or eliminate belonging. Change is expected; one interview participant from

---

<sup>26</sup> Interview participant 28, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 08 December 2017, transcript.

<sup>27</sup> "About us (Our values)," New Zealand Defence Force, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/about-us/>; Interview participant 11, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 17 October 2016, transcript.

<sup>28</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016.

<sup>29</sup> Alan Page Fiske, *Structures of Social Life: The Four Elementary Forms of Human Relations* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 13-14.

the NZSOF talked about diversifying requirements for the type of individual needed to conduct the tasks required of the NZSOF node:

...you can already see clear evidence of us diversifying in the type of individual we need, so you still need that hundred twenty pounds on your back, get that sixty kilometres to the helicopter, but...we need more women in the organisation, we need more cultural diversity, we need different age groups now and we need different skill sets. It's not the same type of soldier, male or female, that joined the organisation...in mid-nineties.<sup>30</sup>

Alongside the NZSOF's expectations of change within their own community, however, is an expectation that the NZDF network itself is changing and that change is bringing the NZSOF closer to other nodes, equally or similarly initiated and maintained by any network node, not just themselves:

"...sometimes much closer collaboration with other forces outside of the SF. It's inevitable and I think that trend's going on here as well."<sup>31</sup>

When belonging is the NZSOF's characteristic being expressed, even differences between the NZSOF and conventional forces are not a cause for division. For example, the difference in philosophy and purpose between the unconventional characteristic of the NZSOF as discussed in Chapter 3, and the conventionality of other nodes, does not limit connections between nodes along a spectrum of military capability. Christopher Tuck may disagree with this observation in that service-specific and unit-specific identities and belonging are organisational factors that are problematic for joint warfare. However, this thesis would suggest that organisational identities and

---

<sup>30</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016.

<sup>31</sup> Interview participant 11, 17 October 2016.

belonging can in fact support jointness or network cohesion.<sup>32</sup> Cooperation where the NZSOF benefit from and contribute to the efforts of other nodes strengthens the bonds of belonging within the network and gives the collective network a common purpose.<sup>33</sup> In Bougainville in 1997-1998 for example, NZDF used a "SOF-led conventional-enabled" force, where both conventional and special operations forces nodes working together was crucial to the overall effort.<sup>34</sup> The reverse situation can also occur, where special operations forces support conventional forces.<sup>35</sup> In an era when the NZSOF must connect ever more closely in relationship with other network nodes (the all-of-government concept will be discussed in the following chapter), engaging and deepening the ties of belonging in the network appear to be of significant focus for the

---

<sup>32</sup> Tuck, "The future of warfare", 451; Interview participant 9, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 13, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 28 October 2016, transcript. See also Elizabeth Buchanan, "Hybrid warfare: Australia's (not so) new normal," *ASPI The Strategist*, 09 May 2019, <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/hybrid-warfare-australias-not-so-new-normal/>.

<sup>33</sup> Interview participant 9, 10 October 2016. Also referred to by Interview participant 11, 17 October 2016; Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016; Interview participant 15, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 17 November 2016, transcript; Interview participant 19, 02 December 2016.

<sup>34</sup> Ron Crosby, *NZSAS: The First Fifty Years* (North Shore: Viking, 2009), 297-301; Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016; International special operations forces also identify the same spectrum between their own efforts and those of conventional forces. See Australian Defence Force, "Special Operations Strategic Plan: Ready, integrated global effects," Special Operations Command Australia, 2017, 8.

<sup>35</sup> Charles T. Cleveland, James B. Linder and Ronald Dempsey, "Special operations doctrine: Is it needed?" *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016): 6; David C. Ellis, Charles N. Black and Mary Ann Nobles, "Thinking dangerously: Imagining United States Special Operations Command in the post-CT world," *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016): 110-129; Dennis Gyllensporre, "Contemporary hybrid warfare and the evolution of special operations theory," in *Special Operations from a Small State Perspective: Future Security Challenges*, ed. Gunilla Eriksson and Ulrica Pettersson (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 28; Walter Haynes, "Elusive victories: How counterterrorism campaigns can link back up with strategy," *War on the Rocks*, 13 October 2016, <http://warontherocks.com/2016/10/elusive-victories-how-counterterrorism-campaigns-can-link-back-up-with-strategy/>; Canadian Special Operations Command, "CANSOFCOM's Strategic Plan: Consolidating the objective," (Department of National Defence), 5, 7, 29; Joint Special Operations University, "Special Operations Forces Reference Manual," 4th ed. (MacDill Air Force Base, FL: The JSOU Press, 2015), 1-1.



NZSOF at this time. Those ties are often built through simple, and often cultural, engagements such as helping with officer selection boards, participating in sports tournaments, or socialising after work hours.<sup>36</sup> Belonging requires the NZSOF to show their character as openly as possible, and that character needs to be such that it brings the NZSOF closer to other NZDF nodes:

The SOF are just an entity within an entity...So for the organisation to be prepared to talk more about them, they've got to make themselves better known in the organisation so that the organisation feels more comfortable about talking about them as part of the organisation.<sup>37</sup>

In a small organisation such as this, your conduct and your history plays a big part in how people relate to you and it is in some cases more important than actually what you're saying is who you are in your relationship to the person you're talking to.<sup>38</sup>

Belonging is a unifying characteristic and one that interview participants from the NZSOF identified as being important to them; this does not mean, however, that belonging is a default characteristic in the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF network.

#### **4.2.2 Disconnection**

Disconnection is the second relational characteristic that this thesis identifies in order to analyse the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF network. In this thesis disconnection is defined as a form of deviation where a node departs from alignment with other network nodes and moves in a direction that takes it away from what it holds in

---

<sup>36</sup> Interview participant 27, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 26 October 2017, transcript.

<sup>37</sup> Interview participant 20, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 05 December 2016, transcript.

<sup>38</sup> Interview participant 19, 02 December 2016.

common with those other nodes. When the NZSOF exhibit a disconnection characteristic in their NZDF relationships, they become in Nina Boyd Krebs' language "edgewalker(s)", something that is "not quite [the] right fit".<sup>39</sup> The unconventional characteristic described in Chapter 3 is one of the best examples of how the NZSOF exhibit disconnection in the NZDF network.

The unconventional characteristic is assigned to the NZSOF by military doctrine. The NZDDP-D New Zealand Defence Doctrine states that "...operat[ing] in an irregular manner, so as to destabilise and defeat irregular actors. In the NZDF, this is primarily the domain of the Special Operations Forces (SOF)."<sup>40</sup> The NZSOF's own doctrine publication, NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations, suggests that a philosophy of the unconventional approach further disconnects it from the conventional approach (although also noting that commanders must be able to use both types of military capability):

Being unconventional is a way of thinking...This philosophy of training and operations can be challenging to those not schooled in the unconventional approach. It is important that commanders learn how to exploit the characteristics of both conventional and unconventional approaches.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> Nina Boyd Krebs, *Edgewalkers: Defusing Cultural Boundaries on the New Global Frontier* (Far Hills: New Horizon Press, 1999), 30.

<sup>40</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-D New Zealand Defence Doctrine," 4th ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2017), 32. In this thesis, 'unconventional' and 'irregular' are similar terms representing a deviation from generally accepted norm or norms; see the definition of 'Unconventional' in the Glossary.

<sup>41</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations," 3rd ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2018), 9.

The type of disconnection represented by the unconventional characteristic does not necessarily always govern how the NZSOF feel and act in their relationships with other NZDF nodes, but it does give those relationships a distinct flavour. Tone Danielsen expresses this same concept when describing Norwegian special operations forces, but her conceptualisation of disconnection through the unconventional characteristic is relevant to the NZSOF as well:

[Norwegian] MJK's [Marinejeger Kommando or Marinejegers] rituals are not ungrammatical; they are more like irregular verbs. Rituals in MJK have their own idiosyncratic twists. They are recognizable as military rituals and at the same time very SOFish...The masters of ceremonies in MJK know the grammar of naval rituals...So it is a conscious choice to play by the rules of irregular conjugation. They are SOF and can allow themselves to conduct their rituals in a special way.<sup>42</sup>

The NZSOF doctrinal extract above describes disconnection as feeling, while Danielsen's quote describes disconnection as action. Both are accurate within the context of relationships as they are defined in this thesis, being the behaviour or feeling between two or more nodes in a network. Both are intentional, a decision to do things differently. When employed by the NZSOF both disconnection of feeling and of behaviour can undermine the sense of belonging the NZSOF have with other nodes in the NZDF network.

Historically disconnection through the assertion of the unconventional characteristic has not always been welcomed by the rest of the military. William Slim, for example, in his memoir decried special [operations] forces as "wasteful" and not particularly beyond

---

<sup>42</sup> Danielsen, *Making Warriors in a Global Era*, 42.

the expected capabilities of “normal” units: “Any well-trained infantry battalion should be able to do what a commando can do”.<sup>43</sup> However, he also admitted a necessity to retain a type of force element that was situated and employed outside of the norm:

There is, however, one kind of special unit which should be retained – that designed to be employed in small parties, usually behind the enemy, on tasks beyond the normal scope of warfare in the field...They will be troops, though they will require many qualities and skills not expected of the ordinary soldier and they will use many methods beyond his capacity...Such units, based on the Army, but drawing on all Services and all races of the Commonwealth for specially qualified men and women, should be an essential component of our modern Armed Forces.<sup>44</sup>

The SAS of 1941 was quintessentially the type of unit Slim described in the passage above. In the 1950s, as New Zealand developed its own special operations forces on the British model, it entertained a similar concept of a force element that was both clearly military, and yet distinct from other military force elements in existence at the time.<sup>45</sup> Disconnection does not entirely separate the NZSOF and other special operations forces from their conventional counterparts, but it does (in Slim’s mind) represent a deviation from the norm that paradoxically relies on other nodes as well as maintaining their own unique capabilities.

---

<sup>43</sup> William Slim, *Defeat Into Victory: Battling Japan in Burma and India, 1942-1945* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2000), 546-549.

<sup>44</sup> Slim, *Defeat Into Victory*, 546-549.

<sup>45</sup> David J. Lonsdale, “Strategy defined,” in *Understanding Modern Warfare*, David Jordan, James D. Kiras, David J. Lonsdale, Ian Speller, Christopher Tuck and C. Dale Walton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 55: “Each particular form of warfare requires a somewhat distinct set of capabilities, which in turn may require varied types of forces, equipment, doctrine and/or training.”

Disconnection of the NZSOF from other nodes, even if prescribed by doctrine or convention, can eventually impact on the hierarchical network itself. It creates an environment in which the NZSOF could begin to think or act outside of the normal functioning of hierarchy. For example, the creation of a Special Operations Component Command gave the NZSOF node direct representation at the strategic level; they now have a much closer connection with the network's senior decision-makers than other non-service nodes (a situation discussed further in Chapter 5 and in the Operation BURNHAM inquiry illustration examined in Chapter 7). For example, the Special Operations Component Commander, although subordinate in rank to other component commanders, was given a voice at the strategic level beyond what the hierarchical rank of a conventional forces colonel would likely be given.<sup>46</sup>

Further unconventional disconnect can be seen with the Special Operations Component Commander being placed in the direct command and control line for 1 NZSAS Regt. Holding business-as-usual responsibilities for an operational node that other component commanders did not in order to work more closely to the senior levels of the hierarchy (in both the NZSOF and international special operations forces) has been seen by some as a necessity.<sup>47</sup> Others have characterised this change as a

---

<sup>46</sup> Interview participant 3, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 23 September 2016, transcript; Interview participant 7, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript.

<sup>47</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 12, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 21 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016; Interview participant 27, 26 October 2017; Interview participant 33, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 08 May 2018, transcript; New Zealand Defence Force, "Regimental Guide," 4th ed., November 2012, 11; Canadian Special Operations Forces Command, "Future Operating Environment Handbook" (Department of National Defence, 2017), 23; Alastair MacKenzie, *Special Force: The Untold Story of 22nd Special Air Service Regiment (SAS)* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 243-244; Interview participant 26, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 17 October 2017, transcript.

potentially dangerous trend that undercuts and subverts the generally accepted norms in a military organisation like the NZDF, and the established lines of accountability and oversight necessary for a more covert node.<sup>48</sup> Change such as this, where the NZSOF deviate from established hierarchical structure, expectations of rank or behavioural norms, especially when that change occurs without similar changes in other nodes in the network, creates a disconnection between the NZSOF and other nodes.

### 4.2.3 Integration

Integration is the third relational characteristic the thesis discusses to analyse the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF network. In this thesis integration is defined as acting in a united way with other network nodes. Integration is a characteristic that is more evident in the practical aspects of the NZSOF's relationships; it is how the NZSOF often work closely with others to achieve a specific result. The NZDF's "Future Land Operating Concept 2035" talks about "the integrated approach" which is defined as:

An approach primarily driven by the process of people from different institutions and different disciplines working side by side at several levels to ensure that their perspectives and activities reinforce each other. The Integrated Approach requires low-level cooperation and mid-level coordination, supplemented by high-level alignment of overall strategic objectives. Integration should improve the flow of information,

---

<sup>48</sup> Interview participant 7, 10 October 2016; Rhys Ball and Wil Hoverd, "Overseeing New Zealand's modern military operations," *New Zealand International Review* 42, no. 6 (2017); Nicky Hager and Jon Stephenson, *Hit & Run: The New Zealand SAS in Afghanistan and the Meaning of Honour* (Nelson: Pottan & Burton, 2017), 113; Abigail Watson and Megan Karlshoej-Pedersen, "A call for dialogue: The dangers of polarisation in the special forces debate," Oxford Research Group, 28 August 2020, <https://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/a-call-for-dialogue-the-dangers-of-polarisation-on-the-special-forces-debate>.

contribute to a shared understanding of stabilisation challenges and responses, reduce policy and delivery 'silos', and ensure greater effect on the ground.<sup>49</sup>

The Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018 discussed an expectation of Defence that it would maintain a mix of capabilities that have "broad utility".<sup>50</sup> Becoming "more than just the sum of our parts" is an aspirational relational intent within the hierarchical NZDF structure and is achieved through integration.<sup>51</sup>

Integration can unite disparate elements and, if effective, "should dramatically improve the co-operation, co-ordination, speed and flexibility of a military organisation."<sup>52</sup> There are many examples of the NZSOF's integration with other NZDF nodes; these range from the simple (for example, training for maritime operations with Navy force elements) to the more complex (for example, conducting operational activities in preparation for conventional forces to then follow).<sup>53</sup> Integration does not require all nodes to be the same, but rather for them to understand each other and be capable of using each other's niche specialties within the hierarchy for collective outcomes.<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "Future Land Operating Concept 2035: Integrated Land Missions," 2nd ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2018), 90.

<sup>50</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018" (Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2018), 8.

<sup>51</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDF Strategic Plan 2019-2025: Operationalising Strategy25" (11 March 2020), <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/Publications/NZDF-Strategic-Plan-2019-2025.pdf>, 15.

<sup>52</sup> David Jordan, James D. Kiras, David J. Lonsdale, Ian Speller, Christopher Tuck and C. Dale Walton, *Understanding Modern Warfare*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 470.

<sup>53</sup> Interview participant 26, 17 October 2017; Interview participant 3, 23 September 2016.

<sup>54</sup> Interview participant 25, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 13 October 2017, transcript; Interview participant 34, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 07 June 2018, transcript.

Integration between the NZSOF and other nodes in the NZDF network is facilitated by familiarisation between the various nodes. When other nodes see recognisable aspects of the NZSOF they are better able to understand how the NZSOF fit in with their own specialties and capabilities within the network.<sup>55</sup> Because the NZSOF belong to the NZDF network, and because they participate in both the hierarchical and rank features of the network, the foundation of understanding exists to enable integration between the NZSOF and other nodes to occur.<sup>56</sup> To achieve the familiarisation and understanding that enables integration, interview participants belonging to the NZSOF consistently recognised the NZSOF's responsibility to create and nurture understanding in relationships with other nodes.<sup>57</sup> They acknowledged that in the past the NZSOF undermined their own efforts to be understood, whether through self-isolation or as a result of arrogance, or a perception that the NZSOF get what resources they want at the expense of other nodes (a form of competition that results in organisational hostility).<sup>58</sup> They also recognised that there is a mythology about special operations forces generally that comes from a lack of detailed information about them, or a

---

<sup>55</sup> Danielsen, *Making Warriors in a Global Era*, 141. "MJK is formally organized like conventional units...It makes the organization structure recognizable to all military personnel..."

<sup>56</sup> As a hierarchical example, the position of Special Operations Component Commander, despite the peculiarities of some of its responsibilities is a role – the component commander – that is familiar to other force elements. As a rank example, the Chief of Army appoints senior leaders of the NZSOF such as the Special Operations Command Sergeant Major (see Interview participant 34, 07 June 2018) as he does with all other senior Army leaders.

<sup>57</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 11, 17 October 2016; Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016.

<sup>58</sup> Interview participant 7, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 8, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016; Interview participant 27, 26 October 2017. See also Tone Danielsen, "Making warriors in the global era: An anthropological study of institutional apprenticeship: Selection, training, education, and everyday life in the Norwegian Naval Special Operations Commando" (PhD diss., University of Oslo, 2015), 227; Stanley McChrystal, *My Share of the Task: A Memoir* (New York: Portfolio | Penguin, 2013), 52; Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016.



'Hollywood-isation' of available information that creates a skewed image of the capability.<sup>59</sup> These challenges to familiarisation and understanding that will enable integration have to be mitigated by the NZSOF in their NZDF relationships. Familiarisation and understanding may be based on a common utilitarian need to integrate or work together, whether that is on an activity led or supported by the NZSOF.<sup>60</sup> Ideas and tools developed in the NZSOF may then be shared in the wider network, which has utilitarian value to other nodes.<sup>61</sup> Sometimes partners identify an element of the NZSOF that they feel could be applied in their own specialties, such as personnel management, and this is a reason for better integration with that node.<sup>62</sup> When opportunities to better understand each other arise, the NZSOF will find that integration within the NZDF network is more achievable.

#### **4.2.4 Independence**

...you were talking about has SOF changed in the last few years, well one thing that's changed in New Zealand in the last few years is they've been given a whole pile of their own enablers, and that's actually taken them further away from the force.<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> Interview participant 2, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 25 August 2016, transcript; Interview participant 8, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 17, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 30 November 2016, transcript; Interview participant 27, 26 October 2017. See also Thomas Gibbons-Neff, "Top U.S. special operations general: 'We're hurting ourselves' with all these movies and books," *Washington Post*, 15 September 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2016/09/15/top-u-s-special-forces-general-were-hurting-ourselves-with-all-these-movies-and-books/>.

<sup>60</sup> Interview participant 14, 04 November 2016; Interview participant 26, 17 October 2017. See also James E. Hayes III, "Beyond the gray zone: Special operations in multidomain battle," *Joint Force Quarterly* 91 (2018), 60-61.

<sup>61</sup> Interview participant 7, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 14, 04 November 2016.

<sup>62</sup> Interview participant 25, 13 October 2017.

<sup>63</sup> Interview participant 7, 10 October 2016.

Independence is the fourth relational characteristic identified. In this thesis independence is defined as the freedom to feel and act as one sees fit. In a hierarchical network independence may not be considered a common characteristic, but despite retaining both a sense of belonging and of integration in the NZDF network, the NZSOF also display an ongoing inclination for independence that is somewhat incongruous. In the previous section it was mentioned that military nodes have their own specialities and that integrating them towards a collective outcome requires understanding between the various nodes in the network. Perhaps it is to be expected, therefore, that retaining “specialness” or independence within the NZDF network is important to the NZSOF, because this means they remain uniquely relevant.<sup>64</sup> Whether it be as national representatives on international security efforts resulting in trade opportunities or increased national reputation on the world stage, or a display of military professionalism, or offering decision-makers “relatively low risk” and “[r]elatively low cost” options, the NZSOF have crafted a narrative around their niche relevance to the NZDF network compared to the other nodes.<sup>65</sup> This has been seen in international special operations forces as well. For example, in Scandinavia, Ronnie Modigs observes:

---

<sup>64</sup> Interview participant 9, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016. Independence may also be seen as a power move rather than what it is portrayed as here, which is an assertion of legitimate difference. See Hager and Stephenson, *Hit & Run*, 113.

<sup>65</sup> Interview participant 9, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 27, 26 October 2017. See also Evan Williams, “A message from Deputy Chief of Army: Reputation and relationships – it works both ways,” *Army News*, October 2019, 3; Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016; Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016. See also Christopher Pugsley, *From Emergency to Confrontation: The New Zealand Armed Forces in Malaya and Borneo 1949-66* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2003), 263, 337; David Horner with Neil Thomas, *In Action with the SAS* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2009), 303; Interview participant 17, 30 November 2016; Crosby, *NZSAS*, 315-316.

This has been the case for the small Nordic states where tactical prowess has created an outstanding operational reputation. Due to this reputation, they are often requested by the large powers' special operations. When reliability has been proven in operations and political will is there to deploy SO in difficult missions, it has paid off strategically and politically.<sup>66</sup>

An overarching way to describe this niche could be that the NZSOF's contributions lay "beyond the capability...of conventional forces."<sup>67</sup> In making such a claim the NZSOF move themselves beyond just disconnection. Disconnection moves the NZSOF away from commonality with other nodes, but they still exist in the same space as them. Independence suggests a more significant and permanent departure from what is expected in the rest of the network.

Independence draws us back to unconventional as one of the NZSOF's general characteristics identified in Chapter 3. When the NZSOF describe themselves as undertaking special operations "to achieve significant strategic objectives that are outside the current capability of conventional forces",<sup>68</sup> they are creating a break in their relationships with other NZDF nodes. No longer are unique skill sets working in tandem, as in the integration characteristic. Rather, independence is created by emphasising the unconventional characteristic, but at the cost of the NZSOF separating themselves in some significant way from conventional nodes.

---

<sup>66</sup> Ronny Modigs, "The utility of special operations in small states," in *Special Operations from a Small State Perspective: Future Security Challenges*, ed. Gunilla Eriksson and Ulrica Pettersson (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 59.

<sup>67</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016. See also Interview participant 19, 02 December 2016.

<sup>68</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations," 3rd ed., 9.

Independence is a characteristic in direct contrast to the characteristic of belonging and of integration; nevertheless, they both exist in the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF network. Even as conventional forces develop towards the niche the NZSOF currently occupy, the NZSOF continually seek to evolve again to the next new or emerging required skill set.<sup>69</sup> Evolutionary is also a general characteristic of the NZSOF described in the previous chapter and clearly that feature is displayed in the NZDF network context, as in fact is the strategic characteristic as represented in the desire to retain a niche specialist role that has an impact at the strategic level. The NZSOF's independence is vital to their remaining usefulness to the network, and yet their independence also challenges their ability to make and maintain good relationships with other force elements. The question that may emerge from this discussion of the NZSOF's independent characteristic in relationships is whether it is possible for an unconventional node determined to keep its niche role in the NZDF network to also keep enough belonging and integration with the rest of the network to still warrant being a part of that network?

Having discussed four characteristics of the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF network, those characteristics can be added to the evolving comparative table developed in Chapter 3. Table 4-3 continues to build the picture of the NZSOF's characteristics that the thesis uses to contextualise the NZSOF's relationships in key security networks.

---

<sup>69</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 8, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016. See also Emily Spencer, "The special operations forces mosaic: A portrait for discussion", in *Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, ed. Jessica Glicken Turnley, Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben-Ari (London: Routledge, 2018), 28: "while the future SOF warrior will no doubt to a degree be a continuation of his (and I am hesitant to add her in this context) former self, there will likely be some type of evolution that is required to remain relevant and effective in the future operating environment."



Table 4-3: The NZSOF's Characteristics (An Evolving Table)

### 4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, the thesis set out to do two principal tasks. First, it analysed the first of three key relational networks for the NZSOF, the NZDF network, as a hierarchical network. It described how hierarchy is demonstrated in the NZDF network by looking at the network's organisational structure and military ranks. In both its broadly understood and complex forms the NZSOF exist within that hierarchy. Second, the chapter developed a conceptual understanding of four relational characteristics of the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF network – 'Belonging', 'Disconnection', 'Integration' and 'Independence'. Those characteristics both adhere to and step away from the more prescriptive bent of the hierarchical form. On the one hand, belonging and integration

are two characteristics that draw the NZSOF towards other nodes and causes them to seek collective outcomes. On the other hand, and simultaneously, the NZSOF also display both disconnection and an inclination towards independence that appear to negate the prior two characteristics in their relationships.

The existence of seemingly irreconcilable relational characteristics is in fact not entirely incongruous. The NZSOF can desire independence while simultaneously acting in an integrated fashion with other NZDF nodes. Their inclination at times to disconnect from elements of the hierarchy has not to date ever entirely severed their sense of belonging to the network. Rather than seeing these characteristics as fixed points, it is better to see them as existing within relational dynamics the NZSOF constantly manage. In order to reconcile characteristics that may appear to conflict with each other, the NZSOF exist in a state of ongoing negotiation, alignment and realignment within their relationships. The purpose of this chapter has been to contextualise the NZSOF's relationships by defining and developing the thesis's understanding of the NZDF network and how the NZSOF's relationships within it can be conceptually understood.

## 5: New Zealand National Security System, the NZSOF's Amorphous Network

### 5.0 Introduction

Our interagency relationships are essential for two reasons, one is [be]cause we've been told to, so there's an expectation we are, for the right reasons, but also it's a requirement now operationally that no one organisation has the piece of the puzzle anymore, so it's really important that people talk.<sup>1</sup>

The New Zealand National Security System (NZNSS) is the second of the three key relational networks for the NZSOF examined by this thesis. In this chapter, the thesis sets out to do two principal tasks. First, it analyses the NZNSS as an amorphous network. An amorphous network is defined in the thesis as one not defined by fixed membership, but rather by an *ad hoc*, situational state. In Section I, the chapter identifies two key concepts that shape the NZNSS network, namely national security as the network's goal, and an all-of-government approach to achieving that goal. The chapter then analyses how NZNSS's goal and approach, and its amorphous state, is operationalised during a national security crisis. In Section II, the chapter develops a conceptual understanding of four characteristics of the NZSOF's relationships in the NZNSS network – 'Integration', 'Collaboration', 'Siloisation' and 'Political sponsorship' –

---

<sup>1</sup> Interview participant 20, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 05 December 2016, transcript.

and contextualises the NZSOF's relationships by way of the characteristics presented in this space.

## **Section I**

### **5.1 Analysing the NZNSS network as amorphous**

This thesis defines the NZNSS network as amorphous, meaning a network not defined by fixed membership, but rather by an *ad hoc*, situational state. If the NZDF is a hierarchical, structured network, contrastingly the NZNSS network is a fluid network whose composition is continuously changing depending on what is required of it. Instead of a rigid, fixed organisational structure, NZNSS's shape and constituent parts are determined by a specific goal, namely national security, and the 'all-of-government' approach designed to achieve that goal.<sup>2</sup> Section I will describe these two key network concepts, and analyse how they practically inform NZNSS's amorphous state when operationalised in the event of a national security crisis.

#### **5.1.1 National security**

National security is the specific goal of the NZNSS network. It is defined by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) which is responsible for helping "coordinate core public service departments and ministries".<sup>3</sup> In its 2016 National Security System Handbook, the Department defines national security as:

---

<sup>2</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, "National Security System Handbook" (August 2016), <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2017-03/dPMC-nss-handbook-aug-2016.pdf>, 7, 27.

<sup>3</sup> "Our purpose," Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, accessed 22 January 2021, <https://dPMC.govt.nz/about-dPMC/who-we-are/our-purpose>.



...the condition which permits the citizens of a state to go about their daily business confidently free from fear and able to make the most of opportunities to advance their way of life. It encompasses the preparedness, protection and preservation of people, and of property and information, both tangible and intangible.<sup>4</sup>

This foundational definition is broad and not particularly prescriptive. It describes an ideal state of security for New Zealand and how the NZNSS exists to contribute to the realisation of that goal. DPMC describes its approach to national security as “all hazards – all risks” which “encompasses more than the traditional definition of security as solely the preserve of defence, law enforcement and intelligence agencies”,<sup>5</sup> and thus “requires [a] flexible and adaptable national security architecture [network]”.<sup>6</sup> Chris Rothery critiques this current approach of the NZNSS. He is concerned that there is “[n]o overarching strategic document...that coordinates all the elements of state power towards a common goal of national security.”<sup>7</sup> In his view, the 2016 National Security

---

<sup>4</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, “National Security System Handbook,” 7.

<sup>5</sup> “New Zealand’s national security system,” Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, accessed 22 January 2021, <https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/national-security-and-intelligence/national-security/new-zealands-national-security>; Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, “National Security System Handbook,” 9. The “all-hazards” approach is also found in Ministry of Defence documentation: New Zealand Ministry of Defence, “Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018” (Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2018), 10.

<sup>6</sup> “New Zealand’s national security system,” Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. See Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, “National Security System Handbook,” 7: The Handbook notes that this approach “involves a wide range of government agencies [and]...Local government, quasi-government agencies and the private sector also have increasingly important roles within national security.” See also “Coordination across government,” Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, accessed 22 January 2021, <https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/national-security-and-intelligence/new-zealands-national-security-system/coordination>.

<sup>7</sup> Chris Rothery, “Time for a national security strategy,” *National Security Journal* 1, iss. 1 (2019), 5, <https://sites.massey.ac.nz/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2020/02/NSJ-2019-October-Rothery.pdf>. See also Rothery’s more extensive examination of the NZNSS in his Masters thesis: Chris Rothery, “New Zealand’s national security framework: A recommendation for the development of a National Security Strategy” (Masters thesis, University of Waikato, 2018).

Handbook from which the foundational definition of national security is derived is “more akin to a guide of what happens in the event of an emergency” rather than “a forward-looking strategy.”<sup>8</sup> While interview participants for this research offered their own interpretations of a definition of national security, most cleaved relatively close to the Handbook’s definition or suggested New Zealand does not really have any concept of national security.<sup>9</sup>

The lack of specificity and prescriptiveness in DPMC’s definition of national security gives other organisations an opening to define and apply the goal in their own professional contexts.<sup>10</sup> The NZDF, for example, defines national security as:

---

<sup>8</sup> Rothery, “Time for a national security strategy,” 5, 11. The lack of a fixed strategy is also commented on by Interview participant 30, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 14 February 2018, transcript. See also Jim Rolfe, “A national security strategy for New Zealand?” Incline, 11 November 2019, <http://www.incline.org.nz/home/a-national-security-strategy-for-new-zealand/>.

<sup>9</sup> Interview participant 2, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 25 August 2016, transcript; Interview participant 3, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 23 September 2016, transcript; Interview participant 4, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 26 September 2016, transcript; Interview participant 6, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 28 September 2016, transcript; Interview participant 8, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 11, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 17 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 12, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 21 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 15, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 17 November 2016, transcript; Interview participant 16, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 22 November 2016, transcript; Interview participant 20, 05 December 2016; Interview participant 28, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 08 December 2017, transcript; Interview participant 29, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 09 January 2018, transcript; Interview participant 31, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 15 February 2018, transcript.

<sup>10</sup> Interview participant 13, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 28 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 18, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 01 December 2016, transcript.

The ability to preserve the nation's physical integrity and territory; to maintain economic relations with the rest of the world on reasonable terms; to protect its nature, institutions, and governance from disruption from outside; and to control its borders.<sup>11</sup>

Adapting definitions of national security depending on professional or situational context and interpretation is one indicator of the amorphous nature of the NZNSS network. Equally, the amorphous nature of the network is also evident in the lack of a specific national security strategy. Without such a strategy, responses to national security challenges occur in an *ad hoc*, situational fashion. How this occurs in practice will be described below when discussing how the NZNSS network is put into action.

### **5.1.2 All-of-Government**

Achieving the national security goal requires a "broad church" approach.<sup>12</sup> The 'all-of-government' concept is in line with such a broad, collaborative, and ongoing Government re-imagining of the New Zealand public service "shifting agencies from working as single departments to working as one, unified public service, to quickly mobilise and tackle specific issues...".<sup>13</sup>

While an all-of-government approach seems to be a common New Zealand Government response to national challenges, the approach is critiqued by some scholars. Jeffrey Meiser states:

---

<sup>11</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-D New Zealand Defence Doctrine," 4th ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2017), 84.

<sup>12</sup> Interview participant 6, 28 September 2016; Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, "National Security System Handbook," 27.

<sup>13</sup> Chris Hipkins, "Public Service undergoes biggest shake-up in 30 years," Beehive.govt.nz, 26 June 2019, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/public-service-undergoes-biggest-shake-30-years>. 'All-of-government' is also referred to as 'whole-of-government'. This thesis uses the former term for consistency's sake, but the two terms are synonymous.

Far too often strategists using the [all]-of-government approach simply fill in the seven boxes corresponding to each element of national power to demonstrate their strategy is comprehensive. In truth, not every problem actually requires all elements of national power. By trying to do too much, we can end up unfocused and confused...<sup>14</sup>

Meiser is suggesting that an all-of-government response runs the risk of over-complicating a response to an issue. Rachel Butler suggests that there is ambiguity in the all-of-government concept, and that the consequences of employing such an approach may not have previously been clearly thought through.<sup>15</sup> The uncertainty around the all-of-government approach and its effectiveness articulated by Meiser and Butler echoes the amorphous nature of the network. Despite that uncertainty, however, Terry Johanson suggests that the all-of-government construct in national security has the potential to create a "national security culture" that would cohere NZNSS partners even more closely.<sup>16</sup> If Johanson is correct, the amorphous nature of the NZNSS network may decrease as a more mature, integrated national security system evolves. This is yet to be seen, however, and the NZNSS is still currently an amorphous network whose composition is relatively unfixed and within which a multiplicity of entities may

---

<sup>14</sup> Jeffrey W. Meiser, "Ends + ways + means = (bad) strategy," *Parameters* 46, no. 4 (2016-2017): 84-85. See also John Battersby, Rhys Ball and Nick Nelson, "New Zealand's counter-terrorism strategy: A critical assessment," *National Security Journal* (2020), 6, <https://nationalecurityjournal.nz/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2020/06/NSJ-2020-Battersby-Ball-Nelson.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> Rachel Butler, "Organisational scapegoats and hierarchical constraints: A critical discourse analysis of inter-agency collaboration within New Zealand's public sector" (Masters thesis, Massey University, 2015), 2, <https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/10038>. Butler's thesis begins to answer, or at least frame, some of the questions arising from this approach in a New Zealand context.

<sup>16</sup> Terry Johanson, "New Zealand's national security coordination," in *New Zealand National Security: Challenges, Trends and Issues*, ed. William Hoverd, Nick Nelson and Carl Bradley (Auckland: Massey University Press, 2017), 250.

at any one time be involved. This notwithstanding, in the DPMC definition we can still see some elements of an identifiable network structure.

Despite DPMC's suggestion that the all-of-government response to national security is broader than just "defence, law enforcement and intelligence agencies", organisations that fit within "the traditional definition of security" remain important to our understanding of, and the functioning of, the NZNSS network.<sup>17</sup> These agencies include the NZDF, the New Zealand Police, and the New Zealand Intelligence Community (made up of the Government Communications Security Bureau, New Zealand Security Intelligence Service and National Assessments Bureau).<sup>18</sup> As part of the NZDF network, the NZSOF's involvement in the NZNSS network is automatic; the NZSOF's relationships in the network are shaped by the NZDF's organisational expectation that it (and its force elements including the NZSOF) will work "in conjunction with the other instruments [network partners] to achieve national objectives."<sup>19</sup>

Organisations like the NZDF are familiar participants in the NZNSS network, but the amorphous nature of the network means that other organisations not traditionally defined as national security agencies may also be included as part of the network's *ad*

---

<sup>17</sup> "New Zealand's national security system," Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

<sup>18</sup> "About us," New Zealand Intelligence Community, accessed 22 January 2021, <https://www.nzic.govt.nz/about-us/>. This is an example of how networks can exist within networks (i.e., the NZDF network within the NZNSS network).

<sup>19</sup> Interview participant 6, 28 September 2016; New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-D New Zealand Defence Doctrine," 4th ed., 10-11; New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Defence White Paper 2016" (Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2016), 5, 38; Timothy Keating, "CDF Address to Staff Course – Graduation," speech notes, 06 December 2017, 4; Interview participant 5, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 27 September 2016, transcript; New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018," 33. For specific statements about the importance of the NZSOF's collaboration in an all-of-government approach, see New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations," 3rd ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2018), iii.

*hoc*, situational response to national security challenges.<sup>20</sup> The New Zealand Customs Service, for example, “protects New Zealand’s border”, aims to “stop any dangers, hazards and threats entering New Zealand” and “work closely with a number of other agencies, including...[t]he New Zealand Defence Force.”<sup>21</sup> Customs is here described as an agency that deals with protection, the prevention of hazards, and adopts a collaborative approach with other agencies that includes a traditional security agency. As such, the New Zealand Customs Service can at times, depending on its role at any given time, participate as a member of the NZNSS network.

Another, and immediate, example of a non-traditional national security partner is the Ministry of Health and its ongoing role in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministry, unlike other agencies, does not label itself as a national security agency in the general information provided on its website about its purpose.<sup>22</sup> Yet its own health response on behalf of New Zealanders (such as preparedness for the rollout of vaccines) and associated security risks (such as cyber activity around COVID-19 research or public concerns about the pandemic) demonstrate a very clear link to, and a presence within, the NZNSS network.<sup>23</sup> The practical nexus between the national

---

<sup>20</sup> William Hoverd, “The changing New Zealand national security environment: New threats, new structures, and new research,” *National Security Journal* 1, iss. 1 (2019), 26, <https://sites.massey.ac.nz/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2020/02/NSJ-2019-October-Hoverd.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> “Who we are,” New Zealand Customs Service, accessed 22 January 2021, <https://www.customs.govt.nz/about-us/about-customs/who-we-are/>; “What we do,” New Zealand Customs Service, accessed 22 January 2021, <https://www.customs.govt.nz/about-us/about-customs/what-we-do/>.

<sup>22</sup> “About the Ministry,” Ministry of Health, accessed 22 January 2021, <https://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry>: The Ministry of Health’s purpose is stated as “The Ministry works across the health sector to deliver better health outcomes for New Zealanders”.

<sup>23</sup> “COVID-19: Vaccine planning,” Ministry of Health, 21 January 2021, <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccine-planning>; “COVID-19,” National Cyber Security Centre, accessed 22 January 2021, <https://www.ncsc.govt.nz/covid-19/>; Andrew Hampton, “Speech: Cyber security

security goal and the all-of-government approach that integrates so-called 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' national security agencies can be clearly seen in responses to contemporary national security crises.

### 5.1.3 Operationalising the NZNSS network

NZNSS is an amorphous network that is not defined by a fixed membership, but in the operationalisation of the network in response to a national security crisis, the response itself is structured. The NZNSS is activated when one (or more) national security events or situations develop.<sup>24</sup> While the collaborative response from the NZNSS should meet certain expectations, flexibility is emphasised, "[a]s every event is different."<sup>25</sup> There are a number of governance entities that will meet to manage the network, but in a national security crisis the practical response is led at the strategic level by the Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination (ODESC).<sup>26</sup>

ODESC (aside from being an umbrella term for the strategic management and response to national security) is a committee of Chief Executives of agencies responding to specific national security events who direct and coordinate that response.<sup>27</sup> Its membership is relevant to the required response, and in that way it adheres to the definition of NZNSS as an amorphous network which is not defined by a fixed membership, but rather by an *ad hoc*, situational state. In addition to ODESC, watch groups can be comprised of relevant organisations to monitor and coordinate across

---

in a Covid-19 world," 03 August 2020, <https://www.gcsb.govt.nz/news/cyber-security-in-a-covid-19-world/>.

<sup>24</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, "National Security System Handbook," 24.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 14, 27.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

those organisations at the strategic level.<sup>28</sup> Working groups and specialist groups are similarly created to give “a consolidated view, or specific advice, to a Watch Group or ODESC.”<sup>29</sup> The actual operational response to a national security crisis event is then carried out by lead and support agencies.<sup>30</sup>

The Handbook is not prescriptive about the membership of NZNSS, but it does list lead agencies for certain types of national security hazards. It is interesting to note that in the Handbook’s table of lead agencies only three of 17 named hazards are led by what might be defined as ‘traditional’ national security agencies, and none of them are led by the NZDF (terrorism is listed as a threat with the response led by the New Zealand Police, but not large-scale conflict).<sup>31</sup> Different crises will determine which agencies lead and which agencies support, and in this way the amorphous nature of NZNSS is operationalised.

An examination of the New Zealand Government’s response to the 2019 Whakaari White Island eruption may serve as an example of how the NZNSS network was operationalised. The 2016 DPMC Handbook states that in the event of a geological (including volcanic) hazard, the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management is the lead agency at the national level and the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group at the local / regional level.<sup>32</sup> The latter is managed by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), which in the 2019 event coordinated the all-of-

---

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 28-29.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 38-40.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 22-23.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 22.



government response at the operational level.<sup>33</sup> Support agencies included the New Zealand Police, GNS Science, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), the New Zealand Red Cross and multiple regional and local councils and health boards, as well as the NZDF (including Navy and Air Force assets) and the NZSOF which carried out high-risk body recovery operations from the volcanic aftermath.<sup>34</sup>

The resolution of the Whakaari White Island eruption event would have required the NZNSS network to work through strategic direction from the New Zealand Government, advised by agency Chief Executives in ODESC, who themselves would have been informed by the watch / working / specialist group level, and together provided operational direction to the lead and support agencies conducting immediate response and post-event activities. The 2019 Whakaari White Island eruption example is not a traditional national security event, such as a conflict or law enforcement or intelligence event. Rather, it clearly exemplifies how a broader community of agencies come together and work as part of a cohesive network towards a national security goal, of which the NZSOF were active and integral contributors. The membership of the

---

<sup>33</sup> "Volcanic eruption at Whakaari / White Island," *Scoop*, 15 December 2019, <https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/AK1912/S00450/volcanic-eruption-at-whakaari-white-island.htm>; Hoverd, "The changing New Zealand national security environment," 26.

<sup>34</sup> "Volcanic eruption at Whakaari / White Island," *Scoop*; New Zealand Defence Force, "New Zealand Defence Force Response to Whakaari / White Island Eruption Dec. 2019," accessed 15 February 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/publication/New-Zealand-Defence-Force-Response-to-Whakaari-White-Island-Eruption-Dec-2019.pdf>, 17; Mark Longley, "White Island eruption: E Squadron, the elite SAS unit who helped bring the bodies back," *Newshub*, 13 December 2019, <https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2019/12/white-island-eruption-e-squadron-the-elite-sas-unit-who-helped-bring-the-bodies-back-from-white-island.html>; "Whakaari / White Island event response," Whakatane District Council, <https://www.whakatane.govt.nz/whakaari-white-island-event-response>, accessed 08 February 2021; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "Annual Report 2019-20" (Wellington: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2020), 53.

network changes depending on the *ad hoc*, situational context, and only operates when required, but does operate within a structural framework facilitated through DPMC.

## **Section II**

### **5.2 Relational characteristics: The NZSOF in NZNSS**

Identifying the NZSOF's characteristics in their relationships in the amorphous NZNSS network might be expected to be more difficult than in the NZDF network because the NZSOF are not always in continual relationships with other national security nodes. In fact, what becomes evident is that the characteristics are in most respects quite similar to those in the NZDF network mentioned in the previous chapter. In this section, the chapter develops and analyses four key relational characteristics of the NZSOF that are emphasised both by the NZSOF and by other nodes in the NZNSS network. The characteristics examined here will be compared with the NZSOF's relational characteristics identified in the other two key security networks examined in Chapters 4 and 6 and utilised later in the thesis in Chapters 7 and 8. The four characteristics that are identified and analysed in this section are: 'Integration', 'Collaboration', 'Siloisation' and 'Political sponsorship'.

#### **5.2.1 Integration**

Integration is the first relational characteristic identified when analysing the NZSOF's relationships in the NZNSS network. In this thesis integration is defined as acting in a united way with other network nodes. This characteristic has already been discussed in Chapter 4, but unlike in the hierarchical NZDF network where the NZSOF integrate with

other nodes on a consistent basis within a single organisation, in the NZNSS network the NZSOF integrate with non-military nodes in an *ad hoc*, situational manner.

Nevertheless, research conducted for this thesis indicates that integration remains an important characteristic for how the NZSOF act in their NZNSS relationships.

Shared experience between the NZSOF and other NZNSS nodes is a critical form of integration. In general, as part of the network all nodes share the experience of adhering to the national security purpose and all-of-government approach to national security deliberations and actions.<sup>35</sup> Specific instances of shared experience between NZNSS nodes can be individual experiences that are familiar to more than one node (for example, the NZSOF and New Zealand Police being shot at in different contexts, but the visceral experience of being in physical danger is the same), or collective experience (for example, when the NZSOF and members of the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) and the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) deployed to Afghanistan and worked together).<sup>36</sup> The NZSOF and other NZNSS nodes share the experience of building professional relationships with international partners, or share personnel in exchanges, secondments or liaison arrangements (for example, when a member of the NZSOF was seconded to DPMC in a senior staff role).<sup>37</sup>

Section I discussed the operationalisation of the NZNSS, and in the stand-up of ODESC and various working groups integration becomes a reality. In these examples, shared

---

<sup>35</sup> Interview participant 6, 28 September 2016; Interview participant 28, 08 December 2017.

<sup>36</sup> Interview participant 5, 27 September 2016; Interview participant 6, 28 September 2016; Interview participant 31, 15 February 2018; "Opening statement to the Intelligence and Security Committee," Government Communications Security Bureau | Te Tira Tiaki, 20 February 2019, <https://www.gcsb.govt.nz/news/opening-statement-to-the-intelligence-and-security-committee/>.

<sup>37</sup> Interview participant 6, 28 September 2016; Interview participant 5, 27 September 2016; Interview participant 31, 15 February 2018; Interview participant 28, 08 December 2017.

experience can be an individual experience common between the NZSOF and other nodes, or an experience shared together in a united way.

Integration is enabled by knowledge that a node has about the other nodes in the NZNSS network. For the NZSOF to integrate successfully in *ad hoc* situations in the network, other nodes benefit from an appreciable professional knowledge of the NZSOF's capabilities and potential utility to the network. Where the NZSOF are proactive in developing that knowledge in their partners, there is a tendency to welcome and appreciate the relational effort taken. The two quotes below demonstrate how a degree of knowledge about a node's potential utility leads to a collective ability to act:

...getting a sense of, to the degree like I said that we need to, what SOF can offer us such that if we are looking for avenues of cooperation and we can go oh actually we've got some capability in this area, maybe that's something. So that's both what the capability is, and the willingness to be able to put that up.<sup>38</sup>

...you often find that Defence is often one of the more proactive agencies that will always put up its hand, and will always offer, it won't wait to be asked or offer assistance in a very constructive way, that's mostly my experience. And it is the biggest supporting agency in any major crisis, it always provides the backbone to a lot of the responses.<sup>39</sup>

Integration is made possible by nodes in the NZNSS network gaining an appreciable knowledge about each other, their capabilities, and their potential utility to the national

---

<sup>38</sup> Interview participant 16, 22 November 2016.

<sup>39</sup> Interview participant 31, 15 February 2018. Other expressions of appreciation for proactive reaching out come from Interview participant 20, 05 December 2016; Interview participant 28, 08 December 2017.

security goal. Interview participants for this research suggested that knowledge about the NZSOF and their potential contribution to the network among other NZNSS nodes varies from “pretty basic” to reasonably comprehensive, the latter being more common in instances where specific nodes work more frequently with the NZSOF.<sup>40</sup> Knowledge about the NZSOF can also come from the development of personal relationships, built over a drink or a casual chat and getting a general sense of who the NZSOF’s members are as people.<sup>41</sup>

Integration is a unifying relational characteristic for the NZSOF in the NZNSS network.<sup>42</sup> Compared to larger states with massive national security infrastructure, thanks to its size New Zealand is inherently well set up for integration; because of the small population there are fewer bureaucratic layers to navigate. Integration is enabled by shared experience, knowledge, and even the close physical geographical location of many of the nodes contributing to national security.<sup>43</sup>

Existing national policies, geographical proximity and relationship norms provide a foundation for effective integration in relationships, but they can evolve as the national security situation evolves.<sup>44</sup> However, the “all-hazards-all-risks” approach described

---

<sup>40</sup> Interview participant 5, 27 September 2016; Interview participant 30, 14 February 2018.

<sup>41</sup> Interview participant 10, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 14 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 23, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 27 June 2017, transcript; Interview participant 26, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 17 October 2017, transcript; Interview participant 30, 14 February 2018; Interview participant 5, 27 September 2016. See also comments on New Zealand soldiers in Afghanistan recognising “that professionalism was constructed around engagement and trust.” Samantha Morris, “Reconsidering military identities: Professional Anzacs doing development?” in *Army Fundamentals: From Making Soldiers to the Limits of the Military Instrument*, ed. B.K. Greener (Auckland: Massey University Press, 2017), 86.

<sup>42</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Defence, “Defence White Paper 2016,” 65.

<sup>43</sup> Interview participant 29, 09 January 2018.

<sup>44</sup> Interview participant 6, 28 September 2016.

earlier in this chapter can give rise to ambiguity over which NZNSS agency should take lead responsibility for any particular national security issue.<sup>45</sup> This lack of specificity, especially for those agencies so familiar with hierarchical operating systems, is a system-wide issue, and complicates the NZSOF's ability to position themselves in relation to other NZNSS nodes. Integration is a unifying characteristic for the NZSOF in the NZNSS network, but to achieve integration requires intentional engagement and that proposition is complicated by the somewhat, at times, *ad hoc* nature of NZNSS nodes and connections. Despite this research identifying integration as an important relational characteristic, it is not a default characteristic in a network defined by its *ad hoc*, situational composition and employment. In such a network, integration requires the NZSOF's intentional engagement with other nodes.

### **5.2.2 Collaboration**

The NZDF [and, presumably, NZSOF as part of that network] does very few activities in isolation and the ability to interact and interoperate with external organisations both domestically and internationally is absolutely essential to our ability to do business effectively, either as the supported agency, or more often than not, the supporting agency.<sup>46</sup>

Collaboration is the second relational characteristic used to analyse the NZSOF's relationships in the NZNSS network. In this thesis collaboration is defined as working together towards a common goal. It is of a pair with the integration characteristic described above. Rather than sharing experience in a unified manner as integration

---

<sup>45</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, "National Security System Handbook," 12.

<sup>46</sup> Interview participant 12, 21 October 2016.

requires, collaboration involves two or more nodes in the NZNSS network bringing their own distinct utility to work in tandem towards the common goal of national security. Collaboration lays at the heart of the all-of-government concept discussed in Section I.

The collaborative, all-of-government effort towards national security discussed in Section I is a task the special operations forces community in New Zealand and elsewhere appears ready and willing to participate in. One interview participant for this research described the NZNSS network as small and therefore believed the NZSOF can meaningfully support the efforts of the network, either in a lead or a supporting role:

New Zealand is too small to have capability across [all] agencies and in fact a lot of the agencies don't have capabilities or capacity that has become critical for other Western nations and Five Eyes nations for government to provide security. So the role of SOF I see is very much in line with contemporary thinking [from] leaders such as McRaven, Petraeus, McChrystal, we're there to support the customer and we are to provide another option for government...that can work alongside in support of, or leading, other government agencies.<sup>47</sup>

Emily Spencer, however, sounds a note of caution about how special operations forces perceive their utility in an all-of-government context, and the way other nodes might perceive that utility. Spencer's comment is given in relation to a conflict environment, but the sentiment is nevertheless also relevant in a more generic national security environment:

---

<sup>47</sup> Interview participant 17, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 30 November 2016, transcript.

Within a[n all-of-government] approach to conflict [or national security], their [SOF's] confidence, combined with their 'avenging angel' spirit, tends to cause them to see themselves as leaders in this environment. This viewpoint is not necessarily shared by all the other actors on stage and can at times contribute to a delta between how SOF see themselves and how others see them.<sup>48</sup>

In a network organised on an *ad hoc*, situational basis, the NZSOF's presence in and utility to the NZNSS network depends on context. The first quote above suggests a more collaborative approach for the NZSOF, which emphasises support, one option among several, and working alongside others in either a support or a leading role. The second quote suggests special operations forces in general naturally incline toward a more assertive, even aggressive claim to leadership in networks like the NZNSS network. Relationships between the NZSOF and other nodes in the NZNSS network are likely to change depending on the national security context in which they find themselves at any given time, and how the NZSOF demonstrate both their utility and their collaborative attitude in working together towards the common national security goal.

Recent examples where the NZSOF have worked within the NZNSS network suggest that the NZSOF generally support rather than lead in national security crises. During the Whakaari / White Island eruption discussed in Section I, the NZSOF conducted a specific task – body recovery in a high-risk scenario. This was a task that required a unique skill set, but one that was just a part of a much larger response led by another

---

<sup>48</sup> Emily Spencer, "The special operations forces mosaic: A portrait for discussion," in *Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, ed. Jessica Glicken Turnley, Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben-Ari (London: Routledge, 2018), 31.



network node (NEMA). A second example, the NZNSS response to the terrorist attacks in Christchurch of 15 March 2019, had the NZSOF also work in a support role. NZSAS snipers were reportedly present in Christchurch at the time and deployed in support of other nodes such as the New Zealand Police's Special Tactics Group (STG).<sup>49</sup> 1 NZSAS Regt's E Squadron (EOD) assisted the New Zealand Police not just in Christchurch at the time (to defuse explosive devices left by the terrorist), but also in Auckland, Wellington and Dunedin.<sup>50</sup> An interview participant for this research talked about matching the NZSOF's capabilities with those of other NZNSS nodes, for example, "...New Zealand Police for the domestic counter-terrorism response – we each have a responsibility to do it, but do we make them do that better? How do we enable that skill?"<sup>51</sup> This observation indicates the accepted responsibility of the NZSOF working together with the New Zealand Police towards a common national security goal (in this case, domestic counter-terrorism), and enabling the Police in that task. As with the examples above, the NZSOF are cast in the supporting rather than the leading role. Collaboration in the NZNSS network appears to be both utilitarian in nature (the NZSOF must offer a unique skill set) and collaborative (the NZSOF must offer a complementary skill set that supports those of other NZNSS nodes). Ultimately, collaboration by the NZSOF with NZNSS partners strengthens their relationships across and utility to the network.

---

<sup>49</sup> Kurt Bayer, "NZSAS soldiers in Christchurch for snipers event responded to mosque terror attack," *New Zealand Herald*, 18 March 2019, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/nzsas-soldiers-in-christchurch-for-snipers-event-responded-to-mosque-terror-attack/JX4HFFUQRQCXRMT03H3XRD3CLY/>.

<sup>50</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "Annual Report 2019 for the year ended 30 June 2019" (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2019), 26; "Christchurch mosques terror attack: 49 dead," *Otago Daily Times*, 15 March 2019, <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/christchurch-mosques-terror-attack-49-dead>.

<sup>51</sup> Interview participant 18, 01 December 2016.

The NZSOF's collaboration with other nodes in the NZNSS network, similarly to integration as discussed above, is enabled by knowledge within the network of the utility the NZSOF offer. At times, it is also complicated by a lack of knowledge or misunderstanding among other nodes about the utility the NZSOF offer to national security.<sup>52</sup> Through strong relationships in the NZNSS network, the NZSOF can change a narrative that appears to frustrate members of the NZSOF and develop new knowledge about what the NZSOF offer those relationships in the twenty-first century. The military (and in particular the NZSOF) suffers from the perception of being "knuckle-dragging gorillas", solely interested in kinetic action.<sup>53</sup> Instead, the NZSOF can collaborate in national security scenarios that do not involve "shooting bullets".<sup>54</sup> Changing this narrative is also a matter for special operations forces internationally; for example, Stanley McChrystal celebrated the transition of his special operations forces in Iraq from a focus on "shooters" to a "formidable...network" of information-gathering and partnership.<sup>55</sup> Relationships are a means to change narratives or address a lack of knowledge, and the NZSOF are making an effort to build their NZNSS relationships through contributing in situations like the two events described above, or integrating individuals from the NZSOF with other NZNSS nodes to assist collaboration in national

---

<sup>52</sup> Interview participant 1, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 11 August 2016, transcript; Interview participant 8, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 17, 30 November 2016; Interview participant 19, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 02 December 2016, transcript; Interview participant 22, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 08 June 2017, transcript; Interview participant 27, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 26 October 2017, transcript.

<sup>53</sup> Interview participant 9, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 17, 30 November 2016; Interview participant 19, 02 December 2016.

<sup>54</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016.

<sup>55</sup> Stanley McChrystal, *My Share of the Task: A Memoir* (New York: Portfolio | Penguin, 2013), 93.

security situations.<sup>56</sup> Integrating policy analysts, military advisors or secondees with partners to assist collaboration in national security situations also achieves collaboration.<sup>57</sup> In these examples, integration and collaboration work together to enhance the NZSOF's relationships in the NZNSS network, offer utility, and reduce points of friction that may have in the past limited the NZSOF's ability to work as effectively within the network. Like integration, however, collaboration is complicated by the amorphous nature of the NZNSS network and requires continual negotiation, alignment and re-alignment between the NZSOF and other nodes.

### 5.2.3 Siloisation

Siloisation is the third key relational characteristic identified in the NZSOF's relationships within the NZNSS network. In this chapter siloisation is defined as one or more nodes isolating themselves from, and working independently from, other nodes in the network. Gillian Tett describes silos as "fundamentally a cultural phenomenon. They arise because social groups and organizations have particular conventions about how to classify the world."<sup>58</sup> In the NZNSS network, the NZSOF and all other nodes have niche areas of utility that are of use to the network depending on the *ad hoc* national security context of the moment. These niche utility areas are automatic points

---

<sup>56</sup> Interview participant 11, 17 October 2016; Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016; Interview participant 17, 30 November 2016; Interview participant 18, 01 December 2016; Interview participant 33, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 08 May 2018, transcript; Interview participant 19, 02 December 2016; Interview participant 22, 08 June 2017.

<sup>57</sup> Interview participant 11, 17 October 2016; Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016; Interview participant 17, 30 November 2016; Interview participant 18, 01 December 2016; Interview participant 33, 08 May 2018; Interview participant 19, 02 December 2016; Interview participant 22, 08 June 2017.

<sup>58</sup> Gillian Tett, *The Silo Effect: Why Putting Everything in its Place Isn't Such a Bright Idea* (London: Little, Brown, 2015), 19.

of difference between NZNSS nodes, and they are developed in unique cultures. While having a unique utility to the network is the reason why a collective node like the NZSOF might be included in the network, that same unique utility can also create silos of culture and practice that complicate relationships in the NZNSS network.

Cultural and practical silos complicate attempts by the NZSOF and other nodes to integrate and collaborate in the NZNSS network. For example, one interview participant suggested there is a distinction between practitioners who are realists and interested in discrete outcomes (for example, the military, including the NZSOF), and bureaucrats who are idealists and interested in process (for example, some policy-heavy civilian agencies).<sup>59</sup> That point of view is supported by theorists writing about special operations forces such as Colin Gray, who remarked that practitioners “whose professional lives are governed in demanding practice by violent possibilities” can be dismissive of theorists<sup>60</sup> (or perhaps policy analysts), and James Roberts who identifies a distinction between professional expectations in agencies with different philosophical approaches to work:

[Military]...meritocracy – work hard, be skilled, keep your eyes open and your mouth shut, be the best, play fair, and the “system” will reward you with prestige, promotions, and increased responsibilities...<sup>61</sup>

versus a

---

<sup>59</sup> Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016.

<sup>60</sup> Colin S. Gray, “Tactical operations for strategic effect: The challenge of currency conversion” (JSOU special report, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2015), 27.

<sup>61</sup> James Q. Roberts, “Need authorities for the gray zone? Stop whining. Instead, help yourself to some Title 100. Hell, take some Title 200 while you’re at it,” *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016): 26-27.

[Civilian]...“politocracy” – where your merit remains important, but will be neither adequate nor determinant. Your political skills – including the ability to listen (not to respond quickly, but to actually understand), to know and cope with the cultures of the other agencies, and to mask your anger and frustration in pursuit of consensus – will be key to your success.<sup>62</sup>

Siloisation based on differences in culture and practice as described above can challenge integration and collaboration in the NZNSS network, or siloisation can be mitigated by an increase in those two characteristics.<sup>63</sup> Niche areas of utility, culture and practice do not have to be unnecessarily exclusionary.

Siloisation can be intentional or unintentional. If the NZSOF exhibit mystique, elitism, arrogance or even deception in their relationships, for example, this is an intentional act of siloisation that creates an isolation from other nodes in the network. Siloisation may also be unintentional. If the NZSOF are perceived by others in the NZNSS network to exhibit mystique, elitism, arrogance, or deception when in fact this was not the intent, siloisation can be externally imposed on the NZSOF.<sup>64</sup> A clear warning to the NZSOF

---

<sup>62</sup> Roberts, “Need authorities for the gray zone?” 26-27.

<sup>63</sup> Interview participant 16, 22 November 2016; Christopher Varhola, “Regional understanding and unity of effort: Applying the global SOF network in future operating environments,” *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016): 50; Varhola offers a counterpoint, suggesting that arguments based on cultural difference are “tired clichés” and that “interagency relations are obscured by a more complex reality in which geopolitical context, personality, and variable levels of experience and competence carry a heavy influence.”

<sup>64</sup> Interview participant 7, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 14, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 04 November 2016, transcript; Interview participant 25, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 13 October 2017, transcript. See also C. August Elliott, “The abuse scandal rocking Australia’s special operations forces,” *Foreign Policy*, 14 August 2018, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/14/the-abuse-scandal-rocking-australias-special-operations-forces/>; David Horner with Neil Thomas, *In Action with the SAS* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2009), 146; Interview participant 29, 09 January 2018. See also Alice Hunt Friend and Kaitlyn Johnson, “The sixth service: What the reorganization of special operations forces can teach us about Space Force,” *War on the Rocks*, 17 September 2018,

about siloisation was sounded by one interview participant. His concern was that if the NZSOF's siloisation was allowed to grow beyond what might reasonably be expected as a result of niche areas of utility, the NZSOF might risk their very existence as force elements.<sup>65</sup>

Not all interview participants were so blunt or suggested that the NZSOF were risking their position in the NZNSS; one interview participant noted that because he 'got on' with the NZSOF, he was less concerned about the fact that "everybody's working an angle" in that particular relationship, although "[h]e wouldn't say the same about others."<sup>66</sup> Having unique utility that can support the NZNSS network is not problematic; in fact uniqueness is a necessary part of being relevant to the network. Nevertheless, devolution from uniqueness into a hardened silo will quickly bring relational risk.

The NZSOF's siloisation from its NZNSS partners can come from the desire to retain their uniqueness or exclusive subject matter expertise. This is a form of "professional

---

<http://warontherocks.com/2018/09/the-sixth-service-what-the-reorganization-of-special-operations-forces-can-teach-us-about-space-force/>; David Horner, *SAS Phantoms of War: A History of the Australian Special Air Service* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2002), 19. See also Tone Danielsen, "Making warriors in the global era: An anthropological study of institutional apprenticeship: Selection, training, education, and everyday life in the Norwegian Naval Special Operations Commando" (PhD diss., University of Oslo, 2015), 112-113; Interview participant 2, 25 August 2016.

<sup>65</sup> Interview participant 29, 09 January 2018.

<sup>66</sup> Interview participant 5, 27 September 2016; Barry Buzan, *People, States & Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 25th anniversary ed. (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2016), 272: Buzan observed that within a state there are "a variety of powers and interests" at play, and that "[d]isputes and contradictions" are a norm of that environment. James Rolfe, in his assessment of New Zealand's defence structures in 1993, wrote the following statement which still holds true in the contemporary network: "This environment includes...the participants and their attitudes, their formal and informal networks...different participants within the groups have more or less influence depending upon their personal position, and such influence is discussed as a significant component of the policy process." See James Rolfe, *Defending New Zealand: A Study of Structures, Processes and Relationships* (Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, 1993), 20.

pride” that can become an excluding factor in relationships if taken to extremes, but relationships can also be the antidote to exclusionary ways of thinking.<sup>67</sup> Mitigation of the NZSOF’s siloisation can be achieved through discussion and deconfliction between NZNSS partners; for example, one interview participant suggested a fusion centre between Defence and Police nodes could be a means to deconflict and improve interoperability between those two nodes.<sup>68</sup> NZNSS nodes may also play a role in helping break down silos, for example MFAT “facilitating and enabling, getting rid of some of those blocks [to integration and collaboration]”, or DPMC giving objective advice to decision-makers by contextualising the opinions of more parochial NZNSS nodes and challenging conventional thinking that might creep into their advice.<sup>69</sup> These examples suggest that the NZNSS network would find the means to reduce the NZSOF’s siloisation where that siloisation impacts negatively on the network achieving the common national security goal.

#### **5.2.4 Political sponsorship**

...the early intervention into Afghanistan in particular, but also in crises in the Solomon Islands and in East Timor, in Bougainville where SOF were agile, were responsive, were relatively low cost in overheads and time to provide...a political outcome for New Zealand...Our SOF professionalism in these interventions have been currency that have been used by political leaders.<sup>70</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> Interview participant 5, 27 September 2016.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Interview participant 16, 22 November 2016; Interview participant 28, 08 December 2017.

<sup>70</sup> Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016.

Political sponsorship is the fourth relational characteristic considered in analysing the NZSOF's relationships in the NZNSS network. In this thesis political sponsorship is defined as the support (verbal, resources, influence to benefit, or other type) political decision-makers offer to a specific NZNSS network node (in this case, the NZSOF). Political decision-makers are both a part of the NZNSS network, in that they interact with the nodes therein, but are also removed from the network in that they direct and employ the network to achieve national security outcomes. Political sponsorship in relation to the NZSOF's relationships is encapsulated in its claim that special operations forces (the NZSOF and internationally) should be directed (or deployed) by the highest levels of authority or command.<sup>71</sup> This certainly includes the highest military command (in other words, the Chief of Defence Force) but in the NZNSS context this includes political decision-makers (the New Zealand Government).

Political decision-makers may choose to sponsor or influence the NZSOF either within the NZNSS network or individually for a variety of reasons. For example, special operations forces can be a way for political decision-makers to signal national security intent:

Elite units offer two basic advantages to the would-be signaller. First, they may be inherently valuable as a signal of serious commitment because of their reputation...Secondly, elite units tend to offer governments better chances for success than regular units in performing a sensitive signalling operation.<sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016; Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016; Interview participant 27, 26 October 2017; Interview participant 33, 08 May 2018.

<sup>72</sup> Eliot A. Cohen, *Commandos and Politicians: Elite Military Units in Modern Democracies* (Cambridge: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1978), 49-50.



Rhys Ball has commented on the fact that “Special Forces are seen as inherently valuable as a signal of serious commitment because of their reputation” and interview participants for this research concur that signalling is a key reason for political sponsorship of the NZSOF and their activities.<sup>73</sup> Deploying the NZSOF to Afghanistan soon after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 in the United States of America is an example of how the New Zealand Government used those force elements to demonstrate its commitment to and solidarity with the international community (and its long-standing Five Eyes partner in the United States) in the face of an event of high-profile aggression.

International literature offers many examples of the strategic or personal sponsorship political decision-makers have chosen to exercise with special operations forces, even in the face of opposition from detractors. The growth and development of special operations forces through history is due in no small part to this involvement at the political level.<sup>74</sup> Literature focused on the NZSOF also indicates strategic or personal

---

<sup>73</sup> Rhys Ball, “The strategic utility of New Zealand special forces,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22, no. 1 (2011): 124; Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016.

<sup>74</sup> Examples include: Mackubin Thomas Owens recounts the example of the establishment of USSOCOM over the objections of detractors in the United States of America. See Mackubin Thomas Owens, “Is civilian control of the military still an issue?” in *Warriors & Citizens: American Views of Our Military*, ed. Kori Schake and Jim Mattis (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2016), 77-78. See also the example of President John F. Kennedy and his sponsorship of the U.S. Army Special Forces. Max Boot, *Invisible Armies: An Epic History of Guerrilla Warfare from Ancient Times to the Present* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2013), 414-415; Hy S. Rothstein, *Afghanistan & the Troubled Future of Unconventional Warfare* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2006), 37-38. Eitan Shamir and Eyal Ben-Ari offer examples of political sponsorship between Kennedy and the U.S. Army Special Forces, “the US Army Rangers and General George C. Marshall, the Office of Strategic Services and President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the SAS and Churchill” that enabled those organisations “to establish themselves and survive.” Eitan Shamir and Eyal Ben-Ari, “The rise of special operations forces: Generalized specialization, boundary spanning and military autonomy,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* (2016): 17. Ken Connor commented on the connection between Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and a senior special operations forces commander, Peter de la Billiere. Ken Connor, *Ghost Force: The Secret History*

reasons for such sponsorship. For example, Timothy Keating spoke to the newly elected Prime Minister Helen Clark about the strategic value the NZSOF offered the New Zealand Government in terms of low cost, value for effort, and relative political risk and felt that his advocacy meant “as a Unit we felt that we had a definite supporter in the Prime Minister.”<sup>75</sup> The NZSAS was seen as a potential solution to an aircraft hijacking in Fiji during the 1987 coup, although Prime Minister David Lange’s enthusiasm for that course of action caused a significant disagreement with the NZDF senior military leadership.<sup>76</sup> A historical example of personal affiliation was recollected by a member of the NZSOF, John McLeod, who remembered that Prime Minister Robert Muldoon was enthusiastic about the NZSAS: “There you are – you’re my gang.”<sup>77</sup> An interview participant for this research remembered meeting a Government Minister who, when the participant identified himself as a member of the NZSOF, willingly entered into conversation with him at a social event.<sup>78</sup> Whether the reason be for political value,

---

*of the SAS* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998), 225. More recently, examples can be found of Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump, and Prime Minister Theresa May making connections with the USSOF and the UKSOF: Mark Bowden, *The Finish: The Killing of Osama bin Laden* (London: Grove Press UK, 2012), 208; Deborah Haynes, “Trump visit: President all fired up by SAS hostage rescue display,” *The Times*, 14 July 2018,

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/trump-visit-president-all-fired-up-by-sas-hostage-rescue-display-2trzw0lz0>. Tone Danielsen describes the Norwegian monarch’s institutional relationship to the Norwegian Marinejegers (naval special operations forces) and the value the Marinejegers place on that relationship: Danielsen, “Making warriors in the global era,” 80-81.

<sup>75</sup> Ron Crosby, *NZSAS: The First Fifty Years* (North Shore: Viking, 2009), 315-316. Strategic reasons are also mentioned by Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 17, 30 November 2016.

<sup>76</sup> Richard Harman, “Duel of the Davids: The standoff of 19 May,” *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 22 (1998): 17-19. See also Grant J. Crowley, “New Zealand’s response to the aircraft hijack incident during the 1987 coup d’etat in Fiji: A study of civil-military relations in crisis” (Masters thesis, Massey University, 2002), <http://hdl.handle.net/10179/7154>; Gerald Hensley, *Final Approaches: A Memoir* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2006), 296-299.

<sup>77</sup> David Fisher, “Inside the NZSAS: Creating the elite soldier,” *New Zealand Herald*, September 2018, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/indepth/national/inside-the-nzsas/>.

<sup>78</sup> Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016.

strategic benefit or personal interest, political decision-makers have over time offered what amounts to forms of political sponsorship of the NZSOF.

On the one hand, political sponsorship of the NZSOF can bring benefit to the ego node in that it enhances their standing within the NZNSS network, being seen to have a degree of influence with the political decision-makers who direct and deploy the network. Ball and Hoverd remark that “[p]olitics and New Zealand special forces have been indirect and direct bedfellows in one form or another since the creation of this military force over 60 years ago.”<sup>79</sup> William Fowler termed this sponsorship “[f]riends in high places”.<sup>80</sup> Richard Rubright has suggested that too clean a separation between special operations forces and political decision-makers could in fact “lead to a detriment in political thinking, the level of war above the strategic,”<sup>81</sup> in essence impoverishing the ability of political decision-makers to make well-informed decisions about the use of special operations forces.

On the other hand, special operations forces’ which rely too closely on political sponsorship risk their reputation as an apolitical node or being perceived to circumvent traditional military command chains. Investigative journalists Jon Stephenson and Nicky Hager have argued that the NZSOF have crossed the apolitical line into becoming a lobby group.<sup>82</sup> They believe that the NZSOF should avoid getting involved in political

---

<sup>79</sup> Rhys Ball and Wil Hoverd, “Overseeing New Zealand’s modern military operations,” *New Zealand International Review* 42, no. 6 (2017): 18.

<sup>80</sup> William Fowler, *SAS Behind Enemy Lines: Covert Operations 1941 to the Present Day* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997), 19.

<sup>81</sup> Richard W. Rubright, “A unified theory for special operations” (JSOU report 17-1, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2017), 9.

<sup>82</sup> Nicky Hager and Jon Stephenson, *Hit & Run: The New Zealand SAS in Afghanistan and the Meaning of Honour* (Nelson: Potton & Burton, 2017), 113.

decision-making about war, or “promote themselves as the first ‘weapon of choice’”.<sup>83</sup> They also believe that the NZSOF (specifically the NZSAS) became an independent “power bloc within the Defence Force” which if true would circumvent traditional military command.<sup>84</sup> These assertions were tested in the recent inquiry into Operation BURNHAM resulting from Hager and Stephenson’s claims made in their book *Hit & Run*. This inquiry will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7, but the event has given rise to critique that current political oversight arrangements for national security in general (including activities of the NZSOF) is currently misaligned.<sup>85</sup> Just as there may be political, strategic, or personal reasons why the NZSOF may be inclined to welcome political sponsorship, there are also significant risks that cannot be ignored.

It appears that the NZSOF are aware of the fine line they walk between being apolitical and having political sponsorship. There are degrees of opinion in the NZSOF as to where the balance lies. One interview participant, for example, was more willing to entertain the notion of making the most of opportunities for political sponsorship and relationships, such as speaking frankly or building rapport at a social function.<sup>86</sup> Most interview participants for this research were clear in their belief that having a positive, yet also carefully professional relationship with political decision-makers must hold the

---

<sup>83</sup> Hager and Stephenson, *Hit & Run*, 113.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> Ball and Hoverd, “Overseeing New Zealand’s modern military operations,” 19-21.

<sup>86</sup> Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016.

balance between two extremes,<sup>87</sup> and must also respect the military chain of command.<sup>88</sup>

It should be a professional relationship, built upon trust and understanding. If for some reason there is a personal relationship, i.e. out of work, it needs to be handled very very carefully so it doesn't affect operational outcomes. And declared. We are apolitical. We need to provide trusted military advice that is not seen to be influenced by a political relationship.<sup>89</sup>

Perceptions of the benefits and risks of political sponsorship to, or for, the NZSOF also vary somewhat. Interview participants for this research ranged from wary acceptance to concerns that sponsorship could contribute to unhelpful siloisation, or to a belief that there should be no such characteristic of the NZSOF, much less manifested, in the network.<sup>90</sup>

It doesn't hurt for SOF commanders to have a face with politicians. Politicians are always looking for confidence, they're always looking for professionalism and if they can see that in the people they're dealing with, that's going to make the job a whole lot easier

---

<sup>87</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 8, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 9, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 11, 17 October 2016; Interview participant 18, 01 December 2016; Interview participant 19, 02 December 2016; Interview participant 22, 08 June 2017; Interview participant 33, 08 May 2018.

<sup>88</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 8, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 9, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 11, 17 October 2016; Interview participant 18, 01 December 2016; Interview participant 19, 02 December 2016; Interview participant 22, 08 June 2017; Interview participant 33, 08 May 2018; Interview participant 13, 28 October 2016. See also Matthias Fiala, "Déjà vu: The shared history of SOF – Switzerland as a case study," *CTX* 9, no. 2 (Spring 2019): 46.

<sup>89</sup> Interview participant 17, 30 November 2016.

<sup>90</sup> Interview participant 6, 28 September 2016; Interview participant 28, 08 December 2017; Interview participant 16, 22 November 2016; Interview participant 20, 05 December 2016; Interview participant 31, 15 February 2018.

to get going. However, it can't be at the expense of keeping everyone else in the loop...there was always a degree of suspicion that some deals could be done...<sup>91</sup>

I don't think politicians should be in the business of engaging with those guys...[remain] apolitical.<sup>92</sup>

Most interviews for this research took place before the Operation BURNHAM allegations were made public, and it is possible that comments about the relationship between political decision-makers and the NZSOF may be more circumspect in the post-inquiry environment. Nevertheless, historically political sponsorship has been a part of the NZSOF (and international special operations forces) history, and that experience (whether or not it continues in the same or different forms in the future) is a notable characteristic of the NZSOF's relationships in the NZNSS network. Having discussed four characteristics of the NZSOF's relationships in the network, those characteristics can be added to the evolving comparative table developed through Chapters 3 and 4. Table 5-1 continues to build the picture of the NZSOF's characteristics that the thesis uses to conceptualise the NZSOF's relationships in key security networks.

---

<sup>91</sup> Interview participant 6, 28 September 2016; Interview participant 28, 08 December 2017.

<sup>92</sup> Interview participant 16, 22 November 2016; Interview participant 20, 05 December 2016; Interview participant 31, 15 February 2018.

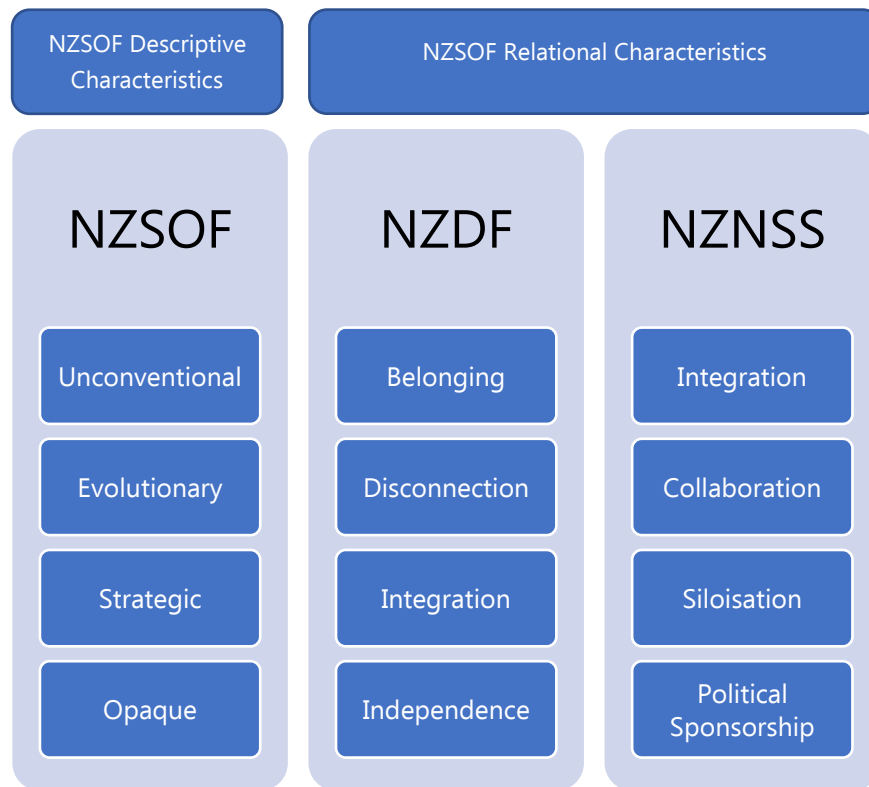


Table 5-1: The NZSOF’s Characteristics (An Evolving Table)

### 5.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, the thesis set out to do two principal tasks. First, Section I analysed the NZNSS network as an amorphous network. It identified two key concepts that shape the network, namely national security as the network’s goal and the all-of-government approach to achieving that goal. NZNSS is an amorphous network. While fixed in a national security system framework, it is a fluid, unstructured network whose nodes shift and change depending on the task required. The chapter then analysed how NZNSS’s goal and approach, and its amorphous state, is operationalised during a national security crisis. Second, Section II developed a conceptual understanding of

four characteristics of the NZSOF's relationships in the NZNSS network – 'Integration', 'Collaboration', 'Siloisation' and 'Political sponsorship'. The purpose of this chapter has been to contextualise the NZSOF's relationships in this specific context by defining and developing the thesis's understanding of the NZNSS network and how the NZSOF's relationships within it can be conceptually understood.

The NZSOF's inclusion in, and relationships within, NZNSS are dependent firstly on their utility to the national security purpose and secondly on their ability to maintain collaborative relationships as one part of an all-of-government approach. The challenge here is that the NZNSS network's changeable nature requires the NZSOF to maintain a complex, sometimes indeterminate, number of relationships to maintain their utility to the network. However, the relative simplicity of the NZSOF's core purpose, approach and characteristic provides a relevant way to determine the ever-evolving structure of this network.

The NZSOF employ the relational characteristics of integration and collaboration in their network relationships which supports their unique niche contribution amongst other network nodes. However, the characteristics of siloisation and political sponsorship contain significant risks to the NZSOF's direct involvement in the network, including reducing or cancelling the effects of its efforts in integration and collaboration.

The four relational characteristics identified are not necessarily irreconcilable, but they do hold the potential to conflict with or cancel each other out. The NZSOF may integrate with other nodes in the NZNSS network through contributing their unique subject matter expertise, but if they seek to withhold their expertise too far in the



pursuit of professional pride and niche protection or engage in unilateral actions with political masters at the expense of other nodes, integration is threatened. Political sponsorship can, in a negative sense, cause other nodes to assume the NZSOF have a direct track of influence to political decision-makers, or they may, more positively, perceive that connection as an opportunity to present a collaborative solution to a national security problem using that explicit point of connection. The NZSOF exist in a state of ongoing negotiation and re-alignment in their relationships in the NZNSS network, managing their relational characteristics within their relational dynamics in the network, and nowhere is this more important, or significant, than with political sponsorship. The following chapter will demonstrate how the NZSOF's relational characteristics change in an environment where commonality is more prominent than difference and how the NZSOF negotiate those characteristics among peer military force elements.

## 6: Five Special Operations Forces, the NZSOF's

### Community Network

#### 6.0 Introduction

It is our most important multilateral relationship.<sup>1</sup>

Five Special Operations Forces (5SOF) is the third of the three key relational networks of the NZSOF examined by this thesis. 5SOF is predominantly a community network for the NZSOF. A community network is defined in the thesis as a network structure that is defined by a sense of commonality, membership, and relative equivalence between nodes.<sup>2</sup> 5SOF is a new term created for this research. Rather than adopt the 'Five Eyes' (FVEY) term that often groups New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America together in national security language, '5SOF' offers a simpler and unique designation for the special operations forces within these states.<sup>3</sup> In Section I, the chapter analyses 5SOF as a unique community defined internally by the relationships and what is shared among the network nodes. These are international peer force elements with whom the NZSOF are committed to maintaining close relationships through continual engagement at multiple levels, against whom they

---

<sup>1</sup> Interview participant 19, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 02 December 2016, transcript.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Alan Page Fiske, *Structures of Social Life: The Four Elementary Forms of Human Relations* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 13-14.

<sup>3</sup> Each 5SOF partner (especially the larger partners) has wide-ranging capabilities and multiple elements within them, each of those elements with their own sub-culture and specialties. The FVEY term remains in use in New Zealand Government documentation; for example, see New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018" (Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2018), 14, 27, 29, 37.

benchmark themselves and with whom they seek to be interoperable.<sup>4</sup> In Section II, the chapter develops a conceptual understanding of three key relational characteristics of the NZSOF's relationships in the 5SOF network. They are 'Formalisation', 'Size' and 'Pragmatism'. The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise the NZSOF's relationships with the NZDF ego node by understanding the 5SOF network and how the NZSOF's relationships within it can be conceptually understood.

## **Section I**

### **6.1 Analysing the 5SOF network as a community**

...it's not difficult for an American, a Kiwi, an Australian, a Brit and a Canadian to interact and in fact you know you could use the scenario that you could take a five-man patrol, one man from each one of those countries, and within just a few hours they would be aligned culturally, in terms of their tactics, techniques and procedures, in terms of their equipment, very easily because of that natural alignment.<sup>5</sup>

5SOF is a community-based network, driven by a sense of historic and cultural commonality among its members. The nodes that make up 5SOF are the NZSOF, the Australian Special Operations Forces (AUSOF), the Canadian Special Operations Forces (CASOF), the United Kingdom Special Operations Forces (UKSOF) and the United States Special Operations Forces (USSOF). Membership in 5SOF is determined by the long-standing historical links among these nodes, links that are unique even among the

---

<sup>4</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations," 3rd ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2018), 27.

<sup>5</sup> Interview participant 1, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 11 August 2016, transcript.

international special operations forces community. 5SOF is also a reflection of the long-standing FVEY group of New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America that exists at the state national security level.

### 6.1.1 Structure

As with the NZDF network, the 5SOF network at first glance has a relatively straightforward structure. It is comprised of five nodes – NZSOF, AUSOF, CASOF, UKSOF and USSOF. Unlike the NZDF network 5SOF has no formal overarching documentation (legislation or state-level agreements) that creates this network; it remains an informal network. Diagrammatically, the 5SOF structure is depicted at Figure 6-1.



Figure 6-1: 5SOF Community Structure

Figure 6-1 is not a line diagram; it is a circle that encloses the 5SOF nodes together and represents an informal, yet more inclusive network than can be seen in a hierarchy like

NZDF. It is a simple representation of the network that demonstrates the relative equality of the nodes as partners within the network.

In New Zealand, Special Operations Forces have a particularly SAS focus but that's only because we have one SAS organisation. If we had a Special Boat Service or some other group then our perception of what the Special Forces look like would be completely different.<sup>6</sup>

The network depicting at Figure 6-1 does not capture the complexity of each individual 5SOF node, and it is important to note that the nodes differ widely in size and capability. In Chapter 3, this thesis used a *taiaha* metaphor to show how the NZSOF were constructed of several force elements. Although they are comprised of multiple force elements, the NZSOF remain the smallest of the 5SOF nodes; the other four nodes are by degrees more complex in their structure. The AUSOF, for example, have three operational units (Special Air Service Regiment (SASR), 1st Commando Regiment (1 Cdo Regt) and 2nd Commando Regiment (2 Cdo Regt)) compared to the NZSOF's one (1 NZSAS Regt), and a number of other supporting specialist units and schools, as well as two headquarters elements (to the NZSOF's one).<sup>7</sup> The USSOF offer another example of even greater complexity. The United States Special Operations Command

---

<sup>6</sup> Interview participant 14, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 04 November 2016, transcript.

<sup>7</sup> The Australian Army, "Special Operations Command Information Booklet," accessed 26 January 2021, <https://www.army.gov.au/our-work/special-forces/special-operations-command-booklet>. Following the release of the Brereton Report into allegations of AUSOF's war crimes in Afghanistan, SASR's 2 Squadron was "removed...from the Army's Order of Battle" which reduced the size of the AUSOF somewhat, but not substantially; see "Chief of Army disbands 2 Squadron SASR," *Australian Defence Magazine*, 20 November 2020, <https://www.australiandefence.com.au/defence/land/chief-of-army-disbands-2-squadron-sasr>.

(USSOCOM) alone as a whole numbered nearly 70,000 personnel as of 2019,<sup>8</sup> far more than the entirety of the New Zealand Defence Force, numbering 14,886 persons as of 2019.<sup>9</sup> It has special operations forces commands for the Army (United States Army Special Operations Command or USASOC), Navy (Naval Special Warfare Command or NAVSPECWARCOM), the Air Force (Air Force Special Operations Command or AFSOC), the Marine Corps (Marine Forces Special Operations Command or MARSOC) as well as geographical or “theater” (Africa, Central, Europe, Korea, North, Pacific, South) commands and a Joint Forces command (Joint Special Operations Command or JSOC) in addition to the overarching USSOCOM, under each of which exist multiple units.<sup>10</sup> The increasing complexity in the network by adding these layers of structure is depicted in Figure 6-2.

---

<sup>8</sup> “Headquarters USSOCOM,” United States Special Operations Command, accessed 21 October 2019, <https://www.socom.mil/about>.

<sup>9</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, “Annual Report 2019 for the year ended 30 June 2019” (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2019), 29.

<sup>10</sup> United States Special Operations Command, “Fact Book 2021,” [https://www.socom.mil/FactBook/2021%20Fact%20Book\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.socom.mil/FactBook/2021%20Fact%20Book_FINAL.pdf), 12, 18-45.

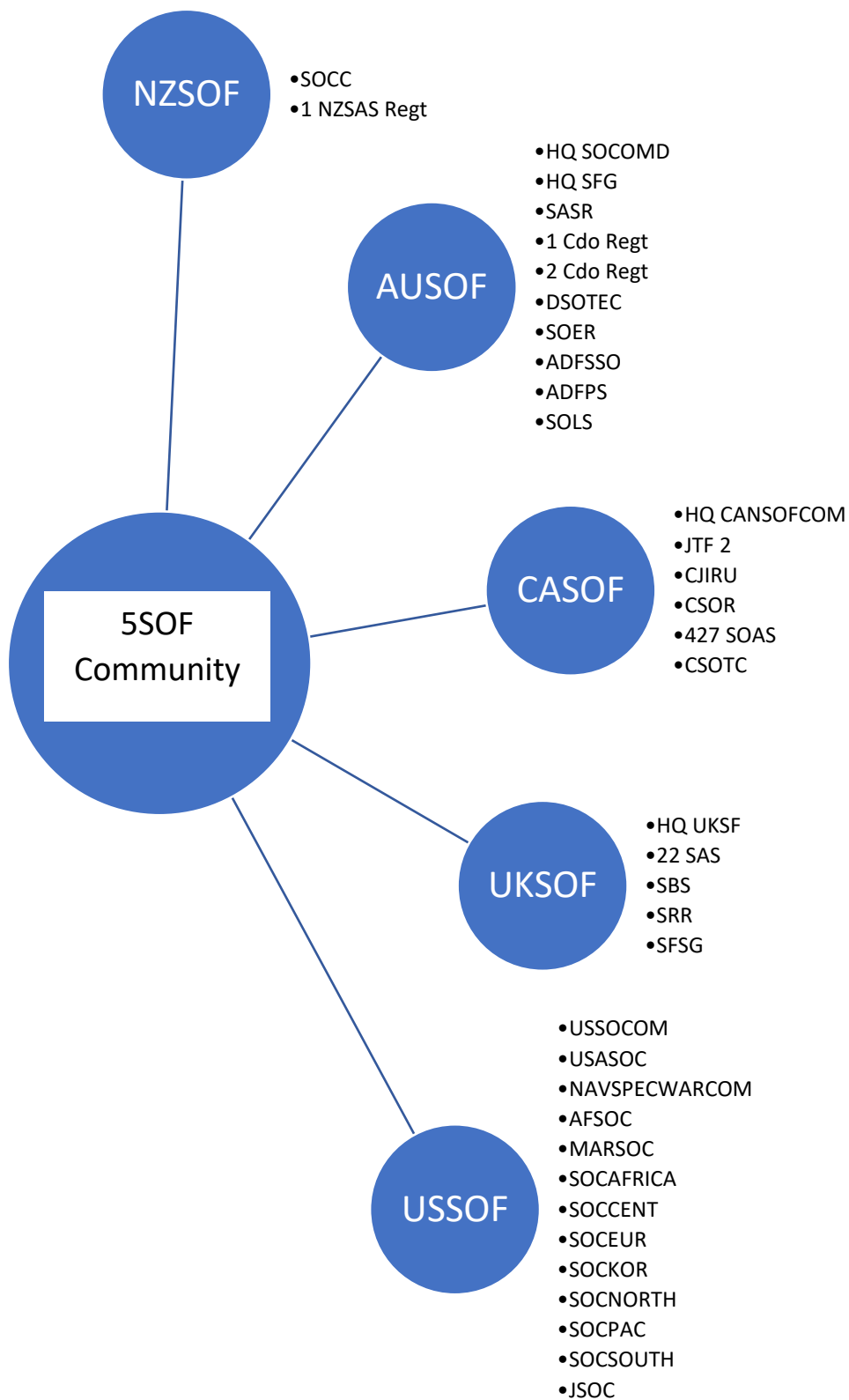


Figure 6-2: Added Complexity in the 5SOF Network<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The Australian Army, "Special Operations Command Information Booklet," accessed 26 January 2021, <https://www.army.gov.au/our-work/special-forces/special-operations-command->

For scope, the focus of research remains only on the generalised relational characteristics exhibited by the NZSOF at the strategic level, and therefore the other 5SOF nodes will be described only at that general strategic level. However, the thesis acknowledges the many layers of complexity within those 5SOF designations that create infinite nuances to the NZSOF's relationships and relational characteristics within the 5SOF network.

### **6.1.2 Community**

5SOF is a globally unique community network; what externally defines this network is determined internally by the relationships among its nodes. This section will focus on membership of the 5SOF network. In the absence of formal agreements establishing the 5SOF network, its composition is created through the long-standing historical and developmental links these nodes have with each other. As was discussed in Chapter 3, the original force element of the NZSOF (1 NZSAS Regt) grew out of the World War II experience of unconventional British and other allied forces (which included New Zealand personnel). During this war, the creation of the United Kingdom's Special Air Service (UKSAS) and other force elements such as the Long-Range Desert Group (LRDG) gave individual New Zealanders opportunities to experience how an unconventional military force element functioned.

---

[booklet](#); "Special Operations Forces organizational structure," Canadian Special Operations Forces Command, Government of Canada, 14 November 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/special-operations-forces-command/corporate/organizational-structure.html>; Simon Anglim, "British special forces in the 2020s: Still a national asset," *Military Strategy Magazine* 7, iss. 1 (2020): 43-45; United States Special Operations Command, "Fact Book 2021," 12, 18-45.



In the early post-war era, NZSAS's primary relational partner in what has become the 5SOF network was UKSAS. The UKSAS was the brain-child of David Stirling, created in 1941, comprised of individuals Ben Macintyre has described as "unusual to the point of eccentricity, people who did not slot easily into the ranks of the regular army, misfits and reprobates with an instinct for covert war and little time for convention, part soldiers and part spies, rogue warriors."<sup>12</sup> Macintyre has listed the many units that in different ways have emerged from the early UKSAS model.<sup>13</sup> In 1955, when the NZSAS was created, New Zealand soldiers' previous wartime experience and the UKSAS model guided its development, although there was concern in New Zealand that the new force element not become subsumed at the expense of its own unique identity.<sup>14</sup> At the operational level, in Malaya NZSAS was employed by the UKSAS and was effectively an additional part of the latter's organisation.<sup>15</sup> The NZSAS also adopted many of the organisational accoutrements, characteristics and ethos of the older unit (for example, NZSAS adopted the flaming sword badge).<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> Ben Macintyre, *SAS Rogue Heroes* (UK: Penguin Books, 2017), xv; Ken Connor, *Ghost Force: The Secret History of the SAS* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998), 18.

<sup>13</sup> Macintyre, *SAS Rogue Heroes*, 316.

<sup>14</sup> Christopher Pugsley, *From Emergency to Confrontation: The New Zealand Armed Forces in Malaya and Borneo 1949-66* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2003), 91.

<sup>15</sup> Alastair MacKenzie, *Special Force: The Untold Story of 22nd Special Air Service Regiment (SAS)* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 68-69.

<sup>16</sup> Frank Rennie, *Regular Soldier: A Life in the New Zealand Army* (Christchurch: WillsonsScott Publishing International Ltd., 2012), 147-153. There is some disagreement about whether the badge depicts a "flaming sword", as recorded by Ron Crosby, *NZSAS: The First Fifty Years* (North Shore: Viking, 2009), front flyleaf, or a "winged dagger", as mentioned by Rennie, *Regular Soldier*, 152. 1 NZSAS's regimental guide from 2012 calls it the "flaming sword Excalibur" as designed by Sergeant Bob Tait of the UKSAS: "It is often referred to as the 'Winged Dagger', and occasionally as the flaming sword of Damocles. However, accounts from the original members of 'L' Detachment suggest that this was not the intent of the original design. Rather, it was to represent King Arthur's Excalibur, and thus represent a sword that would win freedom from the invader." New Zealand Defence Force, "Regimental Guide," 4th ed., November 2012, 16.

As the NZSAS began to demonstrate equivalency in operational competency, however, that relational balance began to re-align. During the Borneo campaign of the mid-1960s, the second post-war occasion on which NZSAS worked in close cooperation with UKSAS, NZSAS soldier Eru Manuera reflected on the relationship as being essentially of equals:

...'[t]he 22 SAS Squadron commanders had been Troop commanders in Malaya and my feeling was that their respect for us was as a result of that earlier interaction. They appeared to be picking up where they had left off before with the Originals [NZSAS], and were treating us as equals.'<sup>17</sup>

The New Zealanders needed to re-learn and re-develop the relationship with the UKSAS, but that process of re-establishing the relationship only strengthened the connection between the force elements:

Confrontation made the men of the New Zealand SAS aware of how much they had to learn. Being attached to 22 SAS Regiment gave them the operational experience that allowed them to develop expertise in four-man jungle patrols. This specialist skill was subsequently maintained and refined. Equally important was the re-establishment of the relationship between the New Zealand SAS and 22 SAS Regiment. In the words of Murray Winton, 'we were back into the club'; the New Zealand SAS has remained a member of this 'club' ever since.<sup>18</sup>

In fact, the relationship was such that for much of 1966 the UKSAS was content for the New Zealanders to command all Commonwealth special operations forces' CLARET activities in Borneo – including the British Special Boat Service (SBS) and Australian SAS

---

<sup>17</sup> Eru Manuera, quoted in Crosby, *NZSAS*, 144-145.

<sup>18</sup> Pugsley, *From Emergency to Confrontation*, 292.

patrols.<sup>19</sup> Equivalency and community between the NZSOF and the UKSOF members of 5SOF were built through these early historical and developmental links.

The NZSAS / UKSAS relationship began to change as other FVEY states created their own special operations forces units and began to interact and engage with each other. The UKSAS remained the grandparent of the network, 5SOF's original unit model (as close as there is such a thing).<sup>20</sup> The Australian Special Air Service (AUSAS) was created soon after NZSAS, in 1957.<sup>21</sup> The AUSAS similarly linked with UKSAS by adopting the SAS name and many of its accoutrements.<sup>22</sup> It shared operational experience with UKSAS (and NZSAS) in Borneo in the early days of its history.<sup>23</sup> In 1962-1963 a United States Green Beret officer, Charlie Beckwith, was seconded to the UKSAS for a year. He came away from that experience transformed: "[e]verything I'd been taught about soldiering, been trained to believe, was turned upside down".<sup>24</sup> Beckwith became a principal advocate for the formation of the 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta (more commonly known as Delta Force), the current USSOF unit most associated with the UKSAS model that had also significantly influenced NZSAS and AUSAS.<sup>25</sup> The

---

<sup>19</sup> Rhys Ball, "The platforms: An examination of New Zealand Special Air Service campaigns from Borneo 'Confrontation' to the Vietnam War, 1965-1971" (PhD diss., Massey University, 2009), 89, <https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/1242>.

<sup>20</sup> Interview participant 15, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 17 November 2016, transcript.

<sup>21</sup> David Horner with Neil Thomas, *In Action with the SAS* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2009), 39.

<sup>22</sup> "Special Air Service Regiment," The Australian Army, 14 December 2016, <https://www.army.gov.au/our-people/units/special-operations-command/special-air-service-regiment>.

<sup>23</sup> Horner with Thomas, *In Action with the SAS*, 102.

<sup>24</sup> Charlie A. Beckwith and Donald Knox, *Delta Force: The U.S. Counter-Terrorist Unit and the Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1984), 14-15.

<sup>25</sup> Eric L. Haney, *Inside Delta Force: The Story of America's Elite Counterterrorist Unit* (New York,: Delacorte Press, 2006), 4-6; Connor, *Ghost Force*, 334; Alastair Finlan, *Special Forces, Strategy and the War on Terror: Warfare by Other Means* (London: Routledge, 2008), 91-92; Ben

Canadian version of a UKSAS-type unit (Bernd Horn notes that the name did not reflect the “commando or specialist training which the organization’s name innately implied”) was originally formed even earlier than the NZSAS. The Canadian Special Air Service Company (note again the repetition of the SAS name) was established in 1948, although it was disbanded after only one year.<sup>26</sup> The CASOF’s current Joint Task Force 2 (JTF2) was not formed until 1993, making it one of the newest 5SOF force elements.<sup>27</sup> The USSOF’s MARSOC was formed in 2006, an even more recent 5SOF force element.<sup>28</sup> Newer force elements like JTF2 and MARSOC being created, and other force elements like the AUSOF’s 2 Squadron, SASR being disbanded in 2020 after the Brereton Report, indicate that the 5SOF network and its respective nodes are still evolving.<sup>29</sup>

Membership of 5SOF has developed through the historical links built over time between the NZSOF and other network nodes, but membership is reinforced not just by those links but by the FVEY intelligence and political links that have also evolved during the same period. Other international special operations forces have also developed along the UKSAS model and have built significant organisational and relational links over time with 5SOF members, but they are not bound by the same, or equivalent, FVEY relationships.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, why is membership of 5SOF constrained to

---

Macintyre, “They changed the way war is run,” *BBC History Magazine* (December 2016), 30; Macintyre, *SAS: Rogue Heroes*, 316.

<sup>26</sup> Bernd Horn, “The Canadian Special Air Service Company,” (monograph 22, CANSOFCOM Education & Research Centre, Ottawa, 2017), 6.

<sup>27</sup> “Joint Task Force 2 (JTF2),” Government of Canada, 14 March 2018, <https://www.canada.ca/en/special-operations-forces-command/corporate/organizational-structure/joint-task-force-2.html>.

<sup>28</sup> United States Special Operations Command, “Fact Book 2021,” 12, 30.

<sup>29</sup> “Chief of Army disbands 2 Squadron SASR,” *Australian Defence Magazine*.

<sup>30</sup> See Tone Danielsen, *Making Warriors in a Global Era: An Ethnographic Study of the Norwegian Naval Special Operations Commando* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2018), xxiv for an

the NZSOF, AUSOF, CASOF, UKSOF and USSOF? The concept of an international special operations forces community network is certainly not limited to 5SOF, and the wider international special operations forces community network is often referred to as the "Global SOF Network," but this research makes a distinction for 5SOF as a key security network for the NZSOF inside of the wider international special operations forces community in part because of the functions of the FVEY grouping at the state level.<sup>31</sup>

The 5SOF network is a sub-set of the FVEY state grouping in the international environment. FVEY originated as an intelligence relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States during World War II and in the immediate post-war environment.<sup>32</sup> As New Zealand, Australia and Canada developed their own intelligence capabilities, they were gradually included in the community.<sup>33</sup> The term FVEY has expanded and come to mean more than just an intelligence community; it is now often used as a generic term to describe the group of the five states in a number of contexts

---

example of other international special operations forces linking their history back to the World War II era.

<sup>31</sup> See Danielsen, *Making Warriors in a Global Era*, xxvi-xxvii; Tom-Erik Kihl and Jonas Carling, "The global special operations forces network from a partner-nation perspective" (capstone project, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, 2014), 4; Chuck Ricks, ed., "The role of the global SOF network in a resource constrained environment" (JSOU report, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2013); Christopher Varhola, "Regional understanding and unity of effort: Applying the global SOF network in future operating environments," *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016); Bernd Horn, *Shadow Warriors: The Canadian Special Operations Forces Command* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2016), 22; "Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy" (Government of Canada, 2017), <https://dgpaapp.forces.gc.ca/en/canada-defence-policy/docs/canada-defence-policy-report.pdf>, 40.

<sup>32</sup> Corey Pfluke, "A history of the Five Eyes alliance: Possibility for reform and additions," *Comparative Strategy* 38, no. 4 (2019): 302.

<sup>33</sup> United Kingdom Government, "National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015: A Secure and Prosperous United Kingdom" (London: Williams Lea Group, 2015), 91.

(although its defence and security connotations remain important).<sup>34</sup> Though FVEY relationships have at times 'ebbed and flowed' with the changing priorities and national interest of individual members, in general the construct has remained relatively consistent.<sup>35</sup> Maintaining its participation in the FVEY group makes strategic sense for New Zealand as a "strong state, weak power" under Barry Buzan's model of vulnerabilities and types of state, whereby despite its institutional strength New Zealand must seek collaborative, cooperative, multilateral influence and relationships because it does not wield much power in its own right.<sup>36</sup> New Zealand's strategic policy is very clear about its ongoing commitment to "a network of strong international relationships" that in broad terms is believed to contribute "to New Zealand's national security objectives".<sup>37</sup> As such, the NZSOF's involvement in the 5SOF network is a sub-

---

<sup>34</sup> For example, the term 'Five Eyes' term remains in use in New Zealand Government documentation; see New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018," 14, 27, 29, 37.

<sup>35</sup> The ANZUS break between New Zealand and the United States of America is a good example of how FVEY relationships can ebb and flow. In the 1980s, New Zealand's nuclear stance resulted in a reduction of relational activity between the two states. However, by 2010 the states were signing a security agreement called the Wellington Declaration (followed in 2012 by the Washington Declaration), and by 2016 it was being claimed that "New Zealand's security is enhanced through engagement with the United States, which has reached a depth and breadth not seen for 30 years." New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Defence White Paper 2016" (Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2016), 32. See also New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018," 29; New Zealand Defence Force, "Future Land Operating Concept 2035: Integrated Land Missions," 2nd ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2018), 37-38.

<sup>36</sup> "Table 3.1 Vulnerabilities and types of state," in Barry Buzan, *People, States & Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 25th anniversary ed. (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2016), 93, 105.

<sup>37</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Defence White Paper 2016," 19. See also New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018," 6; Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, "National Security System Handbook" (August 2016), <https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2017-03/dpmc-nss-handbook-aug-2016.pdf>, 8; Jacinda Ardern, "Opening keynote: A vision for global New Zealand," accessed 19 June 2020, <https://nziaa.org.nz/Portals/285/documents/lists/259/Opening%20Keynote%20speech%20Prime%20Minister%20Jacinda%20Ardern.pdf>.

set of the broader national security policy about relationships enacted in the FVEY group.

As special operations military force elements, each 5SOF node exists within its own state-controlled military, which means they are part of their own hierarchical networks (see the NZSOF in the NZDF network in Chapter 4). However, in the 5SOF network the composition is more akin to the NZNSS network in its abandonment of hierarchy as the structural determinant of the network. It is a network strongly defined by the core characteristic of commonality and what 5SOF nodes share with each other. Throughout its history, the NZSOF's inclusion in and relationships within 5SOF have been dependent on their ability to maintain the sense of community with other nodes through commonality while retaining their own unique identity within the network.

## **Section II**

### **6.2 Relational characteristics: The NZSOF in 5SOF**

Unlike the relational characteristics the NZSOF exhibit in the NZDF and NZNSS networks which move on relational dynamics between closer or more distant connections with partners, and despite some historic 'ebb and flow' over the years, in the 5SOF network the NZSOF's relational characteristics tend towards maintaining and strengthening of *status quo* community relationships. As a network 5SOF is not particularly hierarchical; it is built on the convention of long-standing links and commonality, but some elements of formalisation are present; a pseudo-formalisation of sorts. The core characteristic of 5SOF and of the NZSOF's relationships in the

network, commonality, remains the key measurement of the NZSOF's membership. 5SOF will remain a key security network for the NZSOF as long as that characteristic can be maintained. This section develops and analyses three key relational characteristics that the NZSOF exhibit when they interact with other nodes in the 5SOF network. The characteristics examined here will be compared with the NZSOF's relational characteristics identified in the other two key security networks examined in Chapters 4 and 5 and utilised later in the thesis in Chapters 7 and 8. The three characteristics that are identified and analysed in this section are 'Formalisation', 'Size' and 'Pragmatism'.

### **6.2.1 Formalisation**

SOF have a fantastic informal network throughout the world, and it is, I think it's one of the benchmarks of how it should work. That gets them into trouble sometimes, and when I say trouble I don't mean that they're doing anything wrong, I think it's people don't understand the strength of that informal relationship, and as a result particularly conventional or politicians or anyone looks at it and they can't understand what plays out in that informal environment, [be]cause it doesn't seem transparent.<sup>38</sup>

Formalisation is the first relational characteristic that this thesis identifies in order to analyse the NZSOF's relationships in the 5SOF network. In this thesis formalisation is defined as a process of making something definitive, structured, and fixed. The 5SOF network is generally an informally arranged series of relationships, but there exists within it elements of pseudo-formalisation, such as working relationships and official meetings among senior commanders, the liaison officer sub-network (discussed below),

---

<sup>38</sup> Interview participant 20, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 05 December 2016, transcript.



and regional conferences such as the Pacific Area Security Sector Working Group (PASSWG).<sup>39</sup> The creation of the NZSOF's Special Operations Component Command (formerly the Directorate of Special Operations) involved a review of other 5SOF nodes' strategic commands and the NZSOF's command evolved from their examples.<sup>40</sup> The strategic commands are another example of how formalisation has been introduced to the 5SOF network and adopted by the NZSOF. Formalisation introduces organisational structure to the network. 5SOF nodes are not bound by the strict hierarchical constraints familiar to the NZDF network, but they may through elements of formalisation avoid the relatively *ad hoc* nature of the NZNSS network. The long-standing connections between nodes already establish a measure of structure through convention and additional formalisation can further embed the network.

The FVEY group of states of which the 5SOF network is a reflection originated in a post-World War II intelligence community developed between New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.<sup>41</sup> That intelligence network was a codified series of relationships which began with the British-U.S. Communication Agreement (BRUSA).<sup>42</sup> The FVEY intelligence network was formalised

---

<sup>39</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDF 1045 / SOC / 1," demi-official letter, Special Operations Component Commander to Commander Special Operations Command Pacific, 03 June 2016, 1; Deon V. Canyon, Paul Lieber, Michael Mollohan and Eric Shibuya, "Pacific opportunities: U.S. special operations forces engage Pacific island nations through security working group," *Indo-Pacific Defense Forum* 43, no. 2 (2018): 45; Special Operations Component Commander, "PASSWG-Oceania: SOCC mihi and opening remarks," remarks, 11 July 2016.

<sup>40</sup> Interview participant 9, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016.

<sup>41</sup> See Nicky Hager, *Secret Power: New Zealand's Role in the International Spy Network* (Nelson: Craig Potton, 1996) for an examination of New Zealand's participation in FVEY.

<sup>42</sup> Pfluke, "A history of the Five Eyes alliance," 302-303.

through BRUSA at its origin, but that approach was not translated to the development or current conventions of 5SOF:

Within the SIGINT [intelligence] community there's very crystal-clear understanding of exactly what Five Eyes means and whose roles and responsibilities are what in that architecture. We have taken what is essentially a security classification derived from the SIGINT community and turned it into some sort of team good-guy within the SOF community, which is fine everybody likes that idea, but it's a little harder to articulate...<sup>43</sup>

Currently [5SOF] is not formally set up...They are five separate entities with five different sets of policies, working on their own problem sets, who sometimes also work together.<sup>44</sup>

Lacking specific, formalised articulation of functions, roles, and responsibilities for the 5SOF network, how relationships are conducted and what the intended outcomes are to be for the 5SOF network creates an *ad hoc* approach to connections in the network. There is a pseudo-formalisation inherent to 5SOF that is reflected in the way the NZSOF conduct their 5SOF network relationships.<sup>45</sup>

5SOF nodes belong to their own national military hierarchies, and therefore exist in formalised network structures within which they are answerable to non-special operations forces entities, whether that be "non-SOF bosses at one level or another", or

---

<sup>43</sup> Interview participant 23, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 27 June 2017, transcript.

<sup>44</sup> Interview participant 32, interview by Miriam Wharton, Canberra, Australia, 30 April 2018, interview notes.

<sup>45</sup> Interview participant 32, 30 April 2018. For an historical example of how the NZSOF used personal relationships to develop the NZSOF's capabilities, see Pugsley, *From Emergency to Confrontation*, 107.

other entities in the broader national security framework.<sup>46</sup> The NZSOF's relational characteristic of formalisation is a means to making their relationships in the 5SOF network more understandable to their hierarchical superiors at the national level. There are several ways formalisation can be introduced or enhanced in 5SOF, for example in accountability measures, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), written agreements, and the establishment of strategic command headquarters such as the NZSOF's Special Operations Component Command.<sup>47</sup> All of these formalising elements serve to standardise and measure how the NZSOF engage in relationships with other 5SOF nodes.

One of the best examples of the pseudo-formalisation in the 5SOF network, in which the NZSOF participate, are the Special Operations Liaison Officers (SOLOs). SOLOs are formal representatives of their organisations. They are institutionalised relationship brokers common across the 5SOF network; in the NZSOF doctrine they are mandated as the "commander's [in the NZSOF, the Special Operations Component Commander] personal representatives", expected to support integration efforts, provide a means of "access to their host".<sup>48</sup> More colloquially stated, a SOLO is "kind of a matchmaker, getting the right people in touch".<sup>49</sup> SOLOs enable the Special Operations Component Commander to be represented among their equivalent commands in a full-time, real-time capacity.

---

<sup>46</sup> Interview participant 23, 27 June 2017; Interview participant 24, interview by Miriam Wharton, Honolulu, HI: United States of America, 20 September 2017, transcript.

<sup>47</sup> Interview participant 21, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 21 April 2017, interview notes; Interview participant 23, 27 June 2017; Interview participant 24, 20 September 2017.

<sup>48</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-3.12," 3rd ed., 41-42.

<sup>49</sup> Interview participant 23, 27 June 2017.

Having a permanent formal presence at the home locations of other 5SOF nodes importantly strengthens the relational links between the NZSOF and those nodes.<sup>50</sup> They gain knowledge of, and share experiences with, the node which helps to develop a clearer (and usually stronger) relationship, removing single point failure risk and maintaining consistent and sustainable two-way engagement during and beyond isolated operational interactions.<sup>51</sup> SOLOs can also create social connections that reinforce more formal ties, as Frank Rennie did as an Army liaison officer in London in 1961:

I established contact with the British SAS soon after I arrived and was greatly privileged to be a guest at a special dinner arranged by their Colonel Commandant, Colonel Brian Frank, at the Hyde Park Hotel, attended by some of the SAS greats, including the founder Colonel David Stirling. I also got in touch with George Lea, my former SO in 22 SAS, now a brigadier at the War Office and Assistant Military Secretary...<sup>52</sup>

SOLOs remind partners of their relational links with the NZSOF and are a formalised instrument of facilitation for relationship building, maintenance, and cooperation.

In a network dominated by the commonality characteristic, formalisation can sometimes be perceived as a secondary function of lesser priority. Nevertheless, there are indications that formalisation is becoming more important to the 5SOF network and will increasingly be a key relational characteristic for the NZSOF. If other 5SOF nodes

---

<sup>50</sup> Kihl and Carling, "The global special operations forces network," 47.

<sup>51</sup> Joseph L. Votel, "Advance Policy Questions for Lieutenant General Joseph L. Votel, USA: Nominee for Commander, United States Special Operations Command" (10 July 2014), [http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/votel\\_07-10-14](http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/votel_07-10-14), 17.

<sup>52</sup> Rennie, *Regular Soldier*, 256-257. Rennie was not a SOLO at the time, but as an Army liaison officer was still able to act as a de facto special operations liaison officer due to his background with the NZSOF.

prioritise formalisation, the NZSOF will need to incorporate more formalisation into their current relational approach to remain an effective – and readily identifiable – participant in the network:

...without undergirding and codifying these relationships in a habitual, enduring and substantive manner, working collaboratively alongside allies' and partners' SOF will never rise above a baseline threshold of effectiveness. What is required to build these relationships is more than transactional episodic interactions.<sup>53</sup>

This process is already underway in the NZSOF through MOUs, SOLOs, and the Special Operations Component Command. However, as the comment below suggests, the question of how best the NZSOF should exhibit and embrace formalisation in the 5SOF network remains something they will need to consider carefully:

It's really formalising the understanding of each other within those partnerships, as opposed to them being more casual or informal, less sustained. It's again that enduring relationship piece that when necessary, and it also outlives the individual, which is key too. We all are understanding that individuals, humans are precious but they're also perishable in the sense that you might move on to another job. If your entire institutionalised functionality is centered on your personality and nothing else, then the minute you move on, the institution the organisation's lost that capacity and that's, that happens all the time. It happens in corporate world, it happens certainly in the military, in government. But I think formally if you again institutionalise...how you do that is the difficult part, right? How you institutionalise relationships. It's again kind of a queer statement to make. But I think you institutionalise it by developing a rhythm within the

---

<sup>53</sup> Scott Morrison, "Redefining the indirect approach, defining special operations forces (SOF) power, and the global networking of SOF," *Journal of Strategic Security* 7, no. 2 (2014), 52.

process, whether it be who you interact with, what events you're interacting in, etcetera, that really fundamentally is the important piece to that.<sup>54</sup>

Formalisation and institutionalising relationships in 5SOF may be a difficult outcome for the NZSOF due to their relative collective size. The amount of work associated with formalisation and subsequent formal commitments to relationship activities and resources necessary to maintain the network may prove daunting or difficult to manage for an organisation with the smallest size of assets. Yet if other nodes are increasingly emphasising this relational characteristic as important to them, sooner or later the NZSOF will be required to adapt accordingly.

### **6.2.2 Size**

Size is the second relational characteristic that this thesis identifies to analyse the NZSOF's relationships in the 5SOF network. In this thesis size is defined as how big a node is. There is a substantial difference in organisational size between the NZSOF, which number in the low hundreds,<sup>55</sup> and the largest 5SOF node (the USSOF) which as of 2019 has "nearly 70,000" personnel<sup>56</sup> and "an annual budget of around 14 billion dollars."<sup>57</sup> Even in a network where informal relationships and points of commonality can sustain membership in the face of a significant size differential, for the NZSOF that

---

<sup>54</sup> Interview participant 24, 20 September 2017.

<sup>55</sup> Interview participant 18, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 01 December 2016, transcript.

<sup>56</sup> "Headquarters USSOCOM," United States Special Operations Command. See also Chad Pillai, "Shifting fires: Optimizing special operations for today and tomorrow's fight," War on the Rocks, 19 October 2018, <https://warontherocks.com/2018/10/shifting-fires-optimizing-special-operations-for-today-and-tomorrows-fight/>; Interview participant 8, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript.

<sup>57</sup> Michael Vickers, "Future challenges for special operations forces," The Cipher Brief, 08 May 2018, <https://www.thecipherbrief.com/article/international/future-challenges-special-operations-forces>.

difference still matters and ultimately shapes their relationships in the network.<sup>58</sup> In some cases, other network nodes are aware that size is a point of concern and recognise that they cannot necessarily fully understand the impact of size as a characteristic for the NZSOF because the reality and implications of that characteristic are outside of their own experience.<sup>59</sup> Increasing elements of formalisation in the network will not neutralise this point of difference for the NZSOF, and in fact may exacerbate challenges that arise to the NZSOF from their smaller size.

There are many examples of size differences between the NZSOF and other 5SOF nodes, other than merely the numerical count of how many personnel those nodes employ. A good example is in the comparison between the NZSOF's most senior officer and those of the other nodes. In the NZSOF, the most senior commander (the Special Operations Component Commander) is a colonel which reflects the fact that they have a smaller force to manage within the NZDF hierarchy.<sup>60</sup> By contrast, in Australia the most senior commander is a lieutenant general, in Canada a brigadier general, in the United Kingdom a major general, and in the United States of America a full general. The rank difference between these officers, who organisationally have the same function, can affect the commander-to-commander relationship, and likely impact the NZSOF's credibility with their partners:<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>58</sup> Matthias Fiala, "Déjà vu: The shared history of SOF – Switzerland as a case study," *CTX9*, no. 2 (2019), 39.

<sup>59</sup> Interview participant 23, 27 June 2017; Interview participant 32, 30 April 2018.

<sup>60</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* Also commented on by Interview participant 17, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 30 November 2016, transcript; Interview participant 22, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 08 June 2017, transcript.

...when I've spoken with SOCAUST [Special Operations Commander Australia], he's noted that...our current commander is only a colonel. So this goes to kind of the view that you need to have the right rank level, the right level of credibility at the right time and the right place to fully engage.<sup>62</sup>

Presumably, if the most senior officer in the NZSOF holds a lower rank than their equivalent in the other nodes, similar discrepancies of rank will cascade down through the respective organisations. In this network defined primarily by community and commonality, hierarchical elements are still present (a point of connection with the NZDF network) and can impact on the NZSOF's relationships. The NZSOF's awareness of size being a relational characteristic they must manage in the network shapes much of how they engage on an individual or organisational level.

Size is an ever-present challenging relational characteristic for the NZSOF in the 5SOF network, but not necessarily always a purely negative characteristic. While clearly conscious of this challenge, and using the example above, there is an expectation that regardless of the rank discrepancy between the NZSOF's representatives and those of other nodes, the NZSOF will still be able to hold their own in that environment:

"I have tremendous faith in his qualities and abilities and the abilities of our Warrant Officers to sustain that [liaison role alongside majors]...we back the talent of our people."<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>62</sup> Interview participant 22, 08 June 2017. Also commented on by Interview participant 33, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 08 May 2018, transcript.

<sup>63</sup> Interview participant 19, 02 December 2016.



When I go to conferences with military leaders from other countries, most of whom have much bigger armed forces than we do, I'm not going to let the size of our military determine how I engage and contribute.<sup>64</sup>

What amazes me, particularly with the SAS, is that they're able to send...I met a corporal and a trooper in an air movements terminal in the UK once, and they were heading home. They'd been to a UK Special Forces activity to participate in the planning of it. Now, most of us would've sent...a captain or maybe a major, but they sent a corporal and a trooper. That was cool. My point being is that those guys seem to be able to create relationships at a number of levels using a small group of people. And I think that's inspirational, and something that is a great lesson for general service.<sup>65</sup>

This approach is also a reflection of the broader national New Zealand expectation in the FVEY and wider international community that it "punches above [its] weight" on the world stage.<sup>66</sup> Irrespective of the above, 5SOF partners can, and do, see advantages to the NZSOF's smallness; two international interview participants seemed to feel that the NZSOF are actually doing relatively more with less in comparison to what they are doing when it comes to their international relationships.<sup>67</sup> Sometimes the larger size of 5SOF partners can be perceived as leading to inflexibility and conventionalisation, a move away from the traditional model of special operations forces as conceived in the

---

<sup>64</sup> Tim Keating, "The relentless pursuit of excellence," in *Leaders Like You: New Zealand Leaders Share Stories of Courage, Failure and Commitment*, ed. Nick Sceats and Andrea Thompson (Wellington: Catapult Publishing, 2017), 68.

<sup>65</sup> Interview participant 14, 04 November 2016.

<sup>66</sup> John Key, "New Zealand's place in the world," 03 May 2016, <http://www.nzia.org.nz/past-events.aspx>. The phrase also makes an appearance in secondary source literature, relating to states that are more dependent on soft power to influence others in the national interest. See Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004), 89.

<sup>67</sup> Interview participant 24, 20 September 2017; Interview participant 35, interview by Miriam Wharton, San Diego, California, 30 June 2018, transcript.

early twentieth century history by the United Kingdom.<sup>68</sup> While the NZSOF may take heart that their smaller size is not necessarily a disqualifying factor for membership of 5SOF, perceptions about this as a limitation - knowing “there’s only so much kit in the [the NZSOF] kit bag (or personnel, or financial resources, or time)” – often manifest when their representatives engage with much larger 5SOF nodes.<sup>69</sup>

Ultimately the size characteristic for the NZSOF is an issue of capacity. While the NZSOF may have expansive intentions or desires to establish wide-ranging relationships with partners in the network, they are always limited by what they can commit resources to achieving.<sup>70</sup> Mitigating the challenges (and realising the opportunities) of the size characteristic is an important function of the NZSOF’s third key relational characteristic in the 5SOF network, pragmatism.

### **6.2.3 Pragmatism**

Naturally we shouldn’t really be close to the Canadians, but you have a similar system in political, military approach, then naturally the units become very close because they’re framed the same way. Whereas we’d love to be the same as SFOD-D (Delta); we’re the same basic person and skills...but our capacity and political intent are very, very different.<sup>71</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> Interview participant 22, 08 June 2017; Michael Asher, *The Regiment: The Real Story of the SAS* (London: Penguin Books, 2008), 362.

<sup>69</sup> Interview participant 22, 08 June 2017; Kevin Morton, “Interoperability: Benefits and challenges,” in “The Role of the Global SOF Network in a Resource Constrained Environment,” ed. Chuck Ricks (JSOU report, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL: The JSOU Press, 2013), 19.

<sup>70</sup> Interview participant 21, 21 April 2017.

<sup>71</sup> Interview participant 18, 01 December 2016.

Pragmatism is the third relational characteristic important to the NZSOF's relationships in the 5SOF network. Pragmatism is defined as the principle of accepting the realities of a situation and working within them. In a community-oriented network like 5SOF, pragmatism might be assumed to be under-appreciated as a significant relational characteristic. Nevertheless, the issues created by size and capacity, and the corresponding requirement to prioritise effort and resourcing for relationships in the network, requires the NZSOF to employ a pragmatic characteristic in their relationships with other 5SOF network nodes.

Pragmatism is in the NZSOF's blood. The New Zealand Government's decision to establish the NZSAS in 1955 was in response to a British request that New Zealand commit troops to the Malayan Emergency. Creating and deploying the NZSAS, a 121-person squadron, rather than sending a much larger infantry battalion, was an entirely pragmatic decision and set the tone for decisions made about the NZSOF throughout their history.<sup>72</sup> Pragmatism is often active; Jessica Turnley has suggested that "[o]ne 'participates' in networks, a verb requiring action; one does not 'belong' to networks, a much more passive verb."<sup>73</sup> To be an active participant in the 5SOF network, the NZSOF are obliged to find a practical way to engage with other nodes that weighs the requirements of investing meaningfully in those relationships while also accommodating the community that ultimately unites all 5SOF nodes.<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>72</sup> Rhys Ball, "The strategic utility of New Zealand special forces," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22, no. 1 (2011): 122-123.

<sup>73</sup> Jessica Turnley, "Special operations forces as change agents" (occasional paper, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2017), 6.

<sup>74</sup> Howard Broad, "The New Zealand National Security System," in *New Zealand National Security: Challenges, Trends and Issues*, ed. William Hoverd, Nick Nelson and Carl Bradley (Auckland: Massey University Press, 2017), 153.

However, pragmatism need not always be “active”; it can be a carefully calibrated choice to remain inactive, or to rely on community to carry the relationship either for a brief period of time or purpose, or in the longer term. For example, the NZSOF’s active relational engagement with the CASOF may reduce somewhat as the frequency of interoperability on current operations decreases.<sup>75</sup> Pragmatism may even (hypothetically) from time to time lead the NZSOF away from their membership of 5SOF and towards emerging new relationships that more closely mirror New Zealand’s national strategic interests.<sup>76</sup> Pragmatism, whether active or passive, remains a carefully assessed series of choices about how the NZSOF engages in relationships in the 5SOF network.

The NZSOF’s pragmatism is a means to remove themselves slightly from the bias of long-standing connections and informal personal relationships and take a cost-versus-benefit approach to their overall relational landscape. In the words of one interview participant from the NZSOF, “it’s about being selective and purposeful with our engagement.”<sup>77</sup> The NZSOF have to some extent already made this calculation in their membership of 5SOF, which is a smaller and more focused segment of the broader international special operations forces network called the Global Special Operations Forces Network (GSN).<sup>78</sup> The GSN as a network offers the NZSOF a dizzying array of

---

<sup>75</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016.

<sup>76</sup> Rian McKinstry, “New Zealand’s geopolitics and its security challenge” (strategy research project, United States Army War College, 2018), 8.

<sup>77</sup> Interview participant 33, 08 May 2018. Also commented on by Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Interview participant 8, 10 October 2016; Interview participant 22, 08 June 2017.

<sup>78</sup> Danielsen, *Making Warriors in a Global Era*, xxvi-xxvii; Kihl and Carling, “The global special operations forces network,” 4; Ricks, ed., “The role of the global SOF network”; Varhola, “Regional understanding and unity of effort”; Horn, *Shadow Warriors*, 22; “Strong, Secure, Engaged” (Government of Canada, 2017), 40.

possible relational permutations with international special operations forces beyond 5SOF, but more relationships with more partners does not necessarily equate to better:

...in the long term, more participants does not equate to a better set of partners. Future success depends on sufficient numbers of enduring strategic partners.<sup>79</sup>

For the NZSOF, as advantageous as it may be in theory to have enduring relationships with far-flung special operations forces through the GSN, pragmatism dictates that in a world of limitations choices must be made. The NZSOF has chosen to prioritise their relationships within the 5SOF network, and therefore 5SOF and not the GSN is a key security network examined in this research.

Although the 5SOF network is prioritised by the NZSOF over a more expansive GSN, even within the 5SOF network the NZSOF are obliged to be pragmatic about investing in relationships.<sup>80</sup> The AUSOF might be assumed to fall highest on the NZSOF's priority list of relationships within 5SOF because Australia is New Zealand's only formal ally and closest geographical neighbour.<sup>81</sup> In fact, the bilateral relationship between the NZSOF and the AUSOF has not been a smooth or necessarily close one. Rhys Ball has written on the decision made by New Zealand not to create an Anzac force in the mid-twentieth century in Borneo, based on the fact that AUSAS was still developing its sense of self, and was operating more along the lines of a United States special operations forces capability, rather than the British model to which the NZSAS was closely aligned.<sup>82</sup> This is an historical example of how the two countries (and in this case, the

---

<sup>79</sup> Harry R. Yarger, "Building partner capacity" (JSOU report 15-1, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2015), 106.

<sup>80</sup> Interview participant 22, 08 June 2017.

<sup>81</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018," 29.

<sup>82</sup> Ball, "The platforms," 55.

NZSOF and the AUSOF specifically) chose a non-Anzac path. More contemporaneously, one interview participant for this research believed that the relationship, of all the 5SOF relationships the NZSOF have, is becoming “probably the least maintained...it’s actually not very well developed.”<sup>83</sup> Another interview participant recalled an instance where the AUSOF were mountain training in New Zealand without notifying the NZSOF, creating an awkward bi-lateral moment when the AUSOF tragically suffered a casualty and it became evident the NZSOF was not aware of their partner’s activities.<sup>84</sup> Physical proximity or shared history do not necessarily translate into an automatic pragmatic decision in favour of prioritising the AUSOF relationship.

Importantly, the pragmatic characteristic in the NZSOF’s relational approach means these relationship prioritisations may change. For example, the NZSOF have developing links with non-FVEY special operations forces that create further demands on how they choose to prioritise their limited resources, even if only for a brief period of time. The NZSOF have relatively recently worked adjacent to Norwegian special operations forces in Afghanistan. As small states with more comparable special operations forces than the wide size discrepancy between the NZSOF and a 5SOF node like the USSOF, the Norwegian connection may be one the NZSOF could choose to prioritise in future. Certainly, Tone Danielsen suggested there might be value in the small state, non-5SOF special operations forces connection: “Only by looking outside the American, British, and Canadian cases can we describe and discuss the differences and commonalities

---

<sup>83</sup> Interview participant 22, 08 June 2017.

<sup>84</sup> Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016.

among the special operations forces' international community."<sup>85</sup> As these examples demonstrate, the NZSOF's pragmatism could encompass a number of different relationship prioritisation options. Pragmatism may not always lead the NZSOF to 5SOF, even considering the strength of community in the network. These are the calculations the pragmatism characteristic requires the NZSOF to make when they come to prioritising the 5SOF network.

Pragmatism can be obscured in a network dominated by the concept of community and the commonality characteristic. Yet it is an important part of the NZSOF's relational dynamics in the 5SOF network. The NZSOF do not have the option to do everything they might wish to do in maintaining their 5SOF relationships.<sup>86</sup> However, if the NZSOF are able to maintain effective 5SOF relationships which are linked by a constantly evolving pseudo-formalisation structure, by an acknowledgement of their own size constraints, and through a pragmatic approach that, to a large extent, mitigates some of the limitations of their size, that careful relational balance is possible.<sup>87</sup> It is also clearly in line with New Zealand Government policy, which directs the NZDF (including the NZSOF) to:

---

<sup>85</sup> Tone Danielsen, "A small state's special operators, up close," War on the Rocks, 25 October 2018, <https://warontherocks.com/2018/10/a-small-states-special-operators-up-close/>.

<sup>86</sup> Interview participant 33, 08 May 2018.

<sup>87</sup> Vernon Noel Bennett, "Military force structures in small states: Providing for relevant and credible military capability" (PhD diss., Victoria University of Wellington, 2018), 115, <http://hdl.handle.net/10063/7033>; Interview participant 8, 10 October 2016.

...now take a more active approach to managing and prioritising New Zealand's international defence relationships. This will better enable it to determine where and how organisational resources should be focussed.<sup>88</sup>

Maintaining the 5SOF network relationships the NZSOF have had over decades is clearly possible, but it does require a clear-sighted, pragmatic approach to relationships that will ebb and flow over time. Without that calculus, the NZSOF will quickly be overwhelmed by the relational demands not just of the 5SOF network but potentially other, new partners as well. Pragmatism allows the NZSOF to explore where they can best add value, and gain value, when they invest resources in their relationships.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the thesis set out to do two principal tasks. First, it analysed the 5SOF network as a community. Its structure and historical links, as well as its reflection of the FVEY group of states, was examined to define the commonality of the network, while acknowledging the layers of complexity within each 5SOF node that was outside the scope of this thesis. Second, the chapter developed a conceptual understanding of three characteristics of the NZSOF's relationships in the 5SOF network – 'Formalisation', 'Size' and 'Pragmatism'. Formalisation is a characteristic that holds the potential to fix the network more firmly in place. Size is a characteristic that places limitations on the NZSOF's relationships, but all 5SOF nodes experience this in varying degrees. Pragmatism is an important characteristic, a clear-eyed approach to the realities and

---

<sup>88</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Defence, "Defence White Paper 2016," 76. Interview participant 8, 10 October 2016.



limitations on relationships for the NZSOF. The purpose of this chapter has been to contextualise the NZSOF's relationships in this specific context by defining and developing the thesis's understanding of the 5SOF network and how the NZSOF's relationships within it can be conceptually understood.

This chapter concludes an analysis of three key security networks within which the NZSOF conduct relationships, and specifically an examination of significant relational characteristics that the NZSOF exhibit in their relationships in each network. These characteristics are displayed in their entirety in Table 6-1, having evolved over the last four chapters, with the first column referring to descriptive characteristics of the NZSOF applicable across all relationship contexts.

NZSOF Descriptive Characteristics	NZSOF Relational Characteristics		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NZSOF</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unconventional</li> <li>Evolutionary</li> <li>Strategic</li> <li>Opaque</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NZDF</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Belonging</li> <li>Disconnection</li> <li>Integration</li> <li>Independence</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NZNSS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integration</li> <li>Collaboration</li> <li>Siloisation</li> <li>Political Sponsorship</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>5SOF</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formalisation</li> <li>Size</li> <li>Pragmatism</li> </ul>

Table 6-1: The NZSOF's Characteristics (An Evolving Table)

This research will now take these characteristics into Chapter 7 and discuss how they are subordinate to two overarching relational characteristics; together, those characteristics are exhibited by the NZSOF in relational dynamics in their key security networks.

## **7: Analysing the NZSOF's Ego Node Relational**

### **Characteristics**

#### **7.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, the thesis sets out to conduct an ego node analysis of the NZSOF's subordinate relational characteristics relative to two overarching relational characteristics – 'Commonality' and 'Utility'. Between Chapters 3 through 6, a list of fifteen relational characteristics (see Table 7-1) was constructed that conceptualised the NZSOF node's relationships in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks. They are designated as subordinate characteristics for the first time in this chapter because, rather than assembling them in a simple list as was done in Chapters 3 to 6, Chapter 7 recognises them as characteristics that may not always be present in the NZSOF's relationships with each network, or they can vary widely in significance and application. These subordinate characteristics are transitory and fluid. Consequently, here those characteristics are reorganised to demonstrate how they are subordinate to the overarching commonality and utility relational characteristics introduced in this chapter. The overarching characteristics are designated as such because they are always present in the NZSOF ego node's network relationships. This chapter will discuss those characteristics in the key security networks. Identifying commonality and utility as overarching characteristics occurred inductively through analysis of the research data. While commonality and utility each have their unique functions as ego node characteristics, both are always exhibited by the NZSOF and are essential to building

and maintaining relationships between the NZSOF and other network nodes. Without them, this thesis argues the NZSOF's presence in those networks would be untenable. Moreover, the subordinate characteristics related to and encompassed within the overarching characteristics are either exhibited or not exhibited. This is an 'either / or' proposition for subordinate characteristics the NZSOF exhibit at any given time. The chapter will conclude by employing the Operation BURNHAM inquiry as an illustration of how the overarching and subordinate characteristics may appear in a specific scenario.

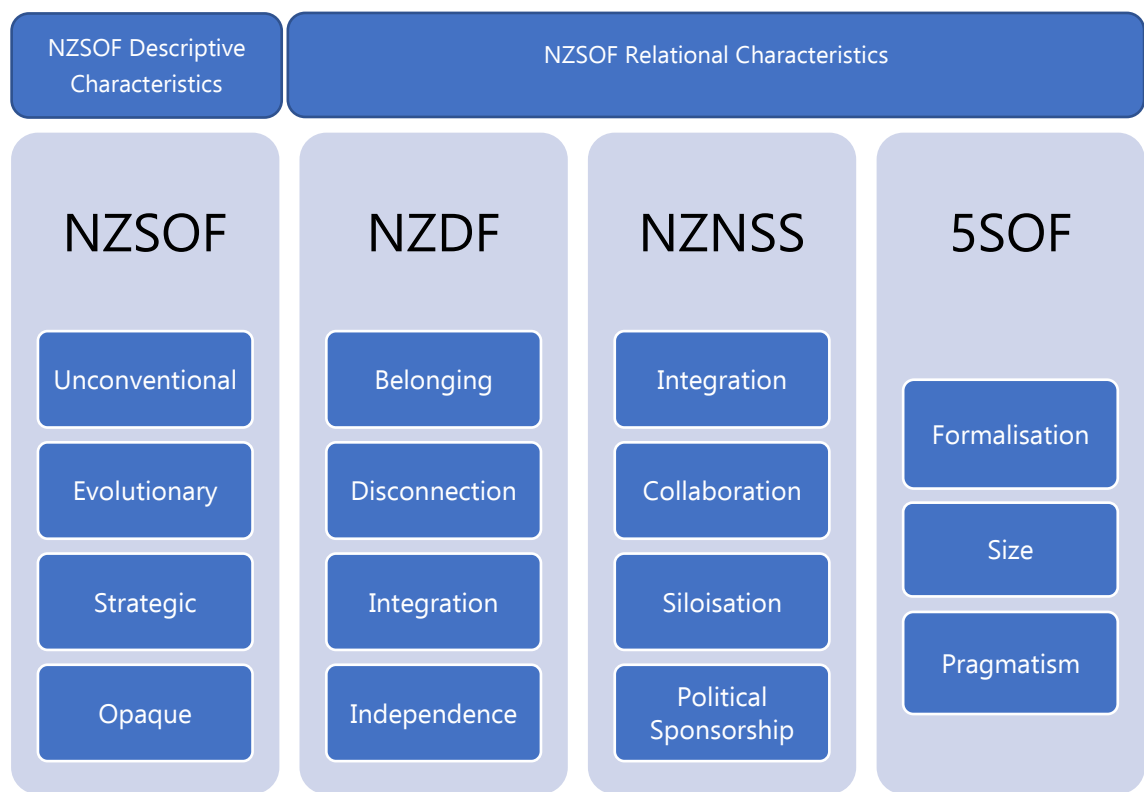


Table 7-1: The NZSOF's Characteristics (An Evolving Table)

## **7.1 Reorganising the characteristics: overarching characteristics and subordinate characteristics**

From the data, this thesis has identified commonality and utility as two essential overarching, cross-network relational characteristics for the NZSOF. This chapter will demonstrate how commonality and utility are overarching relational characteristics because they appear in the NZSOF's relationships across all the networks, and they also encompass within them the transitory, fluid subordinate characteristics seen in Table 7-1. Without these two characteristics, the NZSOF could not effectively function in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks. In this thesis commonality is defined as the state or act of a node sharing things in common with one or more other network nodes. Utility is defined as a value proposition that establishes the node's usefulness relative to other nodes and to a network; it is often established in comparison with other nodes.

Commonality and utility exist together in the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks, but as will soon be shown, they individually have their own distinct roles and expressions. The function of commonality is to act as a binding agent that helps to create and maintain networks. Utility's function is to act as a fundamental professional purpose for the node that it can exchange or offer to other nodes, ultimately determining the NZSOF node's usefulness within networks.

The subordinate relational characteristics for the NZSOF (Table 7-1) are such because they are transitory and fluid. Some, but not all, of these characteristics are common across more than one network. Others have a similar function to each other, but with some slight nuances to how the NZSOF express them in a specific network. All of them

are subordinate to the overarching relational characteristics because they serve to either increase or decrease the NZSOF's commonality and utility with other nodes in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks. The function of subordinate characteristics is to explain the variety and complexity of the NZSOF's relationships as they move in relational dynamics in the different networks.<sup>1</sup> The following sections will analyse in more detail how the characteristics listed in Table 7-1 are subordinate to the overarching commonality and utility relational characteristics in the NZSOF's relationships.

## **7.2 Overarching and subordinate characteristics: commonality**

Commonality is the first overarching relational characteristic identified in this thesis's analysis of the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks.

Commonality is an essential relational characteristic of the NZSOF because it helps to create and maintain effective management and participation with the three networks in which the NZSOF participate. This section will discuss how the fifteen subordinate relational characteristics contribute to and are encompassed within commonality, which is defined by how the NZSOF share things in common with other nodes.

---

<sup>1</sup> This concept of the variety of relationships created by the subordinate characteristics is adapted from Alan Page Fiske's concept of 'preos' – "the class of paradigms, parameters, precepts, prescriptions, propositions, and proscriptions...Because there are innumerable preos, people generate varied cultures." Alan Page Fiske, "Relational Models Theory 2.0," in *Relational Models Theory: A Contemporary Overview*, ed. Nick Haslam (New York: Routledge, 2004), 3-4, 7.

### 7.2.1 Commonality in the NZDF network

Commonality between the NZSOF and other nodes in the NZDF network begins with the hierarchical military structure. Chapter 4 used a *taiaha* metaphor to illustrate the different force elements that make up the NZSOF, but equally they belong as a hierarchically determined node within the network as well. The thesis explained that hierarchical structures and ranks create “a set of expectations that people understand where they stand, and...levels of responsibility.”<sup>2</sup> The commonality of a hierarchical network like the NZDF comes from a shared understanding of what is expected of the NZSOF and of others relative to each other, for example 1 NZSAS Regt as a regimental unit among other regiments and where it is placed in the organisational structure of the Army. The NZSOF’s belonging in the NZDF network is encompassed within the community characteristic as seen in hierarchical structure, where the NZSOF and other NZDF nodes share an understanding of what is expected of each other based on the standardised rules and relationships of the network, such as command and control reporting lines and rank levels. It also comes from the shared understanding of expectations within the hierarchy (for example about NZDF’s organisational values, mission, and vision) which creates the NZSOF’s sense of belonging, the first characteristic identified in Chapter 4. Through the integration characteristic, the NZSOF also approach a sense of commonality with other NZDF nodes when they act in a united way as a cohesive network. An example of integration is an officer from the NZSOF participating on an Officer Selection Board alongside conventional Army

---

<sup>2</sup> Interview participant 14, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 04 November 2016, transcript.

counterparts.<sup>3</sup> Integration is thus related to hierarchy as different nodes in the hierarchy are connected to each other through the network structure. This builds commonality in a structural sense for the NZSOF in the NZDF network.

However, the disconnection and independence characteristics can reduce the NZSOF's commonality with other nodes. The NZSOF's unconventional characteristic is encompassed within the commonality characteristic in that members of the NZSOF share with each other a sense of difference, of participating in an intentional deviation from a military norm or norms in a manner that is different from any entity in New Zealand outside of the NZSOF. Conversely, in the international 5SOF network this is a common characteristic. Disconnection through the contrast between the NZSOF's unconventional characteristic and other NZDF nodes' conventionality results in the NZSOF's relational behaviours that are unfamiliar to other nodes, and therefore erodes the sense of commonality that binds the NZDF network together or, at least, the NZSOF node's place in the network. For example, one interview participant from the NZSOF recounted his experience of task-organising for deployment to Afghanistan. When he discussed his requirements with members of the Army node – a gun battery commander, an infantry commander, and cavalry – they recommended he assemble his contingent in the 'correct' or 'normal' configuration, rather than what he believed was required for the specific task. They recommended two guns instead of the requested one (gun battery), thirty men instead of twelve (infantry), and four LAVs instead of three (cavalry), because "that's not how we deploy guns" and "that's how the infantry

---

<sup>3</sup> Interview participant 27, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 26 October 2017, transcript.



operated” and “that’s how they’re configured.”<sup>4</sup> This is an example of a disconnection between nodes demonstrated in the clash between the NZSOF’s task orientation and the Army node’s structural and procedural orientation. Disconnection can be mitigated by commonality through emphasising the characteristics of belonging and integration. Commonality can sometimes be undermined by the NZSOF’s independence from other nodes in the NZDF network, in those instances where the NZSOF’s identity and contributions to the network are made intentionally separate from those of other nodes. The independence characteristic also risks reducing commonality, if the NZSOF’s contributions to the NZDF network lay “beyond the capability...of conventional forces” but are perceived as being entirely and intentionally separate from the contributions of other nodes.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, when the NZSOF assert their independence as force elements, for example when they conduct their own selection and training programmes, a second order effect can be a reduction of commonality. Importantly, while commonality may be overarching, the NZSOF’s subordinate relational characteristics act to increase or decrease commonality in the NZDF network.

Commonality can be further undermined by the NZSOF’s opaque characteristic, identified in Chapter 3, in that in the absence of understanding about the NZSOF, what they offer as a node in a network, and what their underlying motivations in a relationship might be, there is no way for another node to find common ground with the NZSOF. Being opaque also does not motivate the NZSOF to make the effort to find

---

<sup>4</sup> Interview participant 15, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 17 November 2016, transcript.

<sup>5</sup> Interview participant 1, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 11 August 2016, transcript; Interview participant 19, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 02 December 2016, transcript.

common ground with other nodes, because a lack of transparency creates a disconnect that prevents a relationship from occurring in any meaningful sense.

### **7.2.2 Commonality in the NZNSS network**

Commonality between the NZSOF and the amorphous NZNSS nodes is somewhat harder to locate. Nevertheless, commonality in the NZNSS network is derived from the shared goal of the network, which is national security, and in the moments of shared experience as the nodes work together in the all-of-government approach. The NZSOF's integration in the NZNSS network is demonstrated, as seen in Chapter 5, within the commonality characteristic when the NZSOF and other NZNSS nodes share a unified approach as a cohesive network; this is encapsulated in the 'all-of-government' concept. The NZSOF's collaboration with other nodes in the NZNSS network is encompassed within the commonality characteristic when the NZSOF and other NZNSS nodes bring their unique skill set to bear on a shared goal, which is national security. In Chapter 5, the thesis discussed the NZSOF's relational characteristics of integration and collaboration, both of which have the NZSOF working together with other nodes to achieve the common goal of national security.

Commonality in the NZNSS network can be displayed through a mild form of siloisation when the NZSOF and other NZNSS nodes share the expectation that each node will offer a unique skill set to the network. It can be undermined by the NZSOF's siloisation from other nodes in the NZNSS network, in those instances when the NZSOF over-emphasise their subject matter expertise or uniqueness relative to other NZNSS nodes. Claims of uniqueness and territorial ownership of security domains isolate nodes from one another. This type of negative siloisation can be mitigated by commonality through

integration and collaboration. Political sponsorship is a relational characteristic that often will create less rather than more commonality between the NZSOF and other nodes in the network. A close relationship with political decision-makers that is not shared by other nodes can undermine commonality.<sup>6</sup> Challenges presented by excessive political sponsorship can be mitigated by commonality through integration and collaboration.

The NZSOF's evolutionary characteristic is encompassed within the commonality characteristic in the NZSOF have the capability to evolve towards sharing things in common with other nodes in the NZNSS. Commonality can be undermined by the evolutionary characteristic in that the NZSOF's evolution can occur out of step with other network nodes or away from sharing things in common. Commonality can also be undermined by the NZSOF's strategic characteristic in that laying claim to being a strategic capability generally removes the NZSOF's commonality with any network node that may not often or ever describe themselves as strategic. In any given context, individual nodes may be strategic based on the effect they can achieve. Because the strategic characteristic fluctuates depending on context, it is rarely determinative in assisting the NZSOF to find commonality with other NZNSS nodes. When looking for commonality as a relational characteristic the NZSOF carry across the three networks analysed in this thesis, the characteristic is less distinct in the NZNSS network, but elements of it are present.

---

<sup>6</sup> For example, taking the opportunity to sell the value of the NZSOF to a new Prime Minister as a "low-cost, big strategic" asset that led to a feeling of having political support subsequently. See Ron Crosby, *NZSAS: The First Fifty Years* (North Shore: Viking, 2009), 315-316.

### **7.2.3 Commonality in the 5SOF network**

Commonality between the NZSOF and other nodes in the 5SOF network lays at the heart of the analysis of 5SOF as a community network. In Chapter 6, the thesis discussed the long-standing historical links, as well as the cultural commonality that the NZSOF share with AUSOF, CASOF, UKSOF and USSOF. Emphasising commonality through origins and operations is how the NZSOF maintain their sense of network community with other 5SOF nodes while also endeavouring to retain their own unique identity. The NZSOF's formalisation with other nodes in the 5SOF network, as identified in Chapter 6, is encompassed within the commonality characteristic when the NZSOF and other 5SOF nodes agree to create fixed connections to better share things in common with each other. Through the formalisation characteristic, the NZSOF can introduce fixed elements to their relationships that are shared in common with other nodes, for example using SOLOs as relational facilitators who bring about greater interaction and understanding within the network, or in the creation of the Special Operations Component Command which is a formalised structural element comparable to other nodes, and therefore familiar and relatable to those nodes.

Commonality can be undermined by perceived, or real, perceptions of other nodes in the 5SOF network where the significant size discrepancies mentioned in Chapter 6 potentially reduce the resources the NZSOF have available to share within the network or make it harder for other nodes to understand the NZSOF's decisions or approaches to relationships in the network based on the challenges presented by size differences. However, commonality in the 5SOF network can be displayed through mutual, shared awareness of capacity limitations (relevant for all nodes, no matter how small or large).

Through the size characteristic, commonality is expressed through mutual awareness of capacity limitations and appreciation of the potential advantages smaller or larger nodes in the network possess. This type of size issue can be mitigated by commonality through formalisation and pragmatism.

The NZSOF's pragmatism in the 5SOF network is encompassed within the commonality characteristic when the NZSOF and other 5SOF nodes share appreciation of the unique utility they bring to the network. Through the pragmatism characteristic, the NZSOF can find a balance between commonality created by shared history and culture, and the commonality that comes from a shared appreciation of each node's individual utility in the network. Crucially, commonality is sustained despite the challenges created by the size differential between the NZSOF and other 5SOF nodes.

One of the interesting features of commonality in the 5SOF network, as identified in Chapter 6, is the concept of adaptive emulation. This thesis defines adaptive emulation as where a node adopts a structural or functional element, or fundamental principle, of another node and adapts it for application in its own context. Christopher Marsh discusses how states' emulation of each other's successes "is a type of adaptation."<sup>7</sup> This thesis suggests that as part of the commonality characteristic there is an ongoing tradition of 'adaptive emulation' occurring within the international special operations forces community at large, and certainly within the 5SOF network. For example, the NZSOF adopted the four foundational tenets of Colonel David Stirling of the UKSAS,

---

<sup>7</sup> Christopher Marsh, "Introduction: The world's elite warriors," in *Elite Warriors: Special Operations Forces from Around the World*, ed. Ruslan Pukhov and Christopher Marsh (Minneapolis: East View Press, 2017), viii.

creating commonality through “commitment to a shared ethos”.<sup>8</sup> The Stirling tenets are listed below. Next to them (in italics) are four Māori words or phrases, sourced from 1 NZSAS Regt’s Regimental Guide, that broadly approximate and express Stirling’s tenets in a New Zealand-specific way:

- Brook no sense of class - *ririte*
- Highest standards of discipline - *whakahautanga*
- Humour and humility – *whakakata mahaki*
- The unrelenting pursuit of excellence – *hiranga rerenga*<sup>9</sup>

By using the Māori language alongside the English words, the NZSOF have both emulated their UKSOF partner (by adopting the Stirling tenets) and adapted what has been emulated (from English into Māori) into a New Zealand-based military culture. This is an example of the NZSOF employing adaptive emulation within the 5SOF network.

Another example of adaptive emulation was an interview participant’s subscription to a core special operations forces aphorism by a senior officer, one that comes from the USSOF but presumably can be applied to any special operations forces including the NZSOF; the interview participant’s enthusiasm for the concept demonstrates emulation: “...in the immortal words of Admiral McRaven you can’t surge trust”.<sup>10</sup> Another interview participant observed that:

---

<sup>8</sup> Emily Spencer, “The special operations forces mosaic: A portrait for discussion,” in *Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, ed. Jessica Glicken Turnley, Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben-Ari (London: Routledge, 2018), 30.

<sup>9</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, “Regimental Guide,” 4th ed., November 2012, 43-47.

<sup>10</sup> Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016.

...NZSOF have got a lot better on being the intellectual beachcombers to be able to go out there and see and adapt and take good ideas, and relationships [are] a big part of that.<sup>11</sup>

The establishment of the Special Operations Component Command came about after examining other 5SOF headquarter models, which were then adapted for New Zealand's specific requirements.<sup>12</sup> These are all examples of the NZSOF's adaptive emulation which creates commonality within the 5SOF network. More than in the NZDF and NZNSS networks, commonality is vitally important to maintaining the NZSOF's relationships in the 5SOF community network.

#### **7.2.4 Commonality as an overarching relational characteristic**

Commonality is an overarching relational characteristic of the NZSOF because it helps to create and maintain effective management and participation within the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks. If the NZSOF do not share anything in common with other nodes in a network, the NZSOF's presence in that network cannot be sustained.

Commonality may be professional in that it is created by an established hierarchical structure that employs and deploys the NZSOF in the regular course of the military profession of arms (the NZDF network), for example when the NZSOF were deployed as part of the broader NZDF response to peacekeeping in Timor Leste at the start of the

---

<sup>11</sup> Interview participant 13, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 28 October 2016, transcript.

<sup>12</sup> Interview participant 11, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 17 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016. See also Rian McKinstry, "New Zealand's geopolitics and its security challenge" (strategy research project, United States Army War College, 2018), 9-10.

twentieth century.<sup>13</sup> Commonality may be utilitarian in that it is created by the value proposition the NZSOF offer on an *ad hoc*, situational basis to a national security crisis (the NZNSS network), for example in the deployment of explosive ordnance disposal experts as part of the all-of-government response to the 2019 terrorist attacks in Christchurch.<sup>14</sup> Commonality may be personal in that it is created by long-standing historical and cultural ties between nodes that are supported by strong feelings of friendship or kinship among like-minded military force elements (the 5SOF network).<sup>15</sup> At times, commonality may also be exaggerated in some networks; even in the 5SOF network where commonality is arguably most prevalent, the characteristic can be overstated. For example, one 5SOF interview participant reinforced the tendency for exaggerated commonality by suggesting that even though the community is primarily defined by that characteristic: "We don't know as much as we think we do about each other."<sup>16</sup> Commonality is a strong overarching characteristic for the NZSOF, but it is not all-encompassing and the NZSOF or other network nodes should be cautious of automatic assumptions of commonality as a driving dynamic in networks. It has its

---

<sup>13</sup> John Crawford and Glyn Harper, *Operation East Timor: The New Zealand Defence Force in East Timor 1999-2001* (Auckland: Reed Books, 2001), 39, 50.

<sup>14</sup> "Christchurch mosques terror attack: 49 dead," *Otago Daily Times*, 15 March 2019, <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/christchurch-mosques-terror-attack-49-dead>.

<sup>15</sup> Interview participant 22, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 08 June 2017, transcript; Raymond A. Thomas, "GEN Thomas CoC remarks," speech, 30 March 2016; Interview participant 32, interview by Miriam Wharton, Canberra, Australia, 30 April 2018, interview notes; Interview participant 1, 11 August 2016; Eric Berne, *Games People Play: The Psychology of Human Relationships* (New York: Penguin Books, 1964), 151; James D. Kiras, "A theory of special operations: "These ideas are dangerous"," *Special Operations Journal* 1, iss. 2 (2015): 79-80; Stanley McChrystal, *My Share of the Task: A Memoir* (New York: Portfolio | Penguin, 2013), 96, 185, 243-244; Linda Robinson, *One Hundred Victories: Special Ops and the Future of American Warfare* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2013), 243.

<sup>16</sup> Interview participant 21, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 21 April 2017, interview notes.



variations within and across the key security networks examined in this thesis, and often it exists alongside the second overarching characteristic of the NZSOF, utility.

### **7.3 Overarching and subordinated characteristics: utility**

Utility is the second overarching relational characteristic identified in this analysis of the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks. Utility is defined by how the NZSOF pursue professional purpose and value in the networks in comparison with other nodes. This section will discuss how the fifteen subordinate relational characteristics contributes to and is encompassed within utility.

#### **7.3.1 Utility in the NZDF network**

Utility between the NZSOF and other nodes in the NZDF network is found in the unique value the NZSOF bring to the national military capability, of which being unconventional is a significant trait. The NZSOF's unconventional characteristic is encompassed within the utility characteristic in that members of the NZSOF are focused upon demonstrating their value to networks in an unconventional manner. The NZSOF's strategic characteristic is encompassed within the utility characteristic in that, if the characterisation of being strategic is accurate to the NZSOF in a specific context, it implies the NZSOF are offering value to networks or nodes that can materially change the circumstances of a strategic situation. In Chapter 4, the thesis noted that the Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018 document laid down an expectation that the

NZDF would maintain a mix of capabilities that have “broad utility”.<sup>17</sup> The force elements that comprise the NZDF network, including the NZSOF’s particular unconventional skill sets, are intended to offer something specific and unique to the broad spectrum of capabilities that enables the holistic network to respond to an array of different security challenges, but any of the force elements (including the NZSOF) are not inherently strategic unless employed as such in a particular context. The *taiaha* metaphor used to conceptualise the NZSOF in Chapter 3 examines the unique utility of the various force elements that make up the ego node. In the 2018 Statement, the NZSOF’s utility is explained by their:

...high state of readiness to inform or resolve contingencies that are of significant importance for New Zealand. These forces are trained and equipped to conduct special operations independently or as part of a multinational coalition, and are able to do so discreetly or visibly. Special Operations Forces are innovative, adaptive and agile but generalist. These forces are able to support other Defence Force elements and other Government agencies nationally, in New Zealand’s neighbourhood and further afield.<sup>18</sup>

In this sense, the NZSOF belong (the belonging characteristic) to the NZDF network because they share the common purpose with other nodes of being useful to the strategic goals and outcomes of that network but contribute a specific and unique skill set. In the NZSOF’s case, that includes (but may not be limited to) skills specifically tailored to unconventional activities such as special reconnaissance, counter-terrorism and explosive ordnance disposal, and an unconventional mindset that can think outside

---

<sup>17</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Defence, “Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018” (Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2018), 8.

<sup>18</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Defence, “Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018,” 35.

the conventional military 'box' (see Chapters 3 and 4). The integration characteristic also serves the network's utilitarian purpose. Many of the NZDF force elements are now either intrinsically 'joint' in nature (that is, they are tri-service force elements that are comprised of individuals and assets from all three services), or they are employed in a joint fashion to meet a particular security challenge. NZDF doctrine states that:

Effective military operations at the strategic and operational levels require military force elements from all Services to operate in an integrated fashion. The integrated approach allows the value of a joint force to become more than merely the sum of its component parts. When commanders and staff focus upon the desired outcomes or effects required, and employ the appropriate means from two or more Services, it is called generating the 'joint effect'.<sup>19</sup>

The NZSOF inherently exhibit the 'joint effect' referred to, through the Special Operations Component Commander reporting directly to the Commander Joint Forces New Zealand, and 1 NZSAS Regt recruiting from all three services as well as externally through civilian channels (see Chapters 3 and 4). There are examples of the NZSOF's contribution and utility to the integrated, joint utilitarian purpose of the NZDF network.

The NZSOF's belonging in the NZDF network is encompassed within the utility characteristic when the NZSOF and other NZDF nodes share the common purpose of being useful to, and adding to the "broad utility" of, the strategic goals and outcomes of the network. The NZSOF's disconnection from other nodes in the NZDF network is encompassed within the utility characteristic where the distinctness of their

---

<sup>19</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-D New Zealand Defence Doctrine," 4th ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2017), 44.

unconventional characteristic in relation to other NZDF nodes may enhance their claim to unique utility in the network. Utility can also be undermined by the NZSOF's disconnection from other nodes in the NZDF network where in its more extreme form disconnection could significantly alter the utility purpose they share with other NZDF nodes; this type of disconnection can be mitigated by utility through belonging and integration. The disconnection characteristic does not necessarily undermine the NZSOF's utility relative to other nodes in the NZDF network, although that is always a possibility. Chapter 4 discussed disconnection in relation to the difference between the NZSOF as unconventional force elements in contrast to other, conventional NZDF force elements. The relational behaviours that result from this significant point of difference nevertheless do not necessarily undermine the idea of utility; in fact, the NZSOF's argument for utility may be enhanced by the fact that their unconventional characteristic is such a distinct utility in comparison to the conventionality of other nodes. However, if the disconnection becomes so extreme that it undermines the belonging characteristic, in that circumstance utility through disconnection would not suffice to justify the NZSOF's presence in the network.

The fourth characteristic discussed in Chapter 4, the independence characteristic, is an endeavour on the part of the NZSOF to ensure they remain distinct force elements within the network, and therefore remaining of distinct utility, rather than risk being subsumed into other nodes and their means of providing utility. The NZSOF's independence in the NZDF network is encompassed within the utility characteristic where the NZSOF can support one part of their forces with another part of their forces, rather than relying on other nodes for assistance, and in that sense, they offer a useful

compartmented capability to the rest of the network – but only to a point. Utility can also be undermined by the NZSOF's independence in that if their utility is too independent from the rest of the network, they lose their justification to remain a part of the network because in that position the NZSOF's utility is not employed for the network's purpose. The chapter discussed an example where the NZSOF did not have a representative present when NZDF decision-makers were considering response options to a Pacific cyclone. Relying on other, conventional decision-makers to remember the NZSOF could offer capabilities to the response was insufficient in this instance; either those considering response options forgot the NZSOF were a possible solution, or they did not feel the need to have the NZSOF present at all. In this example the NZSOF's skill set was not employed because of what the interview participant perceived as a lack of independence within the network. Because utility is such an important characteristic, if the NZSOF cannot demonstrate a professional purpose (utility) for being a part of the NZDF network, if the NZSOF cannot work with other NZDF nodes as part of a joint or unified force to serve the network's utilitarian purpose, they risk losing their distinctness as a force element relative to other network nodes and might even cease to exist in its current form. The NZSOF's integration in NZDF is therefore important to the utility characteristic in that network.

### **7.3.2 Utility in the NZNSS network**

Utility is particularly important for the NZSOF's relationships with other nodes in the NZNSS network. Unlike commonality, utility is easily identified as an overarching characteristic in the NZNSS network and in fact what commonality there is in the network is primarily utilitarian. In the absence of a fixed hierarchical structure as in the

NZDF network, ultimately the utility of nodes to the common purpose of national security creates relationships and the reason for different nodes to participate in the network. The NZSOF are relevant to other nodes and to the network only insofar as they can contribute something unique and useful. For example, the development of a new Battle Training Facility for the NZSOF in south Auckland, opened in April 2016, was made available to other government agencies for training purposes. The facility was purpose-built for the NZSOF's requirements, but "will also be used by other divisions of the NZDF...as well as teams from the New Zealand Police, the New Zealand Fire Service and other Government services like search and rescue teams."<sup>20</sup> This relatively simple utility that the NZSOF can offer to other nodes in the NZNSS network – a physical training facility – is still a unique, valuable contribution that helps to strengthen both the NZSOF and the whole network.

The NZSOF's integration and collaboration in the NZNSS network is encompassed within the utility characteristic where the NZSOF and other NZNSS nodes work as part of a similarly unified approach that combines the NZSOF's utility of skill sets with the utility of other nodes. Chapter 5's discussion of integration and collaboration addresses the NZSOF's need to have their presence and utility in the NZNSS network understood by other network nodes. Integration and collaboration are made possible by those nodes understanding what the NZSOF potentially offer to the network on an *ad hoc*, situational basis at the operational and tactical levels and how they can be utilised in various contexts. Nevertheless, the NZSOF must continually make their case for utility

---

<sup>20</sup> Scott Yeoman, "Inside NZ's new SAS training facility," *New Zealand Herald*, 08 April 2016, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/inside-nzs-new-sas-training-facility/N2J4NQZF7W77YFNP6W2VX43GQU/>.

to the network, a proposition that may not be easy in the face of misunderstanding about the NZSOF's operational and tactical capabilities:

There's a considerable gap in understanding about what capability we bring. There is at times...misunderstanding about who and what SOF is...there are frameworks and perceptions that are difficult to alter. I think they [NZNSS nodes] can utilise us much more effectively if they knew more.<sup>21</sup>

Whether the NZSOF are integrated with other NZNSS nodes (for example, if a member of the NZSOF is seconded to work in another agency for a period of time), or whether they collaborate with other NZNSS nodes (for example, if the NZSOF's D Squadron (CDO) supports the New Zealand Police's "operational lead for reducing risk and responding to terrorism threats domestically", that combination of capabilities can only be truly effective (utilitarian) if nodes understand enough about each other to know how to work together.<sup>22</sup> The NZSOF's utility must be both distinct and communicable with the utility of other nodes in the network.

The NZSOF's siloisation characteristic in the NZNSS network is not conducive to enabling the NZSOF's communication about themselves and their capabilities to the network on a consistent basis. Utility can especially be undermined by the NZSOF's siloisation from other nodes in the NZNSS network when the NZSOF's capabilities are

---

<sup>21</sup> Interview participant 18, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 01 December 2016, transcript.

<sup>22</sup> Interview participant 31, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 15 February 2018, transcript; "About us," New Zealand Defence Force, accessed 15 February 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/about-us/>; Counter-Terrorism Coordination Committee, "Countering terrorism and violent extremism national strategy overview," ODESC: Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination, accessed 15 February 2021, <https://dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2020-02/2019-20%20CT%20Strategy-all-final.pdf>, 2.

withheld or obscured, and other NZNSS nodes lose sight of what those capabilities are and how they could be used for the greater utility of the network. Chapter 5 analysed how siloisation is an action that isolates the NZSOF's capabilities and highlights their differences in culture and practice from other network nodes. Siloisation may be self-imposed or externally imposed, but in either case the characteristic makes the NZSOF's efforts to apply their utility to the NZNSS network more difficult. Despite culture and practice, niche areas of utility do not have to be unnecessarily exclusionary and isolating themselves from the rest of the network does not support the NZSOF's argument that they offer utility when in fact, as discussed above, they do have utility in certain NZNSS contexts. Siloisation can be mitigated by utility through integration and collaboration.

The NZSOF offer fast, reactive, effective, and discrete utility for political decision-makers. The NZSOF's political sponsorship in the NZNSS network is encompassed within the utility characteristic when the NZSOF's closeness with political decision-makers can help facilitate the network's approach to national security in response to those decision-makers' political direction. Utility can also be undermined by the NZSOF's political sponsorship when that sponsorship is seen as a form of siloisation and therefore while the NZSOF may themselves experience a narrow form of utility, that perception can simultaneously reduce utility in the wider network because the NZSOF are perceived to be acting outside of the network. The political sponsorship characteristic represents a risk for the NZSOF's utility with other network nodes. Political sponsorship may be seen by other nodes as a form of siloisation – or at worst, outright favouritism. The NZSOF may gain a narrow form of utility for themselves, for



example receiving more funding for a new capability that improves or creates a new skill set, but simultaneously that could reduce utility in the holistic network because the NZSOF are perceived to be acting outside of the network and in their own interest. Conceivably there could be a positive form of utility through political sponsorship, where the NZSOF's connections with political decision-makers might be an avenue for other NZNSS nodes to approach those decision-makers with requests or recommendations. It is a less likely scenario. The NZSOF's utility in the NZNSS network is dependent in large part on how well they communicate and are understood and accepted by other network nodes as part of the holistic, all-of-government approach to the national security goal.

### **7.3.3 Utility in the 5SOF network**

The NZSOF's formalisation in the 5SOF network is encompassed within the utility characteristic when the elements formalised between the NZSOF and other 5SOF nodes lead to collective increased effectiveness or advantage. Utility can also be undermined by this subordinate characteristic if elements of their work are constrained by formalised arrangements and the NZSOF can no longer operate in the way they would prefer. As alluded to earlier, the NZSOF's size relative to other nodes in the 5SOF network is encompassed within the utility characteristic when the NZSOF's relatively small size enables them to move faster than other nodes and deliver unique value. They can also be more collaborative because their size require them to lean on other nodes for support rather than being self-sufficient. At the same time, utility can also be undermined by the NZSOF's size when they function as a limiting factor on the NZSOF's ability to contribute to the network due to a lack of resources (human,

financial, equipment or otherwise). The NZSOF's value is often determined by a pragmatic assessment of what they can offer to the network. Utility can also be undermined here if the NZSOF's (or other nodes') pragmatic considerations about the value of the NZSOF's participation in the network lead to a decision to reduce or entirely remove their contribution.

However, it seems clear that the NZSOF's utility in the 5SOF network is primarily driven by the pragmatism characteristic. Chapter 6 analysed how the opportunities and limitations of the NZSOF's small size relative to other 5SOF nodes leads the NZSOF to prioritise their activities within the network carefully. It welcomes the impression of members of other nodes that the NZSOF are contributing above and beyond what might be expected of entities of their size. Nevertheless, to remain active participants in the network that add material value, the NZSOF must be able to successively demonstrate their utility to their partners. Their early contribution to the multi-national coalition in Afghanistan after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks is one instance where the NZSOF demonstrated their utility to other 5SOF nodes as they have done in previous operational campaigns over the years.<sup>23</sup> Because the NZSOF were able to demonstrate combat effectiveness in Afghanistan, they were among those national forces distinguished from others in Afghanistan that were not permitted to engage in

---

<sup>23</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations," 3rd ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2018), 27: "NZSOF capabilities will, in all probability, form part of a coalition with the ability to be task-tailored to particular circumstances. To ensure foreign policy utility, NZSOF should be benchmarked and interoperable with SOF from New Zealand's defence partners."

significant combat engagements.<sup>24</sup> They also offered certain unique skill sets to the coalition:

We were an exceptionally valued contribution, in fact when we arrived there we were the only capability from a number of providing nations that could go into high altitude AND cold weather environments. We could provide real value there, completely disproportionate to the size of our force simply because of the training and expertise that we had in that particular niche area of capability.<sup>25</sup>

In instances such as the one described above, the NZSOF's efforts can demonstrate their comparative value to the 5SOF network.<sup>26</sup> For the NZSOF to offer their utility to the 5SOF network is a pragmatic calculation; to remain relevant and demonstrate their value.

The size characteristic in the 5SOF network is not necessarily a determining factor one way or another in deciding the NZSOF's general utility within the network. Despite not necessarily acting as a determining factor for relationships in the network, size can still be a limiting factor, and therefore inhibits the scope within which the NZSOF can demonstrate utility to other 5SOF nodes. The formalisation characteristic is an avenue for the NZSOF to demonstrate how their obligation to focus on niche capabilities or contributions because of their size can still produce utility. Chapter 6 observes how SOLOs are placed carefully to maximise utility. Another example noted was the

---

<sup>24</sup> Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the War Against the Taliban*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2009), 338-339.

<sup>25</sup> Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016.

<sup>26</sup> Phil Goff, "Presentation of the US Presidential Unit Citation," [Beehive.govt.nz](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/presentation-us-presidential-unit-citation), 24 May 2007, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/presentation-us-presidential-unit-citation>: The value of the NZSOF's contribution to their FVEY / 5SOF partner the United States of America was recognised by the awarding of the U.S. Presidential Unit Citation to members of 1 NZSAS Group in 2007.

establishment of MOUs within the 5SOF network to enable formalised information sharing, and therefore shared utility among the nodes. Despite the strength and prevalence of commonality as a cross-network relational characteristic in the 5SOF network, the professional purpose of utility is also a vitally important measure of the NZSOF's relationships and relational characteristics in that context.

### **7.3.4 Utility as an overarching relational characteristic**

Utility is an overarching relational characteristic for the NZSOF because it is the existential and operational function the NZSOF offer to the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks. Without utility, the NZSOF have little reason to remain part of these networks. This is particularly obvious in the amorphous NZNSS network, where nodes only take part in the network if their unique skill set is of value in addressing a particular national security challenge. Utility does not always have to be a primary characteristic in the NZSOF's relationships; sometimes the NZSOF members can build network relationships simply by contributing a supportive, listening ear to a colleague, being a "good guy" or having an approachable, welcoming culture.<sup>27</sup> However, because the NZSOF are ultimately professional nodes that exist as state assets, personal connections are not sufficient to maintain presence in a network over the long term. The NZSOF's utility may be found in providing unconventional force elements to a conventional military hierarchy (the NZDF network). Equally, utility may be found in a similarly unique skill set that cannot be found in any other node (the NZNSS network).

---

<sup>27</sup> Interview participant 2, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 25 August 2016, transcript; Interview participant 5, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 27 September 2016, transcript; Interview participant 24, interview by Miriam Wharton, Honolulu, Hawaii, 20 September 2017, transcript.

Utility may be found in a willingness to contribute or provide a unique skill to nodes that are similarly philosophically, culturally, capably, and strategically aligned with the NZSOF (the 5SOF network). As such, the NZSOF's evolutionary characteristic is encompassed within the utility characteristic in that they have the capability to evolve according to the needs of the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks or according to the needs of their relationships with nodes in those networks. Utility can also be undermined by the evolutionary characteristic in that the NZSOF's evolution can diminish their utility to networks or network nodes depending on what that evolution entails. It is also conceivable that enhancing their utility in one network may diminish the NZSOF's utility in another network if the needs and values of those networks diverge.

#### **7.4 Illustrating the overarching and subordinate characteristics: the Operation BURNHAM inquiry**

The Operation BURNHAM inquiry may be used as an illustration of how the NZSOF's overarching and subordinate characteristics appear in a specific scenario. The inquiry originated in a book released in 2017 by investigative journalists Nicky Hager and Jon Stephenson, entitled *Hit & Run: The New Zealand SAS in Afghanistan and the Meaning of Honour*.<sup>28</sup> The book made allegations of serious NZSAS misconduct while on an operation in Afghanistan codenamed BURNHAM in August 2010, as well as other

---

<sup>28</sup> Nicky Hager and Jon Stephenson, *Hit & Run: The New Zealand SAS in Afghanistan and the Meaning of Honour* (Nelson: Potton & Burton, 2017). Two earlier articles on similar topics were written by Jon Stephenson: Jon Stephenson, "Eyes wide shut," *Metro*, May 2011, 38-49; Jon Stephenson and Simon Wilson, "Eyes wider shut," *Metro*, June 2011, 38-41.

associated operational events. Those allegations included civilian casualties, wrong or misleading intelligence, deliberate and malicious destruction of property, motivations of revenge and retaliation, no aid or assistance to those impacted by the operations, mistreatment of a detainee, breaches of international humanitarian law, the Law of Armed Conflict, Rules of Engagement and detainee law, and a cover-up of the operation and alleged actions of the NZSAS servicepersons involved.<sup>29</sup> The New Zealand Government announced an independent inquiry into the allegations and related matters in April 2018. The inquiry's findings were reported to the Attorney-General in July 2020 and subsequently released publicly.<sup>30</sup> Its main findings included:

- The *Hit & Run* book was accurate in its account of the operations in some respects, but inaccurate in other important respects (p. 21).
- Principal allegations about NZDF personnel misconduct were not accurate (p. 21).
- Rules of Engagement authorised the use of appropriate lethal force (p. 25-26).
- During the operation NZDF servicepeople were unaware of possible civilian casualties, but after allegations of casualties were made those allegations were not adequately investigated and misstatements or inaccurate statements were made to ministers and in public releases (p. 27-28).

---

<sup>29</sup> Hager and Stephenson, *Hit & Run*. Refer to Hager and Stephenson's book for allegations made throughout the text. The Inquiry into Operation Burnham report summarises these allegations: "Report of the Government Inquiry into Operation Burnham and related matters," Inquiry into Operation Burnham, July 2020, <https://operationburnham.inquiry.govt.nz/assets/IOB-Files/Report-of-the-Government-Inquiry-into-Operation-Burnham-print-version.pdf>, 8-9.

<sup>30</sup> Inquiry into Operation Burnham, accessed 15 February 2021, <https://operationburnham.inquiry.govt.nz>.

- There was no organised institutional strategy in NZDF to cover up its role in Operation BURNHAM or the possibility of civilian casualties (p. 28)
- A detained individual was punched in the ribs and stomach as he was put into a vehicle for transport to an Afghani detention facility; at that facility there is strong evidence the individual was tortured by Afghan security forces; New Zealand authorities did not conduct further inquiries or bring the matter to the attention of ministers (p. 31).
- NZDF's approach to Afghan-partnered operations was inappropriate (approach should have focused on substance, not form) (p. 32).<sup>31</sup>

The report's authors made four recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1.** A Ministerial review of NZDF's (a) organisational structure and (b) record-keeping and retrieval processes through the appointment of an expert review group comprising people from within and outside NZDF, including overseas military personnel with relevant expertise.
- **Recommendation 2.** Establishment of an office of the Independent Inspector-General of Defence to facilitate independent oversight of NZDF and enhance its democratic accountability.
- **Recommendation 3.** A Defence Force Order be promulgated setting out how allegations of civilian casualties should be dealt with, both in-theatre and at New Zealand Defence Force Headquarters.

---

<sup>31</sup> "Report of the Government Inquiry into Operation Burnham and related matters," 20-33.

- **Recommendation 4.** Development of effective detention policies, procedures, and related training for NZDF personnel.<sup>32</sup>

The Operation BURNHAM inquiry is a specific relational issue, time-bound, but potentially long-lasting in its consequences. The immediate effects of the inquiry on the NZSOF's relationships are only just beginning to take shape, and the longer-term relational effects may only be guessed at. However, the ramifications of the inquiry will likely have some effect on the NZSOF's relationships in the three key security networks analysed in this thesis. Therefore, the Operation BURNHAM inquiry can be explored to illustrate how the NZSOF's relational characteristics are exhibited in this specific case.

#### **7.4.1 Operation BURNHAM inquiry and the NZDF network**

The implications of the Operation BURNHAM inquiry for the NZSOF's relational characteristics and relationships in the NZDF network are potentially substantial. In Chapter 4 the belonging characteristic brought the NZSOF within a hierarchical structure that is shared by all nodes. Similarly, the inquiry's impacts on the NZSOF node will be felt by the whole hierarchical network. It is interesting that Recommendation 1 suggests that the Minister of Defence should satisfy him or herself about the NZDF's organisational structure, not just the NZSOF's organisational structure. While it would be fair to assume that the focus of structural reform might focus on the NZSOF, the entire hierarchy is brought into focus in the inquiry's report. The integration characteristic also will reflect this impact, in that the report recommends the establishment of new policies, procedures and training that all NZDF nodes will be

---

<sup>32</sup> "Report of the Government Inquiry into Operation Burnham and related matters," 33-34.



expected to adhere to, not just the NZSOF.<sup>33</sup> An integrated organisational response to these recommendations is required. The NZSOF's disconnection characteristic may suggest that in relation to Operation BURNHAM the force elements were involved in activities showing a deviation from the military norm and ignoring NZDF policies, but in fact the inquiry report does not support this conclusion. Rather, the issues raised by the report are more general; for example, inaccurate reporting from the operational theatre, practices around partnering with foreign nationals on operations and an isolated incident of assault on a detainee are not peculiarly issues for the NZSOF. The mitigations for the issues raised, such as the establishment of an independent Inspector-General of Defence and changes to policy, practice and training, again suggest network-wide resolution rather than changes specifically related to the NZSOF node itself.<sup>34</sup>

The fourth characteristic of the NZSOF Chapter 4 analysed in the NZDF network, namely independence, may be affected in a similar manner to the other three discussed above, in that there is a general impact that is also felt relatively equally by the entirety of the NZDF. However, this thesis would suggest that in fact the NZSOF's independence characteristic may be affected more than the others and in a different fashion in the

---

<sup>33</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDF enacts rules around civilian harm reports," 11 February 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/news/nzdf-enacts-rules-around-civilian-harm-reports/>; "NZ Defence Force releases new rules for dealing with civilian harm," *Radio New Zealand*, 11 February 2021, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/436216/nz-defence-force-releases-new-rules-for-dealing-with-civilian-harm>: Defence Force Order 35 – New Zealand Defence Force Response to Civilian Harm was publicly released on 11 February 2021 in response to the Inquiry recommendations.

<sup>34</sup> Rhys Ball and Wil Hoverd, "Overseeing New Zealand's modern military operations," *New Zealand International Review* 42, no. 6 (2017): 18-21: See Ball and Hoverd's analysis of organisational, institutional, and political accountability towards the military, including recommending establishing an independent Inspector-General of Defence as a result of the Operation BURNHAM inquiry.

way the rest of the NZDF network is affected. The NZSOF's capabilities are unlikely to change because of the Operation BURNHAM inquiry, but how those capabilities are used as part of the hierarchical network may well change. The overarching characteristics of commonality and utility remain to anchor the NZSOF in the NZDF network, but decision-makers may exhibit less tolerance in future for the NZSOF's independence in that network. The examination of organisational structures mentioned above may result in changes that begin to reflect such a trend. The NZSOF's relational characteristics and relationships in the NZDF network will likely be affected to some degree by the inquiry. This supposition is speculative in the early post-inquiry period, but not unreasonable.

#### **7.4.2 Operation BURNHAM inquiry in the NZNSS network**

The NZSOF's relational characteristics and relationships in the NZNSS network will also likely be affected, but probably to a lesser degree than in the NZDF network. Other NZNSS nodes, including MFAT, DPMC, the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS), the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) all provided information to the inquiry and are therefore in some measure caught up in the findings and recommendations, even as NZDF and the NZSOF remain the focus.<sup>35</sup> In Chapter 5 the integration and collaboration characteristics were analysed as being ways the NZSOF would contribute to a united approach towards the common national security goal. If organisational change occurs because of the recommendation made by the inquiry, the way the NZSOF integrate with other NZNSS nodes may also change if the NZSOF node evolves into a different structure.

---

<sup>35</sup> "Report of the Government Inquiry into Operation Burnham and related matters," 35.

Collaboration may change because of the introduction of new policies and procedures. The way the NZSOF engage and collaborate with other NZNSS nodes may be impacted by new requirements around record-keeping or the way in which they give subject matter expertise and advice within the network.

An inclination by other nodes to be less collaborative with the NZSOF because of allegations that operational level personnel from the NZSOF acted unprofessionally or illegally is unlikely because the report found those allegations (except in one instance) to be incorrect, but it is not outside the realm of possibility. If ostracization of the NZSOF in the network occurs due to the public allegations and inquiry, this will in fact support the siloisation characteristic (in its externally imposed variation). It is the characteristic of political sponsorship that may be most impacted by the Operation BURNHAM inquiry. The report's findings were clear that significant misstatements or inaccurate statements were made by commanders of the NZSOF to senior military decision-makers, and by senior military decision-makers to political decision-makers. The relationship between the NZSOF and political decision-makers in New Zealand, already mistrusted by some as analysed in Chapter 5, has become more problematic in the wake of the report's findings and it is more likely than not that political sponsorship will be less easily forthcoming to the NZSOF in the future, or may change in form from casual engagement to something more formal.<sup>36</sup> Again, the points made here are speculative and may be hard to assess for accuracy because individuals do not always articulate their internal thoughts, and sometimes thoughts and words and actions do

---

<sup>36</sup> Interview participant 30, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 14 February 2018, transcript.

not concur, but it is fair to assume that the NZSOF's relational characteristics and relationships in the NZNSS network will be affected to some degree.

### 7.4.3 Operation BURNHAM inquiry in the 5SOF network

The NZSOF's relational characteristics and relationships in the 5SOF network will likely not be materially affected in the near term by the Operation BURNHAM inquiry. All nodes in the 5SOF network have experienced allegations and inquiries like Operation BURNHAM.<sup>37</sup> The Brereton Report into allegations of Australian SAS misconduct in

---

<sup>37</sup> See for example C. August Elliot, "The abuse scandal rocking Australia's special operations forces," *Foreign Policy*, 14 August 2018, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/14/the-abuse-scandal-rocking-australias-special-operations-forces/>; Bernard Lagan, "Australia SAS chief says elite troops were guilty of Afghan war crimes," *The Times*, 30 June 2020, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/world/australia-sas-chief-says-elite-troops-were-guilty-of-afghan-war-crimes-mrsq3c8nw>; Brendan Nicholson, "Australian Army rebuilding special forces culture ahead of Afghanistan war crimes report," *ASPI The Strategist*, 03 October 2020, <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/australian-army-rebuilding-special-forces-culture-ahead-of-afghanistan-war-crimes-report/>; Brendan Nicholson, "How the Lindt café siege exposed army atrocities," *ASPI Australian Strategic Policy Institute*, 16 November 2020, <https://www.aspi.org.au/opinion/how-lindt-cafe-siege-exposed-army-atrocities>; Christopher Knaus, "Australia's entire SAS regiment must be disbanded after Brereton report, expert says," *The Guardian*, 24 November 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/nov/25/australias-entire-sas-regiment-must-be-disbanded-after-brereton-report-expert-says>; "Families of Afghan men allegedly killed by Australian SAS soldiers still asking for justice," *Radio New Zealand*, 26 November 2020, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/world/431525/families-of-afghan-men-allegedly-killed-by-australian-sas-soldiers-still-asking-for-justice>; "They are not one of us': SAS soldiers condemn war crime perpetrators," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 November 2020, <https://www.smh.com.au/national/they-are-not-one-of-us-sas-soldiers-condemn-war-crime-perpetrators-20201116-p56ezv.html>; "Elite British special forces troops accused of running hit squads in Afghanistan," *The National*, accessed 18 August 2018, <https://www.thenational.ae/world/elite-british-special-forces-troops-accused-of-running-hit-squads-in-afghanistan-1.91485>; "Corps affirms full exoneration for MARSOC unit rocked by scandal," *Military.com*, accessed 18 August 2018, <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2018/02/07/corps-affirms-full-exoneration-marsoc-unit-rocked-scandal.html>; Gidget Fuentes, "A Jekyll and Hyde portrait emerges of the SEAL accused of murdering an Islamic State prisoner," *Navy Times*, 15 November 2018, <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2018/11/15/a-jekyll-and-hyde-portrait-emerges-of-the-seal-accused-of-murdering-an-islamic-state-prisoner/>; Meghann Myers, "SOCOM boss calls for another ethics review," *Military Times*, 12 August 2019, <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2019/08/12/socom-boss-calls-for-another-ethics-review/>; Meghann Myers, "The Pentagon is reviewing the special operations community after a series of high-profile scandals," *Military Times*, 05 December 2018, <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/12/05/the-pentagon-is-reviewing-the>

Afghanistan, for example, is even newer than the Operation BURNHAM inquiry, far more wide-ranging and serious.<sup>38</sup> The pragmatism characteristic analysed in Chapter 6 suggests that other 5SOF nodes would not see anything extraordinary in the NZSOF's experience with the Operation BURNHAM inquiry. The NZSOF's shared commonality and utility with other nodes is unlikely to change as a result. In fact, this shared experience may even enhance a sense of commonality in the network. The NZSOF's size characteristic in the 5SOF network is also unlikely to be materially affected by the inquiry unless the Minister of Defence's examination of NZDF's (presumably the NZSOF's) organisational structure results in significant changes to the way the NZSOF are currently composed and where they are placed in the NZDF network.

Paired with size in the scenario above is the NZSOF's formalisation characteristic. Organisational change is a formalising action by the NZDF network, and whatever change occurs has the potential to also change the formalising features of the NZSOF's relationships with other 5SOF nodes. For example, if the NZSOF are completely subsumed back into the Army and the Special Operations Component Command

---

[special-operations-community-after-a-series-of-high-profile-scandals/](#); Meghann Myers, "Spec ops in trouble: Mired in scandal and under Pentagon review, what will it take to clean house?" *Army Times*, 13 March 2019, <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2019/03/13/spec-ops-in-trouble-mired-in-scandal-and-under-pentagon-review-what-will-it-take-to-clean-house/>; Geoff Ziezulewicz, "How the Navy plans to deal with drug use and war crimes allegations in the SEAL community," *Navy Times*, 13 February 2019, <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2019/02/13/how-the-navy-plans-to-deal-with-drug-use-and-war-crimes-allegations-in-the-seal-community/>.

<sup>38</sup> The Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry, accessed 15 February 2021, <https://afghanistandinquiry.defence.gov.au>; "Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry Report: Part 1 – The Inquiry and Part 3 – Operational, organisation and cultural issues," The Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry, November 2020, <https://afghanistandinquiry.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-11/IGADF-Afghanistan-Inquiry-Public-Release-Version.pdf>.

essentially ceases to exist, the NZSOF will no longer have a distinct strategic headquarters equivalent to those of the other 5SOF nodes. Removing the strategic headquarters element would remove a point of commonality the NZSOF currently have with other 5SOF network nodes and would likely therefore have the effect of reducing the efficacy of New Zealand representation at senior levels in 5SOF and the broader international special operations forces community. It would not remove engagement between the NZSOF and other 5SOF nodes at the strategic level altogether, but it would complicate that engagement and further exacerbate the size differences within this network. New policies, procedures and training around operational activity and detention also have the potential to cause divergence from formalised policies, procedures and training in other nodes which might complicate the NZSOF's sense of commonality in the network. Of the three key security networks analysed in this thesis the NZSOF's relationships and relational characteristics in the 5SOF network is least likely to be significantly affected by the process, findings, and recommendations of the inquiry report, but only future developments will determine if this is indeed the case.

#### **7.4.4 Operation BURNHAM inquiry as an illustration of ego node relational characteristics**

The Operation BURNHAM inquiry is a useful illustration of the NZSOF's ego node relational characteristics because it impacts across the three key security networks analysed in this thesis and is the most notable public-facing issue relating to the NZSOF of recent times (except perhaps for Corporal Willie Apiata's Victoria Cross for New

Zealand, awarded in 2007 which was a positive event in the NZSOF's history).<sup>39</sup> The inquiry and its report have potential ramifications for the NZSOF's relational characteristics and relationships in the future, as well as how these are currently expressed.

To further demonstrate how the inquiry is a cross-network illustration, this thesis refers to the public statement Chief of Defence Force Air Marshal Kevin Short made on the report's release. Within the one statement, Air Marshal Short made comments relevant to all three networks. In relation to the NZDF network, his statement says:

...this Inquiry Report demonstrates that we let our frontline service people down through a series of organisational and administrative failings that saw incorrect information provided to Ministers and the New Zealand public. And for that, I am deeply sorry.<sup>40</sup>

What this statement indicates is that operational personnel were failed by the inadequate actions of the NZSOF and NZDF decision-makers at the strategic level. It speaks to relationships within the network between the strategic and operational levels, and between the NZSOF's service personnel, the NZSOF's leadership and NZDF leadership. In other words, the relationships and expectations and hierarchical structures in place at the time of Operation BURNHAM and subsequently were insufficient mechanisms to support good relationships within the network. The

---

<sup>39</sup> "Lance-Corporal Bill (Willie) Henry Apiata, NZSAS," New Zealand History | Nga korero a ipurangi o Aotearoa, accessed 15 February 2021, <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/page/nz-victoria-cross-recipients#apiata>.

<sup>40</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "Report of the inquiry into Operation Burnham released: A statement from Air Marshal Kevin Short," accessed 15 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/news/report-of-the-inquiry-into-operation-burnham-released/>.

implication of this finding is that the trust between nodes, and even within the NZSOF ego node between its operational and strategic level personnel, may need to be rebuilt and the changes made because of the inquiry will have to reflect this reality.

In relation to the NZNSS network, Air Marshal Short's statement says:

I accept the recommendations for the Defence Force made by the Inquiry and will work with Ministers and other agencies to adopt them, including the establishment of an independent Inspector-General of Defence.<sup>41</sup>

What this statement indicates is that NZDF's (and the NZSOF's) response to the inquiry will be assisted and facilitated by cooperation with other NZNSS nodes. Political sponsorship may be replaced by a more focused engagement with the Minister of Defence and other political decision-makers to make necessary changes. An independent Inspector-General of Defence may constitute a new NZNSS node as if it is established separate from and outside of the NZDF. As was discussed above, other NZNSS nodes contributed information to the inquiry itself. In this way, the inquiry is relevant to the NZSOF's relationships and relational characteristics in the NZNSS network because of the way in which an all-of-government approach to national security is practiced.

In relation to the 5SOF network, Air Marshal Short's statement says:

---

<sup>41</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "Report of the inquiry into Operation Burnham released: A statement from Air Marshal Kevin Short."



New Zealand's armed forces are well respected internationally – whether providing humanitarian aid, reconstruction, training, peace keeping, or in combat. They are held in high regard for their skills, resourcefulness, their humility and their courage.<sup>42</sup>

This statement is reaffirming a belief that NZDF's (and implicitly the NZSOF's) relationships with international partners such as the 5SOF nodes remain intact despite the inquiry and its report. It supports the assumption this thesis makes above that the NZSOF's relationships and relational characteristics in the 5SOF network are likely to remain unchanged.

The Operation BURNHAM inquiry was a useful illustration to show how a specific scenario involving the NZSOF impacts on that ego node's relationships in the three key security networks. It also illustrated how specific characteristics (overarching and subordinate) exhibit themselves in those relationships within the parameters of that specific scenario. What the Operation BURNHAM inquiry illustration has shown is that in each network the NZSOF's relationships have a specific relational dynamic that is created and evolves depending on how the characteristics interact with each other. For example, the impacts of the inquiry caused the NZSOF's belonging and integration characteristics to strengthen the relationships with other NZDF nodes, while the independence characteristic was reduced. The NZSOF's political sponsorship characteristic in the NZNSS network was weakened, and their characteristics in the 5SOF network remained relatively stable.

---

<sup>42</sup> New Zealand Defence Force, "Report of the inquiry into Operation Burnham released: A statement from Air Marshal Kevin Short."

The Operation BURNHAM inquiry illustration contributed to this thesis's answer to the first research question by identifying and describing the NZSOF's relational characteristics present and interacting in the NZSOF's relationships as they related to the inquiry scenario. The illustration also contributed to this thesis's answer to the second research question by discussing the possible implications for the NZSOF's relationships in the three key security networks as a consequence of how those relational characteristics changed and interacted with each other in this specific context. The Operation BURNHAM inquiry was a useful and important illustration for the thesis because it provided a concrete example of how the various elements of the NZSOF's relationships result in relational dynamics that are identifiable, describable, and complex in their implications for the future of the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks.

## **7.5 Conclusion**

In Chapter 7 the thesis has conducted an ego node analysis of the NZSOF's 15 subordinate relational characteristics in relation to two overarching relational characteristics – 'Commonality' and 'Utility'. It also presented the Operation BURNHAM inquiry as a practical illustration of how the characteristics appear in a specific scenario. The ego node analysis has been predicated on a proposition that these characteristics are either exhibited or not exhibited by the NZSOF at any given time (or, in the case of the overarching characteristics, always being exhibited). In Chapter 8 the thesis will put the proposition of the ego node analysis aside. It will conduct a second-level analysis of the relational dynamics taking place between the NZSOF ego node and other nodes in

the networks, and how the NZSOF relate sometimes paradoxically across their key security networks.

## 8: The NZSOF's Relational Dynamics – Paradoxical

### Alchemy?

#### 8.0 Introduction

Having established an understanding in Chapter 7 of the characteristics the NZSOF ego node exhibits in its relationships, Chapter 8 will look at the relationships themselves. It will examine the relational dynamics that occur when its characteristics are exhibited in those relationships, particularly when they occur simultaneously and are moving along a spectrum of possible ways those characteristics can manifest. The chapter will then analyse three products of the NZSOF's relational dynamics – 'Liminality', 'Ambiguity' and 'Tension'. It will explain how those products at times can introduce a seeming or actual paradox to the NZSOF's relationships. The chapter will suggest that the paradox leaves the NZSOF with two possible approaches to their relationships. They could choose to resolve the paradox by changing their relational characteristics, sacrificing relational dynamism for relational stability and certainty by halting the movement and fluidity of those characteristics, or they could choose to accept and harness the paradox to support their relationships that may come at a cost or necessitate certain sacrifices.<sup>1</sup> The latter option requires the NZSOF to find an alchemy for their paradox that enables their relationships to remain viable.

---

<sup>1</sup> Interview participant 9, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript.

## **8.1 Relational dynamics**

Previously, this thesis has analysed the NZSOF's relational characteristics in relative isolation through their presence in one or another key security network (or in the case of commonality and utility across all three networks). Chapter 8 moves from examining relational characteristics, which are focused predominantly on the NZSOF ego node, to the actual relationships the NZSOF have with other network nodes. The relational dynamics constitute relationships; they are what occur between the NZSOF ego node and other nodes in the three key security networks. This thesis defines a relational dynamic as the force resulting from the interplay of the NZSOF's relational characteristics in their network relationships. Relational dynamics are created by the characteristics described in Chapters 3 to 7 (the two overarching characteristics and the fifteen subordinate characteristics) being exhibited in the NZSOF's relationships. The interplay of characteristics occurs on a spectrum of possible ways they can be exhibited, either towards other nodes, away from other nodes, or static. They almost always also occur simultaneously.

Relational dynamics are creative, continually constructed and deconstructed in the interplay between characteristics. Because they are creative, relational dynamics have their own effect. Sometimes what is produced is an effect where relationships occur easily and without contention; they just work. At other times, what is produced is more contentious and requires active management. There are three products this thesis will examine that fall into the latter category – 'Liminality', 'Ambiguity', and 'Tension'. These products are the result of the relational dynamics, of which the NZSOF's relationships

are comprised. They are significant enough to shape the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks in important ways. Liminality, ambiguity, and tension all introduce a seeming or actual paradox to the NZSOF's relationships that requires clarification, understanding and, quite often, mitigation.

## **8.2 Liminality**

As the NZSOF engage in their relationships, the relational dynamics that occur create three products that, at times, introduce seeming or actual paradox into the NZSOF's relationships. The first of those products is liminality. Liminality is defined in this thesis as a state in which a node (the NZSOF in this case, but it could be true of any node) exists when it is unfixed and moves within networks in an indeterminate manner; it never permanently settles on one state or another. The concept of liminality comes from Victor Turner's *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*.<sup>2</sup> Turner suggests that "[l]iminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial."<sup>3</sup> In a general sense Turner's concept of liminality places entities between one fixed state and another.

This thesis argues that the NZSOF in fact often exist in the liminal state. Liminality is the result when the NZSOF's relational characteristics create relational dynamics where those relationships are not just exhibiting either one characteristic or another, but both

---

<sup>2</sup> Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1995).

<sup>3</sup> Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 95.

at one and the same time. For example, commonality where the NZSOF share things in common with other network nodes, and pragmatism, where the NZSOF and other network nodes act on their own capabilities and interests, places the NZSOF in a liminal state that involves neither just commonality or pragmatism, but both at one and the same time. Commonality and pragmatism are both evident in the 5SOF network. The NZSOF share historical, cultural, and philosophical links in common with AUSOF, CASOF, UKSOF and USSOF (commonality). The NZSOF also prioritise the USSOF by placing a permanent SOLO in the United States of America, where they have not done so in the other 5SOF nodes, because the USSOF are a global hub for special operations forces representation (pragmatism). The NZSOF are neither "here" (in the sense of being solely relationally driven by commonality) nor "there" (in the sense of being solely relationally driven by pragmatism). Both occur, simultaneously. The NZSOF's liminality is paradoxical; in this example, liminality exists in relational dynamics in 5SOF that emphasise both characteristics, changing at different times, that represent a paradox in the NZSOF's relationships.

This thesis diverges from Turner's general conceptualisation of liminality in some respects. Turner states that the "liminal period", the state of liminality, "is of society as an unstructured or rudimentarily structured and relatively undifferentiated *comitatus*, community, or even communion of equal individuals".<sup>4</sup> This thesis defines community (through commonality, most noticeable in the 5SOF network, but also present in the NZDF and NZNSS networks) as an independent state of being that is not inherently liminal. The NZSOF's departure from a sole existence in community towards another

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 96.

state of being, or between community and that other state of being, is what puts them in a liminal state. This thesis also diverges from Turner's conceptualisation in that it suggests the NZSOF's liminality, which is a product of their relational dynamics, is in fact a permanent relational state, rather than Turner's suggestion of liminality as a transitional state that will eventually end or be resolved.<sup>5</sup> In Turner's own words, the NZSOF's liminality, like that of "monastic and mendicant states in the great world religions", is a case in which transition has "become a permanent condition."<sup>6</sup> The liminality of the NZSOF's relationships is that they often reside in an unfixed, mutable, irregular state when engaging with other nodes in the three key security networks.

Using the 5SOF example described above, if the NZSOF were to resolve their liminality by entirely embracing and fixing themselves in commonality in the 5SOF network, they would likely move beyond the limits of their resources in trying to equally place and maintain permanent SOLOs in all four other network nodes, a feat that not even the largest of those nodes (the USSOF) has been able or willing to achieve.<sup>7</sup> Or if the NZSOF were to resolve their liminality by entirely embracing pragmatism in the 5SOF network, they could ignore the foundational history and culture that underpins the network in favour of just developing their relationship with the AUSOF, their closest geographic neighbour, and thereby undercutting the communal links that are interweaved in the very fabric of the 5SOF network. Either of these options to resolve the paradox evident in the interaction of their relational characteristics might decide

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 129.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>7</sup> Raymond A. Thomas, "Advance Policy Questions for Lieutenant General Raymond A. Thomas, USA: Nominee for Commander, United States Special Operations Command" (09 March 2016), [http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/thomas\\_03-09-16](http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/thomas_03-09-16), 25.



the NZSOF's liminality, but it would fundamentally change the NZSOF as a relational entity in that network.

### **8.3 Ambiguity**

The second product of the NZSOF's relational dynamics that at times introduces seeming or actual paradox to their relationships is ambiguity. Ambiguity flows from liminality and is defined in this thesis as the unfixed quality of multiple characteristics manifest in a node's relational dynamics in networks. The discussion of liminality suggested that the NZSOF often exist in a liminal state that represents a paradox in the NZSOF's relationships. The liminality of existing "betwixt and between" two or more different relational characteristics at once, and in more than one network at once, is a profoundly ambiguous state of being for the NZSOF. The distinction between liminality and ambiguity is that liminality refers to how the NZSOF position themselves in relation to something or someone, and ambiguity refers to an inherent quality or characteristic of the NZSOF. Within their set of relational characteristics, either within a single network or across networks, the NZSOF are often in a state of 'both' (simultaneity of characteristics) and 'neither' (never just one individual characteristic) rather than 'either' or 'or'. Nina Boyd Krebs who has written about "edgewalkers" (liminal people) does not see the ambiguity associated with liminality necessarily as problematic:

As a psychologist, I have learned over the years...the importance of sustaining warring thoughts and feelings [or states of being] within myself. Most of us have a tendency to reduce this uncomfortable state by jumping one way or the other. Staying in the middle, looking at both sides, picking and choosing from each, challenges even the most

stalwart social reformer. But that process of living through ambiguity and choosing consciously is a basic building block for conflict management. To the extent any of us can learn to expand our tolerance for internal paradox, we expand our ability to relate to people different from ourselves.<sup>8</sup>

The quote suggests that choosing to hold one's liminality and ambiguity can be difficult, but ultimately more valuable for the NZSOF than trying to resolve the paradox of that state of being. It becomes even more valuable when paradoxical liminality and ambiguity can be used to enhance the utility that the NZSOF can bring to their relationships.

The example used in Chapters 3 and 4 of the balance the NZSOF strike between unconventional and conventional is a good illustration of the ambiguous aspect of the paradox in their relationships. Chapter 3 discussed the NZSOF's unconventional characteristic. Elements of the NZSOF's structure and function intentionally place them outside certain norms of the NZDF network within which they sit. Chapter 4 expands on the unconventional characteristic in its discussion of the disconnection characteristic. In that discussion, the thesis observes that the NZSOF's unconventional characteristic disconnects the NZSOF from commonality with other NZDF force elements that are defined as conventional. A natural function of being unconventional is that the role and function of the NZSOF evolves; it often is ambiguous. Despite their unconventional and disconnection characteristics, the NZSOF simultaneously exhibit deep belonging and integration characteristics in the NZDF network. Likewise, the NZSOF exist within a

---

<sup>8</sup> Nina Boyd Krebs, *Edgewalkers: Defusing Cultural Boundaries on the New Global Frontier* (Far Hills: New Horizon Press, 1999), xi-xii.

conventional structure, sharing commonality with other nodes in the hierarchical aspects of that network, and cooperating as part of the holistic network. They are both unconventional and conventional at one and the same time, which is a liminal and ambiguous state of being.

In the NZDF network, the NZSOF's ambiguity may also be produced by both themselves and other network nodes being unsure of how best to engage in the relationship at any given moment in time. For example, the Special Operations Component Commander does not hold a military rank that is commensurate to the three other component commanders (including from the Army) who are brigadier-level ranks.<sup>9</sup> In their NZDF network, the NZSOF and other nodes have to decide whether the Special Operations Component Commander relates to other nodes according to their Army rank (which gives them complementarity with Army colonels, or a lesser degree of complementarity with colonel-equivalent ranks in different services – a Captain in the Navy or a Group Captain in the Air Force), or according to their structural function (which gives them complementarity with the Maritime, Land and Air Component Commanders but complicated by differences in the rank levels).<sup>10</sup> In this example, the Special Operations Component Commander's position is ambiguous; it is in a state of being 'both' / 'neither', rather than 'either' / 'or'. Linking this example to the one in the

---

<sup>9</sup> The Maritime Component Commander is a Commodore, the Land Component Commander is a Brigadier, and the Air Component Commander is an Air Commodore (see Figure 4-3). "About us (Our leadership)," Navy, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/navy/about-us/>; "About us (Our leadership)," Army, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/army/about-us/>; "About us (Our leadership)," Air Force, accessed 14 January 2021, <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/air-force/about-us/>.

<sup>10</sup> See Figure 4-3; Simon Ewing-Jarvie, "Rima tekau," UNCLAS: A Blog on New Zealand's National Security and Other Favourite Topics, 23 August 2018, <https://unclas.com/2018/08/23/rima-tekau/>.

previous paragraph, the NZSOF are notably unconventional in comparison to how the majority of NZDF nodes conceive of themselves and how they act, yet the NZSOF are also conventional in that they subscribe to many of the hierarchical (for example, rank) and organisational (for example, establishing positions on a par with those in other nodes) constructs that enable them to participate in the same network as other nodes. What this reality suggests is that when the NZSOF engage in relationships in key security networks, they are not always easy for other nodes to definitively understand the NZSOF node they are in relationship with, nor for the NZSOF to describe themselves definitively. In some cases, other nodes may use the discomfort caused by ambiguity as a reason not to engage with the NZSOF. The NZSOF must be *interpreted* because of their inherent ambiguity, and that interpretation comes equally from themselves and from other nodes. This ambiguity is a product of the NZSOF's relational dynamics, created by the simultaneity and movement of their relational characteristics.

#### **8.4 Tension**

The third product of the NZSOF's relational dynamics that at times introduces seeming or actual paradox to their relationships is tension. Tension flows from liminality and ambiguity and is defined in this thesis as a cooperative or competitive friction in network relationships, arising from constantly changing relational dynamics in a network. The NZSOF often exist in a state of liminality and ambiguity, and it is entirely natural that tension between the NZSOF and other network nodes occurs as their relational dynamics ebb and flow. Steve Duck, in his examination of human relationships, acknowledges that tension is a natural product of relationships which are:

... a management or balancing of a complex set of elements, some of which can be good and some bad...<sup>11</sup>

Duck's observation is important. As the NZSOF balance their relational characteristics in a variety of relationships in networks and across networks, the tension that results from this fluidity could generally be assumed to be negative. The possibility of tension being a negative product in relationships is not unfamiliar and may be seen in any number of network contexts, from competitive tensions between the NZDF network's three services, to New Zealand public sector tensions in the working environment, and even to tensions about identity within a single special operations forces entity, as Eric Ouellet has examined institutional tensions in relation to the CASOF.<sup>12</sup> Tension can be complicative (and also sometimes creative) to a relationship, and in this sense of the word is probably more familiar when it holds a negative connotation. When it is complicative, tension creates a divide between the NZSOF and other network nodes. For example, Alastair Finlan remarked that "[a] noticeable feature of the relationship between [British] SF and conventional forces throughout their relatively short history is that tension is a permanent condition affecting their utility."<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Steve Duck, *Human Relationships*, 4th ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2007), 206-207.

<sup>12</sup> Joel Hayward, "Current and future challenges for New Zealand commanders," in *Born to Lead? Portraits of New Zealand Commanders*, Glyn Harper and Joel Hayward, eds. (Auckland: Exisle Publishing, 2033), 225-226; Rachel Butler, "Organisational scapegoats and hierarchical constraints: A critical discourse analysis of inter-agency collaboration within New Zealand's public sector" (Masters thesis, Massey University, 2015), 35, <https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/10038>; Eric Ouellet, "The self and the mirror: Institutional tensions and Canadian Special Operations Forces," in *Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, ed. Jessica Glicken Turnley, Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben-Ari (London: Routledge, 2018), 185-200.

<sup>13</sup> Alastair Finlan, "A dangerous pathway? Towards a theory of special forces," *Comparative Strategy* 38, no. 4 (2019): 260.

However, according to Duck, tension is not automatically negative. Rather, tension can be a positive or cooperative aspect of relationships, and there is evidence of this in the data gathered for this research. Tension is the friction that is created, either by the NZSOF's presentation of those relational characteristics or by expectations about those characteristics, as interpreted by other network nodes. It can be both internal (within the NZSOF's own behaviour) and external (between the NZSOF and other nodes). One interview participant even saw tension as a natural and desirable part of network relationships.<sup>14</sup> Tension in the positive sense can be a balancing force between nodes in the NZNSS network that ultimately leads to better policymaking.

An example of this type of tension between the NZSOF and other network nodes resulting from their relational dynamics, was seen in Chapter 6's description of philosophical differences between the NZSOF as military force elements and civilian agencies, where one interview participant noted the difference in philosophy between realist, outcome-focused military practitioners and idealist bureaucrats in other parts of the system.<sup>15</sup> Claims by the NZSOF in the NZNSS network of being a 'force of choice' for national security challenges is a philosophical position of their value that, as a result of their silo-creating narrative (siloesation), could produce tension in the rest of the network. The 'force of choice' argument common to both the NZSOF and international special operations forces runs the risk of suggesting that there are no other capabilities

---

<sup>14</sup> Interview participant 29, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 09 January 2018, transcript.

<sup>15</sup> Interview participant 15, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 17 November 2016, transcript.

that can address a particular national security challenge as well as they can.<sup>16</sup> James Kiras has noted that special operations forces have quite consistently used their unique utility to claim to being a 'force of choice' to obtain resources and influence:

An emergent theory of special operations, or SOF power, particularly one sponsored by the special operations community, is an indicator of an expansion of bureaucratic confidence and political influence. SOF and special operations continue to captivate the public imagination and are the "force of choice" for policymakers against contemporary irregular threats, adding to this institutional sense of confidence. Special operations leaders have used this to good effect, to expand budget and manpower and strengthen connections with agencies, departments, and Congress. With such confidence comes the temptation to increase bureaucratic power and author and expand political influence.<sup>17</sup>

The NZSOF highlight their 'specialness' to the NZNSS network to emphasise their distinct utility to other nodes, yet their 'force of choice' narrative could potentially create friction in the relationships with nodes with which they are attempting to interact.

---

<sup>16</sup> Interview participant 1, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 11 August 2016, transcript; Interview participant 6, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 28 September 2016, transcript; Interview participant 7, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript; Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016; Interview participant 17, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 30 November 2016, transcript; David Horner with Neil Thomas, *In Action with the SAS* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2009), 308; Bernd Horn, "The evolution of SOF and the rise of SOF power," in *Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, ed. Jessica Glicklen Turnley, Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben-Ari (London: Routledge, 2018), 22; Bernd Horn and Emily Spencer, "Force of choice: SOF as a foreign policy enabler," in *Special Operations Forces: Building Global Partnerships*, ed. Emily Spencer (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2012), 5.

<sup>17</sup> James D. Kiras, "A theory of special operations: "These ideas are dangerous"," *Special Operations Journal* 1, iss. 2 (2015): 85.

Paradoxically, the NZSOF's integration and collaboration characteristics in the NZNSS network can also create a more positive, creative tension between themselves and other nodes. Without integration and collaboration, the concept of the NZNSS network would not be effective. Any node, including the NZSOF, that too heavily emphasises siloisation to the holistic network's cost would not only struggle with commonality and utility, but ultimately may ostracise it from the network itself. Nevertheless, the unique utility that the NZSOF and other nodes bring to the network does not completely disappear. When integration and collaboration occur in the network, there is a paradoxical assembling of dissimilar nodes with different cultures, philosophies, and utilities to create the desired effect. The NZSOF's participation in the NZNSS network's response to the Whakaari / White Island event is one example of how unique utility and integration and collaboration unite to produce a result. The NZSOF's relational dynamics are created by these various characteristics interacting with each other. The paradox in the NZSOF's relationships, introduced by tension as well as liminality and ambiguity in their relational dynamics, presents a quandary for the NZSOF and a relational challenge for other network nodes. Mitigation of this quandary becomes an imperative for the NZSOF as they seek to navigate the relational landscape in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks.

## **8.5 Paradox and paradoxical alchemy**

This chapter has suggested that the interplay of the NZSOF's relational characteristics creates relational dynamics that generally function in a business-as-usual manner, but it can also create three products – liminality, ambiguity, and tension – that introduce



seeming or actual paradox to the NZSOF's relationships in the three key security networks. For this thesis, a paradox is defined as a seemingly contradictory force in the NZSOF's relationships. This thesis has provided many examples of how the interplay of the NZSOF's relational characteristics can create relational dynamics that result in this paradox. For example, the apparent complementarity of the NZSOF's belonging, integration and collaboration characteristics in the NZDF and NZNSS networks appear to conflict with the opaque characteristic analysed in Chapter 3 and the disconnection, independence and siloisation characteristics in the NZDF and NZNSS networks. In the NZDF network a sense of belonging to that network was set alongside, and sometimes in competition, with the need to carve out a unique niche that sets the NZSOF apart from other nodes in that network. In the NZNSS network, doctrinal and long-standing arguments for the NZSOF's need to be commanded at the highest level (whether that be military or civilian decision-makers) was paired with a need to remain apolitical and not be seen to have too close a relationship with political decision-makers. In the 5SOF network, collective community and commonality was offset by disconnection related to size, or to greater cultural alignment with one node more than another. These all suggest that the NZSOF often reside in a paradoxical state in their relationships where synergy with and divergence from other nodes is occurring simultaneously.

The paradox in the NZSOF's relationships introduced by liminality, ambiguity, and tension, presents the NZSOF with two possible approaches to their relationships. Either they could resolve the paradox by reducing or eliminating the fluidity and dynamism of their relational characteristics to fix themselves in a stable state in relation to other nodes, or they could harness the paradox to support a more fluid and dynamic

approach to relationships despite the challenges that option might present. At present it appears that the NZSOF are attempting the latter approach. Rather than choosing solely to embrace those relational characteristics that draw them closer to other network nodes, whether that be belonging or integration or collaboration or formalisation, the NZSOF also exhibit a tendency towards those relational characteristics that pull them further away from other network nodes, for example unconventional, opaque, disconnection, independence, siloisation, size and (in some instances) pragmatism. Often the NZSOF view these characteristics as not an 'either' or 'or' proposition, but rather occur as a 'both' and 'neither' proposition within their relationships. To mitigate the paradox on display in the NZSOF's relationships, an alchemy is required.

### **8.5.1 Finding a paradoxical alchemy**

Alchemy is defined in this thesis as a creative, unifying solution (philosophical and practical) in network relationships. Combining the paradox and alchemy concepts, the NZSOF's paradoxical alchemy is understood as a continuous process whereby the NZSOF consistently and creatively manage the paradox in their relationships as, in the words of Nina Boyd Krebs, "a way of life."<sup>18</sup> This creative, intentional process lays at the heart of what the NZSOF's relationships require to be effective.

Managing the paradox that resides in the NZSOF's relationships with other nodes in key security networks is both a profoundly important task unique to the NZSOF's journey as military force elements but is also fundamentally mundane in that the same

---

<sup>18</sup> Krebs, *Edgewalkers*, 73.

task is in some measure required of all human relationships. To engage with a liminal, ambiguous node like the NZSOF must, in the eyes of other nodes in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks, at times be an uncomfortable experience, and that discomfort represents the tension that can exist in those relationships. However, Mie Augier and Andrew Marshall have suggested that strategically minded individuals must be able to work with discomfort:

...strategists / strategic thinkers must be able to live with (and through) uncertainty and ambiguity. This might make traditional disciplinary-minded scholars (as well as policy people) uncomfortable, as there is a desire to model, predict, and put the world into models. But human nature does not fit optimizing models...so a key requirement for a strategist or strategic thinker is that he must be "comfortable being uncomfortable"..."<sup>19</sup>

Because of the alchemical approach the NZSOF currently employ, when it comes to managing the paradox in their relationships, this thesis would suggest that at any level where the NZSOF engage with other network nodes, those nodes should expect and be reconciled with the idea of feeling "comfortable being uncomfortable" in those relationships.

However, if other network nodes must tolerate some discomfort and tension in relationships with the liminal, ambiguous NZSOF, then it behoves the NZSOF to find a way to manage the discomfort of those nodes. Without proactive, intentional engagement in their relationships with other nodes, the NZSOF will not find the utility they seek to offer in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks. A significant event like the

---

<sup>19</sup> Mie Augier and Andrew W. Marshall, "The fog of strategy: Some organizational perspectives on strategy and the strategic management challenges in the changing competitive environment," *Comparative Strategy* 36, no. 4 (2017): 283-284.

Operation BURNHAM inquiry demonstrates how quickly some tensions can manifestly move out of balance rapidly and become profoundly, if not irrevocably, uncomfortable. Fiona Beals, Joanna Kidman, and Hine Funaki have examined Boyd Krebs' analysis of edgewalkers – liminal entities like the NZSOF – and offer commentary not just on how Krebs characterises an edgewalker, but also on what being an edgewalker costs. Edgewalkers, they say, “do not shed one skin when they move from their cultures of origin to the mainstream and back...An edgewalker feels astutely the paradox that occurs when you walk between two worlds but remain true to yourself.”<sup>20</sup> The NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks naturally include paradoxical dynamics. The NZSOF's solution must be to employ a paradoxical alchemy to balance and manage that paradox, but it can, and does, come at the acceptable cost of having to feel “comfortable being uncomfortable” and understanding the degree to which that discomfort may also be experienced by other nodes in these networks. The latter option requires the NZSOF to find an alchemy for their paradox that enables their relationships to remain viable.

## **8.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the thesis has examined the relational dynamics that occur when the NZSOF's characteristics are exhibited in their relationships in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks. It has analysed three products of the NZSOF's relational dynamics – ‘Liminality’, ‘Ambiguity’ and ‘Tension’ and how at times those products can introduce a

---

<sup>20</sup> Fiona Beals, Joanna Kidman and Hine Funaki, “Insider and outsider research: Negotiating self at the edge of the emic-etic divide,” *Qualitative Inquiry* 26, no. 6 (2020): 597.

seeming or actual paradox to the NZSOF's relationships. The chapter suggested that the NZSOF have two possible approaches to the paradox in their relationships; either they could resolve the paradox by changing their relational characteristics to achieve a more fixed state of being or they could accept and harness the paradox to support their relationships despite the challenges that come with embracing that approach. It observed that the NZSOF currently employ the latter approach and consequently require an alchemy that mitigates the paradox in their relationships. The result of making that choice is that both the NZSOF and other network nodes with which they maintain relationships must be reconciled to feeling comfortable being uncomfortable for those relationships to remain viable. This is an ongoing challenge for the NZSOF as they continue to engage with others in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks.

## 9: The Paradoxical Alchemy of the NZSOF's

### Relationships

#### 9.0 Introduction: the research questions

This thesis focused on the New Zealand Special Operations Forces' relationships inside three key security networks – the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), the New Zealand National Security Sector (NZNSS), and the Five Special Operations Forces (5SOF).<sup>1</sup> The networks were selected because they had immediate relational value to the NZSOF, and they allowed for analysis within a number of different contexts. The purpose of selecting these networks was to build a comprehensive analytical understanding of how the NZSOF build, maintain, and perhaps hinders relationship across their local community (NZDF), nation (NZNSS) and the world (5SOF).

The research set out to answer two central research questions:

(1) What relational characteristics shape the NZSOF's relationships in key security networks?

(2) What implications do these relational characteristics have for how the NZSOF engage in relationships with others in key security networks?

In answering the research questions, the thesis has situated its findings within the scant scholarship about the NZSOF and the nascent international special operations field. It

---

<sup>1</sup> 5SOF was an original term devised for the thesis. This new term encompasses the interrelations between the Western special operations forces from New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

has developed a conceptual framework that integrates concepts of networks, relationships, and bricolage that were then applied to its analysis of the NZSOF's contemporary relationships. It has also employed thirty-five original interviews with senior military officers and Government officials conducted specifically for the research, a body of knowledge unique to the field. In doing so, the thesis has offered insight into how the contemporary NZSOF build, maintain, and potentially hinder their relationships with a variety of security partners.

This final chapter will summarise the key findings of the research, including the seventeen relational characteristics across the NZSOF ego node and the three network case studies that provide an answer to the first research question. It will then examine the broader implications and ramifications of the research in answer to the second research question. The chapter will conclude by briefly noting three key points the researcher would like the reader to take away from the thesis.

## **9.1 Establishing the structure and language of the research**

Chapter 1 introduced the conceptual origins and research questions of the thesis, using Rennie's proposition about relationships as an opportunity to examine the NZSOF through a *relational* lens. The chapter then investigated the existing secondary literature related to the NZSOF and international special operations forces in four main categories – mainstream histories, biographies, media commentary and special operations forces scholarly literature, the latter of which was further sub-divided into literature about the NZSOF, international special operations forces literature, and

interdisciplinary New Zealand national security literatures. It identified gaps in these literatures where this thesis could contribute to the extant literature. It then discussed the conceptual framework, comprised of (1) the network framework which serves as a ubiquitous analytical structure and language throughout the thesis, (2) relationships as an analytical concept representing a new way to examine the NZSOF, and (3) the bricolage approach to support and cohere the various elements of the research methodology and content.

Chapter 2 described the qualitative methodology employed to identify and examine the contemporary NZSOF's relational characteristics. It began with a personal reflection of the hybrid emic-etic position of the researcher in relation to the thesis, including the opportunities and potential for bias inherent in that position. It examined the application of bricolage to the nexus of network case studies that would produce answers to the research questions. The chapter then discussed the sourcing of primary and interview data for the thesis. The evolving knowledge provided by the thirty-five unique interviews was designed to address the gaps in the primary and secondary data. The chapter also discussed the process of coding, and thematic and comparative analysis, before concluding with a summary of the limitations of the methodology.

## **9.2 Identifying and analysing the NZSOF's relational characteristics**

To answer the first research question, Chapter 3 developed the foundational analytic of the NZSOF as an ego node. It employed a *taiaha* metaphor to describe the NZSOF



through their various force elements and their historical development.<sup>2</sup> The chapter then developed a conceptual understanding of the NZSOF through four general characteristics that inform their relationships – ‘Unconventional’, ‘Evolutionary’, ‘Strategic’ and ‘Opaque’. Those four characteristics helped to describe the NZSOF ego node. Using a table of evolving relational characteristics, the chapter also established an analytical model of identifying relational characteristics that would be repeated in the network case study analysis in Chapters 4 to 6. The key finding of the chapter was that the NZSOF generally retain a fixed organisational structure but contains within that structure these four characteristics that make them both distinct and unique as military force elements. The chapter also emphasised the NZSOF’s uniqueness within the special operations forces community and acknowledged the bicultural heritage and identity present within the NZSOF and their New Zealand context.

Chapter 4 was the first network case study utilised to examine the NZSOF ego node’s relational characteristics in a specific context. The NZDF network was described as a hierarchical network and the chapter employed organisational structure and rank as means to define that hierarchy. It then developed a conceptual understanding of the NZSOF’s relationships in the NZDF network through an examination of four relational characteristics the NZSOF exhibit in the network – ‘Belonging’, ‘Disconnection’,

---

<sup>2</sup> Kaitohutohu NZDF | NZDF Māori Cultural Adviser / Miriam Wharton, emails 25 January – 18 February 2021: To mitigate any suggestion of cultural appropriation, the researcher consulted with the Kaitohutohu NZDF | NZDF Māori Cultural Adviser about the appropriateness of the *taiaha* metaphor in this context and as it is used in the thesis. The advice given was that the *taiaha* has been used previously within the NZDF crest and in the crest of HMNZS Matataua, which is comprised of a combination of divers, a hydrographic team and logistic support. The Kaitohutohu NZDF also guessed that the Army might also have used the *taiaha* within its ‘warrior ethos’ concept. He advised that he had no issues with the use of the *taiaha* to describe the different force elements of the NZSOF. Our correspondence was also reviewed by the Senior NZDF Māori Cultural Adviser, who did not proffer any further comment.

'Integration' and 'Independence'. Those characteristics were added to the analytical table of relational characteristics begun in Chapter 3 to start building and organising points of comparison between the NZSOF ego node and the three network case studies that would be utilised further in Chapters 7 and 8. The key finding of the chapter was that the NZSOF's place within the NZDF network requires a complex understanding of hierarchy that encompasses the nuances introduced by the NZSOF's relational characteristics.

In chapter 5 the NZNSS network was described as an amorphous network. To mitigate the challenge of defining a network lacking the type of fixed structure familiar to the NZDF hierarchy, the chapter primarily focused on the *purpose* and *practice* of the network rather than its form. It employed the specific goal of national security and the all-of-government approach to define the NZNSS network's amorphousness. To clarify what an amorphous network looks like in *practice*, it summarised how the network operationalises in a national security crisis using the example of the 2019 Whakaari / White Island eruption. The chapter then developed a conceptual understanding of the NZSOF's relationships in the NZNSS network through an examination of four relational characteristics the NZSOF exhibit in the network – 'Integration', 'Collaboration', 'Siloisation' and 'Political sponsorship'. The key finding of the chapter was that the fluid nature of the NZNSS network enables relational characteristics to continually reinterpret the parameters, possibilities, and risks of the NZSOF's relationships in that context.

Chapter 6 examined the NZSOF ego node's relational characteristics in the 5SOF network. The 5SOF network was described as a community network, united by strong

historical links. The chapter then developed a conceptual understanding of the NZSOF's relationships in the 5SOF network through an examination of three relational characteristics the NZSOF exhibit in the network – 'Formalisation', 'Size' and 'Pragmatism'. The key finding of the chapter was that even within a network neither as hierarchically bound as the NZDF network nor as fluid and *ad hoc* as the NZNSS network, relational characteristics still create variations in the *status quo* of the NZSOF's relationships in the 5SOF network. At the end of the chapter, the table containing fifteen relational characteristics of the NZSOF across Chapters 3 to 6 was finalised. Together those characteristics presented a detailed picture of the form of the NZSOF's relationships in key security networks.

Chapter 7 reorganised the analytical table of fifteen relational characteristics and conducted a comprehensive analysis in relation to two identified overarching relational characteristics of the NZSOF ego node – 'Commonality' and 'Utility'. The fifteen characteristics in the table were defined as subordinate characteristics for the first time in the thesis because, rather than being assembled in a simple list, they were recognised as transitory and fluid in comparison to the two overarching characteristics which are fixed and present across all three key security networks. The chapter then used the Operation BURNHAM inquiry as an illustration of how the NZSOF ego node's overarching and subordinate relational characteristics could appear in a specific scenario. Examining the relational characteristics in that scenario removed them from a simple list based on the form of the NZSOF ego node or its relationships in individual networks and placed them into a broader picture of how the NZSOF's relationships are constructed and can evolve. This identification and analysis of the NZSOF's relational

characteristics enabled the thesis to build a more comprehensive understanding of the NZSOF's relationships in key security networks.

### **9.3 Assessing the implications of the NZSOF's relational characteristics**

To answer the second research question, Chapter 8 moved from a direct examination of the NZSOF's relational characteristics to an examination of the implications of those characteristics for their relationships. It identified relational dynamics that occur when the relational characteristics interact with each other, particularly in their more complex, simultaneous variations. The thesis determined there are three products of relational dynamics when the NZSOF's relationships generate a degree of contention or require active management. These products are 'Liminality', 'Ambiguity', and 'Tension'. At times, these products can introduce paradox into the NZSOF's relationships. The chapter suggested that the NZSOF have two possible approaches to the paradox. Either they can seek to resolve the paradox by reducing or eliminating the dynamism of their relational characteristics, thereby fixing themselves in place and sacrificing relational dynamism, or they can choose to harness the paradox to support a more dynamic approach to relationships, which also presents potential risks. Analysis suggested that the latter approach appears to be the choice the NZSOF are currently making and the mitigation of the challenges that accompany that choice represent a necessary paradoxical alchemy.

The implications for how the NZSOF engage in relationships in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks begin with the relational dynamics created when those characteristics

combine and interact in a particular context. Rather than situating the NZSOF in a fixed relational position or approach in those networks, the fluidity and variability of the relational characteristics suggest that the NZSOF are constantly moving between, and not settling on, any one position or approach for any length of time. Consider the key findings identified in the previous section as they pertain to each network case study. The fluidity and variability of the NZSOF's relational dynamic in the NZDF network manifests itself in the nuances of characteristics. Those nuances bring complexity to the NZSOF's place in the military hierarchy, or even hint at the possibility of more radical change, as one NZDF interview participant observed:

To be perfectly honest, the whole business of Command and Control, and hierarchy with an SF element is sort of against their culture. What they want to do is they want to get a task and just go and do it, not be bound by siloes created by Command and Control structures, and so to be able to operate across the system. That's where I think the SF will also change. In the next fifteen years the system and the environment is going to change and they'll be operating across. It might be a wider set of circumstances, it might be a more narrow set of circumstances, but it will be different. And they have to respond to that. So the question we should ask ourselves is, where to for SOF? Where should we go to find where the SAS should be thinking about in terms of where to plant themselves in fifteen years? It's a really good question.<sup>3</sup>

The implications of nuance or change brought about through relational characteristics are that the NZSOF's relationships contain a measure of unpredictability; it is harder for other network nodes to know what to expect from the NZSOF at any given time. In one

---

<sup>3</sup> Interview participant 14, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 04 November 2016, transcript.

moment the NZSOF may be expressing the integration characteristic by training for maritime operations with Navy force elements, and in the next they may be expressing the independence characteristic by demonstrating a maritime skill set that is unfamiliar to those same Navy force elements. In fact, both of those characteristics may happen simultaneously. Unpredictability puts both the NZSOF and other NZDF network nodes in the state of having to continually negotiate, align and re-align within their relationships.

The fluidity and variability of the NZSOF's relational dynamic in the NZNSS network manifests itself in the continual reinterpretation of parameters, possibilities, and risks presented by the shifting nature of the network. The implications of reinterpretation are that the NZSOF's relationships contain a measure of indeterminacy; the NZSOF and other network nodes are unable to define exactly the purpose of the NZSOF or their relationships in the network because the network conditions in which they express are constantly changing. In one moment the NZSOF may be expressing the collaboration characteristic by responding to a terrorist attack at the request of the New Zealand Police and working with Police units to resolve the attack, and in the next they may be expressing the siloisation characteristic by trying to resolve the attack according to their own niche standard operating procedures. Both characteristics in that scenario may happen simultaneously. Reinterpretation, as was the case with unpredictability in the NZDF network, requires the NZSOF and other NZNSS nodes to continually negotiate, align and re-align within their relationships.

The pattern of implications already established for the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF and NZNSS networks is also found in the 5SOF network. The dynamism and

variability of the NZSOF's relational dynamic in that network manifests itself in variations of the *status quo* norms of 5SOF, meaning expectations of behaviour and feeling in the network may change or ebb and flow. The implications of *status quo* variation are that the NZSOF's relationships contain the potential for fundamental change; there are no structural guarantees in the network that relationships will remain the same or within the bounds of traditional or existing expectations. In one moment the NZSOF may be expressing the formalisation characteristic by agreeing to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for capability development with another 5SOF node, and in the next they may be expressing the pragmatism characteristic by identifying capability building with a third 5SOF node or even a non-5SOF partner that overshadows the MOU previously mentioned. Potential relational change requires the NZSOF and other 5SOF nodes, as in the other two networks, to continually negotiate, align and re-align within their relationships.

The key findings and implications of the NZSOF's relationships in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks echo the products of the relational dynamic discussed in Chapter 8.

Those implications make the NZSOF liminal entities and introduce ambiguity and tension to their relationships within the networks. This can create tension for both the NZSOF and their partners when building and managing these relationships. Examining the NZSOF's relational characteristics, relational dynamic, and products of that dynamic have defined the paradox in the NZSOF's relationships.

Having identified that a paradox does exist in the NZSOF's relationships in the three key security networks, the thesis now suggests that paradoxical alchemy may be a way for the NZSOF and other nodes in these networks to think through the problem and

implications of the paradox. If the NZSOF persist in attempting to harness and use the paradox rather than eliminate it, the ego node's challenge in its relationships will be to discover how to use that force effectively. The research would suggest that in fact, rather than being a relational impediment, the identified paradox can, if harnessed, be creative, generating new ways of thinking and approaches to resolving national security problems that would not be possible if all nodes thought and acted alike. However, there is a contrasting implication to the embracing of paradox, which is that paradox inevitably brings discomfort. The existence of networks implies that nodes are connected constructively with each other in ways that reduce friction and increase effectiveness. The existence of discomfort in relationships between the NZSOF and other nodes, an inevitable by-product of embracing paradox, risks reducing the effectiveness of networks even as it presents possibilities and opportunities for new types of utility.

A final, overarching implication is thus embedded in the choice to embrace paradox rather than resolve it. If the NZSOF utilise paradox in their relationships in key security networks, I would suggest, all nodes will be obliged to reconcile themselves, in some degree, to feeling comfortable being uncomfortable in those relationships. There is no simple way to unravel or resolve the paradox without changing the NZSOF as force elements and changing their relationships beyond recognition. Paradox-influenced relationships will always retain a measure of discomfort both to the NZSOF and to those with whom they engage in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks. While the ego node may be comfortable with this, it must at the very least acknowledge that other network nodes may not be as reconciled to discomfort.



The practical implications of the NZSOF's relational characteristics to their relationships in key security networks also have policy implications, and here too the paradox plays a part. Policy determines rules and procedures and yet the implications outlined above clearly identify a need for space for the human element and complexity that can often be constrained by those rules and procedures. In the NZDF network, for example, a hierarchical policy determining a standard method for a new initiative to be presented to senior leadership (i.e. through the normal chain of command) may be at variance with how in practice an individual chooses to present the initiative outside of that standard approach.<sup>4</sup> In the NZNSS network, policy might dictate that military advice be given from the NZSOF to political decision-makers through the Chief of Defence Force, but an officer of the NZSOF may encounter a minister in a social setting and talk informally in a manner that could circumvent policy but nevertheless strengthen a working relationship that is then carried forward in a more formal manner.<sup>5</sup> In the 5SOF network, policy may direct that the Special Operations Component Commander has an equivalency with the Commander of the AUSOF despite the significant rank discrepancy (colonel and major general respectively). In practice, the Component Commander may feel more comfortable interacting with international peers closer in rank to themselves and with whom they may have established a closer working or personal relationship.<sup>6</sup> Policy and practice, if it is to address the implications of this thesis, should work in tandem. Policy can provide structure to practice, while practice

---

<sup>4</sup> Interview participant 15, interview by Miriam Wharton, Auckland, New Zealand, 17 November 2016, transcript.

<sup>5</sup> Interview participant 30, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 14 February 2018, transcript.

<sup>6</sup> Interview participant 1, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 11 August 2016, transcript.

brings a human element to policy. Policy must be written that can manage the complexity of dynamic, variable relationships. It should be able to define the dynamic uniqueness of nodes the NZSOF within and alongside more fixed or static networks and their respective policy or strategy settings.

#### **9.4 Final Thoughts**

...New Zealand soldiering is based on respect and relationships rather than status and position...<sup>7</sup>

I think SOF needs to embody the paradoxical, I'll call it the paradoxical alchemy of SOF. It is this, SOF has institutionalised the unconventional approach inside the military orthodoxy.<sup>8</sup>

This thesis began with Rennie's quote about New Zealand soldiering being about respect and relationships rather than status and position. It contributed to knowledge by focusing on relationships as a unique analytical lens through which to examine the NZSOF and sought to bring more detail to an understanding of the NZSOF's relationships specifically within three key security networks – NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF. The thesis examined relational characteristics the NZSOF exhibit inherently and within those networks that comprise the relationships, and the implications of those characteristics interacting with each other in and across networks. The thesis also identified relational dynamics that are created by the interaction of relational

---

<sup>7</sup> Frank Rennie, *Regular Soldier: A Life in the New Zealand Army* (Auckland: Endeavour Press, 1986), 9.

<sup>8</sup> Interview participant 9, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 10 October 2016, transcript.

characteristics, and the products of those dynamics that introduce a paradox to the NZSOF's relationships. It discussed how the NZSOF could choose to manage the paradox through paradoxical alchemy.

There are three key points the researcher would like the reader to consider at the conclusion of this thesis:

- **The NZSOF's self-reflection.** Relationships are complex. They encompass transitory and fixed characteristics that create a unique and constantly evolving relational dynamic that shapes relationships depending on context. The NZSOF as the ego node of this thesis and of the relationships examined would be improved relational actors if they actively embraced self-reflection specifically about relationships. Understanding and managing the paradox in their relationships has the potential to increase the NZSOF's presence and influence in the NZDF, NZNSS and 5SOF networks in a focused, intentional manner that will present opportunities for the NZSOF to offer unique utility in those network contexts. Failure to be self-reflective about relationships will likely result in missed opportunities to enhance utility and make the NZSOF's professional work more difficult. The complexity of their relationships warrant close and continual examination and reflection.
- **Other nodes' understanding.** To embrace paradox is to embrace uncertainty and discomfort. If the NZSOF choose to harness, rather than resolve, their paradox then that choice will require other nodes to also accept uncertainty and discomfort. Those nodes will need to understand why (including associated

opportunities and risks) the NZSOF's paradox exists in relationships and how it is being managed to the mutual benefit of the relationship as a whole.

- **The NZSOF's self-reflection and other nodes' understanding can create mutual respect.** The second half of Rennie's proposition for New Zealand soldiering alongside relationships was respect. In order for the NZSOF's relationships to exist in an optimum condition, a combination of the NZSOF's self-reflection and other nodes' understanding is necessary. Mutual respect can be created through the NZSOF's willingness to engage with other nodes in assisting them to understand and accept the paradox, and to receive their feedback and recommendations on the implications of the paradox for those relationships. Mutual respect can also be created by other nodes engaging with the NZSOF, indicating their willingness to learn about and accept the paradox as a feature of the NZSOF's relationships rather than necessarily a flaw, and offering constructive reflections of their own.

The intentional interaction between the NZSOF and other nodes to develop their understanding and acceptance of the paradox in the NZSOF's relationships can create mutual respect and embody Rennie's full proposition in relation to the NZSOF:

You've got to make sure that professional rivalry doesn't spread across to professional jealousy, and the only way that you can actually address that is by mutual understanding. You cannot create mutual understanding and therefore deliver unity of purpose or effort unless you have that trust and you only build trust through understanding.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Interview participant 15, 17 November 2016.

From all of my experience of Defence we work well with SOF, very well aligned. There's a mutual, I wouldn't call it admiration but there's a mutual respect, mutual understanding of what we're here for and how we get stuff done. We want to foster that, continue it.<sup>10</sup>

However, Rennie's quote is a relatively simple proposition. The equation is respect + relationships = New Zealand (the NZSOF) soldiering. In comparison, consider the proposition of paradoxical alchemy as the resolution of this thesis's research questions. Alchemy is not a simple proposition. It is an inherently complex idea that necessitates creativity, and more than a little magic. Consequently, it requires active management to achieve its potential, rather than negative outcomes. It suggests in the context of this thesis that the NZSOF's relationships, a part of their soldiering experience, requires as much if not more art than science. It requires the NZSOF ego node and other network nodes to engage with and embrace the paradox, or to resolve it and in doing so change the nature of those relationships. It appears that the NZSOF have chosen the former of the two options and so will continue to need to harness and manage their paradoxical alchemy in their relationships in the future.

---

<sup>10</sup> Interview participant 25, interview by Miriam Wharton, Wellington, New Zealand, 13 October 2017, transcript.

# Bibliography

## Audio-visual materials

"NZSAS: First among equals – inside the New Zealand Special Air Service." Directed by Steven O'Meagher. 2007. DVD, Auckland: Desert Road.

"Reluctant hero: Cpl. Willie Apiata, VC." Directed by Steven O'Meagher. 2008. DVD, Auckland: Desert Road.

## Interviews

Interview participant 1. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 11 August 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 2. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 25 August 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 3. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 23 September 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 4. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 26 September 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 5. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 27 September 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 6. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 28 September 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 7. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 10 October 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 8. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 10 October 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 9. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 10 October 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 10. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 14 October 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 11. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 17 October 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 12. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 21 October 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 13. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 28 October 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 14. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 04 November 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 15. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Auckland, New Zealand. 17 November 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 16. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 22 November 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 17. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 30 November 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 18. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Auckland, New Zealand. 01 December 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 19. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Auckland, New Zealand. 02 December 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 20. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 05 December 2016. Transcript.

Interview participant 21. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Auckland, New Zealand. 21 April 2017. Interview notes.

Interview participant 22. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 08 June 2017. Transcript.

Interview participant 23. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 27 June 2017. Transcript.

Interview participant 24. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Honolulu, Hawaii. 20 September 2017. Transcript.

Interview participant 25. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 13 October 2017. Transcript.

Interview participant 26. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 17 October 2017. Transcript.

Interview participant 27. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 26 October 2017. Transcript.

Interview participant 28. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 08 December 2017. Transcript.

Interview participant 29. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 09 January 2018. Transcript.

Interview participant 30. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 14 February 2018. Transcript.

Interview participant 31. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 15 February 2018. Transcript.

Interview participant 32. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Canberra, Australia. 30 April 2018. Interview notes.

Interview participant 33. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Auckland, New Zealand. 08 May 2018. Transcript.

Interview participant 34. Interview by Miriam Wharton. Wellington, New Zealand. 07 June 2018. Transcript.

Interview participant 35. Interview by Miriam Wharton. San Diego, California. 30 June 2018. Transcript.

### **Media articles**

"'They are not one of us': SAS soldiers condemn war crime perpetrators." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 November 2020. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/they-are-not-one-of-us-sas-soldiers-condemn-war-crime-perpetrators-20201116-p56ezv.html>.

"Alleged cover-up of civilians murdered by UK special forces in Iraq and Afghanistan." *Scoop Independent News*, 07 August 2020. <https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL2008/S00048/alleged-cover-up-of-civilians-murdered-by-uk-special-forces-in-iraq-and-afghanistan.htm>.

"Cabinet set to review our Viet forces." *The Auckland Star*, 15 July 1967.

"Chief of Army disbands 2 Squadron SASR." *Australian Defence Magazine*, 20 November 2020. <https://www.australiandefence.com.au/defence/land/chief-of-army-disbands-2-squadron-sasr>.

"Christchurch mosques terror attack: 49 dead." *Otago Daily Times*, 15 March 2019. <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/christchurch-mosques-terror-attack-49-dead>.

"Corps affirms full exoneration for MARSOC unit rocked by scandal." *Military.com*, accessed 18 August 2018. <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2018/02/07/corps-affirms-full-exoneration-marsoc-unit-rocked-scandal.html>.

"Editorial: SAS fast track for recruits deeply flawed." *New Zealand Herald*, 11 August 2011. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/editorial-sas-fast-track-for-recruits-deeply-flawed/JZLACOP7QASHHGJBI7PJQH7ZX4/>.

"Elite British special forces troops accused of running hit squads in Afghanistan." *The National*, accessed 18 August 2018. <https://www.thenational.ae/world/elite-british-special-forces-troops-accused-of-running-hit-squads-in-afghanistan-1.91485>.

"Fallen SAS trooper farewelled." *Otago Daily Times*, 06 October 2011. <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/fallen-sas-trooper-farewelled>.

"Families of Afghan men allegedly killed by Australian SAS soldiers still asking for justice." *Radio New Zealand*, 26 November 2020. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/world/431525/families-of-afghan-men-allegedly-killed-by-australian-sas-soldiers-still-asking-for-justice>.



"Hager calls for open inquiry on SAS mission in Afghanistan." *Radio New Zealand*, 21 November 2018. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/376459/hager-calls-for-open-inquiry-on-sas-mission-in-afghanistan>.

"Helicopter pilot killed fighting fire ex-SAS." *Otago Daily Times*, 15 February 2017. <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/helicopter-pilot-killed-fighting-fire-ex-sas>.

"Jungle war can be grim." *New Zealand Weekly News*, 24 March 1965.

"Key confirms SAS Afghanistan pullout." *Otago Daily Times*, 22 December 2011. <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/key-confirms-sas-afghanistan-pullout>.

"Labour opposes SAS deployment." *Otago Daily Times*, 22 September 2009. <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/politics/labour-opposes-sas-deployment>.

"Minister denies report of disbandment." *The Auckland Star*, August 1967.

"NZ Defence Force must expose troops' 'guilty secrets' – Hager." *Radio New Zealand*, 20 November 2020. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/431084/nz-defence-force-must-expose-troops-guilty-secrets-hager>.

"NZ Defence Force releases new rules for dealing with civilian harm." *Radio New Zealand*, 11 February 2021. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/436216/nz-defence-force-releases-new-rules-for-dealing-with-civilian-harm>.

"Operation Burnham report released." *Scoop*, 31 July 2020. <https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA2007/S00322/operation-burnham-report-released.htm>.

"Rogue SAS unit accused of executing civilians in Afghanistan." *The Times*, 02 July 2017. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/rogue-sas-unit-accused-of-executing-civilians-in-afghanistan-f2bqlc897>.

"SAS claims 'unfounded' – Key." *Otago Daily Times*, 10 May 2011. <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/sas-claims-unfounded-key>.

"SAS fired upon in Kabul." *Otago Daily Times*, 05 March 2010. <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/politics/sas-fired-upon-kabul>.

"SAS involved in Afghan attack." *New Zealand Herald*, 18 July 2011. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/sas-involved-in-afghan-attack/5L6Y4V35JRBDE536W4KVFMRXPM/>.

"SAS men are ordered never to write books." *Independent*, 23 October 2011. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/sas-men-are-ordered-never-write-books-1356609.html>.

"SAS soldier killed in Afghan raid." *Otago Daily Times*, 21 August 2011. <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/sas-soldier-killed-afghan-raid>.

"The Civil War: Between the battles." *PBS News Hour*, 12 April 2011. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/the-civil-war-between-the-battles>.

"Volcanic eruption at Whakaari / White Island." *Scoop*, 15 December 2019. <https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/AK1912/S00450/volcanic-eruption-at-whakaari-white-island.htm>.

"White Island eruption: Search for final two bodies continues, police confirm death of 21-year-old Australian woman." *New Zealand Herald*, 14 December 2019. [https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=12293775](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12293775).

Barber, David. "Training team will balance SAS withdrawal from Vietnam." *The Evening Post*, 29 January 1971.

Bayer, Kurt. "Army's bomb disposal callouts almost triple in the first quarter of 2018." *New Zealand Herald*, 09 May 2018. [https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=12048111](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12048111).

Bayer, Kurt. "NZSAS soldiers in Christchurch for snipers event responded to mosque terror attack." *New Zealand Herald*, 18 March 2019. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/nzsas-soldiers-in-christchurch-for-snipers-event-responded-to-mosque-terror-attack/JX4HFFUQRQCXRMT03H3XRD3CLY/>.

Bolinger, James. "Americans and Aussies mark 100 years of fighting shoulder-to-shoulder." *Stars and Stripes*, 03 July 2018. <https://www.stripes.com/news/americans-and-aussies-mark-100-years-of-fighting-shoulder-to-shoulder-1.535818>.

Buchanan, Paul G. "Why Kiwi SAS troops must join fight against ISIS." *New Zealand Herald*, 07 January 2016.

Campbell, Gordon. "Into the fire." *New Zealand Listener*, 05 July 2003. <http://www.listener.co.nz/uncategorized/into-the-fire/>.

Campbell, Gordon. "Where the boys are." *New Zealand Listener*, November 2002.

Carter, Nick. "Old alliance is key to meeting modern threats." *The Times*, 24 September 2018. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/old-alliance-is-key-to-meeting-modern-threats.mdlbr2535>.

Clifton, Jane. "Our mutual friends." *New Zealand Listener*, May 2018.

Davidson, Isaac. "Kiwi troops not in combat in northern Iraq, says Defence Minister Gerry Brownlee." *New Zealand Herald*, 21 October 2016. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/kiwi-troops-not-in-combat-in-northern-iraq-says-defence-minister-gerry-brownlee/BEZQ4J242N7235DPHON4RN3MT4/>.

de Graaf, Peter. "Northland SAS soldier's bones brought home after 62 years." *The Northern Advocate*, 01 September 2018. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/northern-advocate/news/northland-sas-soldiers-bones-brought-home-after-62-years/3PYSWNAGZQ2BE2HAXHZIYTOBT4/>.

Dorschner, Jim. "Quiet professionals." *Jane's Defence Weekly*, June 2015.

Dryer, Kristine. "353rd Special Operations Group completes Exercise Teak Net 16-1." *Tip of the Spear*, August 2016.

Dykes, Mervyn. "SAS men really sweat for their red berets." *New Zealand Weekly News*, 01 June 1970, 3-9.

Edwards, Bryce. "Political roundup: Defence cover-up starts to unravel." *New Zealand Herald*, 15 March 2018. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/political-roundup-defence-cover-up-starts-to-unravel/DYAHUZ4ZXXN6KBWP36JIW2B5PI/>.

Ewing-Jarvie, Simon. "Let's talk about New Zealand's national security." *Stuff*, 14 June 2016. <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff-nation/assignments/share-your-news-and-views/15012668/Lets-talk-about-New-Zealands-national-security>.

Fisher, David. "Inside the NZSAS: Creating the elite soldier." *New Zealand Herald*, September 2018. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/indepth/national/inside-the-nzsas/>.

Fisher, David. "Revealed: The military's briefing to its minister on the deadly 'Hit & Run' raid by the NZSAS." *New Zealand Herald*, 22 April 2017. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/revealed-the-militarys-briefing-to-its-minister-on-the-deadly-hit-run-raid-by-the-nzsas/2BLGUO3GO2CJUH42OT52KILMKA/>.

Fisher, David. "What is Odesc? Meet the top-secret committee guiding Jacinda Ardern and New Zealand through our darkest days." *New Zealand Herald*, 18 March 2019. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/what-is-odesc-meet-the-top-secret-committee-guiding-jacinda-ardern-and-new-zealand-through-our-darkest-days/R4TMX2NTHWZC4NYR24OOCWXAQA/>.

Fuentes, Gidget. "A Jekyll and Hyde portrait emerges of the SEAL accused of murdering an Islamic State prisoner." *Navy Times*, 15 November 2018. <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2018/11/15/a-jekyll-and-hyde-portrait-emerges-of-the-seal-accused-of-murdering-an-islamic-state-prisoner/>.

Garamone, Jim. "Special ops capabilities relevant around the world, commander says." 22 July 2017. <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1255158/special-ops-capabilities-relevant-around-the-world-commander-says/>.

Gibbons-Neff, Thomas. "Top U.S. special operations general: 'We're hurting ourselves' with all these movies and books." *Washington Post*, 15 September 2016. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2016/09/15/top-u-s-special-forces-general-were-hurting-ourselves-with-all-these-movies-and-books/>.

Giovannetti, Justin. "SAS did nothing wrong, but senior military officers misled public: report." *The Spinoff*, 31 July 2020. <https://thespinoff.co.nz/politics/31-07-2020/sas-cleared-of-major-allegations-made-in-hit-and-run-book/>.

Goodwin, Eileen. "Call for inquiry after Hager-Stephenson book." *Otago Daily Times*, 23 March 2017. <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/call-inquiry-after-hager-book>.

Gould, Martin. "EXCLUSIVE – SEALS AT WAR: Fellow warriors brand Rob O'Neill a LIAR after he claims he was the shooter who fired three bullets into Bin Laden's head." *Daily Mail Australia*, 07 November 2014. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2824136/Fellow-SEALs-turn-Team-Six-member-going-public-bin-Laden-killing-Rob-O'Neill-not-truthful-telling-fired-three-bullets-terror-mastermind-s-head.html>.

Greener, Peter. "Towards 2025: An interview with the Chief of Defence Force." *Line of Defence*, Summer 2018.

Hager, Nicky. "No defence." *North & South*, November 2018.

Hall, Michael T. "Protecting the future of the special operations forces enterprise." *Military Times*, 23 May 2020.

<https://www.militarytimes.com/opinion/commentary/2020/05/23/protecting-the-future-of-the-special-operations-forces-enterprise/>.

Haynes, Deborah. "SAS favourite ready to take on world." *The Times*, 19 November 2016. <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/world/sas-favourite-ready-to-take-on-world-jjnm5p50n>.

Haynes, Deborah. "Trump visit: President all fired up by SAS hostage rescue display." *The Times*, 14 July 2018. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/trump-visit-president-all-fired-up-by-sas-hostage-rescue-display-2trzw0lz0>.

Hitchings, Rob. "The untold story of the daring NZ SAS mission to rescue UN personnel in West Timor." *Stuff*, 06 September 2020.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/122568724/the-untold-story-of-the-daring-nz-sas-mission-to-rescue-un-personnel-in-west-timor>.

Judson, Jen. "3 ways US and Mideast special ops could better counter regional threats." *DefenseNews*, 07 May 2018. <https://www.defensenews.com/digital-show-dailies/sofex/2018/05/07/us-and-middle-east-special-ops-forces-must-improve-cooperation-info-sharing/>.

Knaus, Christopher. "Australia's entire SAS regiment must be disbanded after Brereton report, expert says." *The Guardian*, 24 November 2020.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/nov/25/australias-entire-sas-regiment-must-be-disbanded-after-brereton-report-expert-says>.

Lagan, Bernard. "Australia SAS chief says elite troops were guilty of Afghan war crimes." *The Times*, 30 June 2020. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/world/australia-sas-chief-says-elite-troops-were-guilty-of-afghan-war-crimes-mrsq3c8nw>.

Leask, Anna. "Army training accident: SAS soldier died after jumping from helicopter and falling height of several storeys – source." *New Zealand Herald*, 09 May 2019.

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/army-training-accident-sas-soldier-died-after-jumping-from-helicopter-and-falling-height-of-several-storeys-source/J4JJ3OB5KIYFOAQP7MQQZNVZVI/>.

Leask, Anna. "White Island eruption: Defence boss' fears for Whakaari recovery heroes." *New Zealand Herald*, 16 December 2019. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/white-island-eruption-defence-boss-fears-for-whakaari-recovery-heroes/BVWRUWROTL2OOTWR3NJBQAQIKQ/>.

Longley, Mark. "White Island eruption: E Squadron, the elite SAS unit who helped bring the bodies back." *Newshub*, 13 December 2019.

<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2019/12/white-island-eruption-e>

[squadron-the-elite-sas-unit-who-helped-bring-the-bodies-back-from-white-island.html](#).

Manhire, Toby. "Bill English says no inquiry into Hit & Run claims: His reasons, and Hager's response." *The Spinoff*, 03 April 2017. <https://thespinoff.co.nz/politics/03-04-2017/bill-english-says-no-inquiry-into-hit-run-claims-his-reasons-and-hagers-response/>.

Mapp, Wayne. "NZDF investments set to determine nature of partnerships." *Line of Defence*, Autumn 2019.

Mark, Ron. "Minister: Capability Plan Review, Defence Estate and Climate Change." *Line of Defence*, Summer 2018.

Mazzetti, Mark, Nicholas Kulish, Christopher Drew, Serge F. Kovalski, Sean D. Naylor and John Ismay. "SEAL Team 6: A secret history of quiet killings and blurred lines." *New York Times*, 06 June 2015. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/07/world/asia/the-secret-history-of-seal-team-6.html>.

Mehta, Aaron. "Irregular warfare strategies must move beyond special forces, Pentagon says." *Military Times*, 02 October 2020. <https://www.defensenews.com/pentagon/2020/10/02/irregular-warfare-strategies-must-move-beyond-special-forces-pentagon-says/>.

Mentiplay, Cedric. "Special forces in New Zealand: They fear political axe – not jungle enemy." *Review: The Official R.S.A. Journal*, 08 June 1967.

Moody, Oliver. "Germany's SAS suspended after neo-Nazi soldiers hoard weaponry." *The Times*, 01 July 2020. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/world/germanys-sas-suspended-after-neo-nazi-soldiers-hoard-weaponry-pnd2kzn0v>.

Musgrove, Dave. "Interview | Niall Ferguson: From the Reformation to the Cold War, social networks played a role." *BBC History Magazine*, November 2017.

Myers, Meghann. "SOCOM boss calls for another ethics review." *Military Times*, 12 August 2019. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2019/08/12/socom-boss-calls-for-another-ethics-review/>.

Myers, Meghann. "Spec ops in trouble: Mired in scandal and under Pentagon review, what will it take to clean house?" *Army Times*, 13 March 2019. <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2019/03/13/spec-ops-in-trouble-mired-in-scandal-and-under-pentagon-review-what-will-it-take-to-clean-house/>.

Myers, Meghann. "The Pentagon is reviewing the special operations community after a series of high-profile scandals." *Military Times*, 05 December 2018. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/12/05/the-pentagon-is-reviewing-the-special-operations-community-after-a-series-of-high-profile-scandals/>.

Neil, Scott. "Commentary: Military advisers have a place, but the colored beret is cheap attempt at legitimacy." *Army Times*, 04 November 2017. <https://www.armytimes.com/opinion/commentary/2017/11/04/commentary-military-advisers-have-a-place-but-the-colored-beret-is-cheap-attempt-at-legitimacy/>.

Press Association. "British government and army accused of covering up war crimes." *The Guardian*, 17 November 2019.

<https://www.theguardian.com/law/2019/nov/17/british-government-army-accused-covering-up-war-crimes-afghanistan-iraq>.

Rempfer, Kyle. "From 75th Ranger Regiment to the Pentagon, Gen. Clarke now helms SOCOM." *Army Times*, 02 April 2019. <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2019/04/02/from-75th-ranger-regiment-to-the-pentagon-gen-clarke-now-helms-socom/>.

Ryan, Nick. "The SAS man who wouldn't stay quiet." *The Irish Times*, 23 March 2004. <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/the-sas-man-who-wouldn-t-stay-quiet-1.1136564>.

Shand, Matt. "Forgotten SAS Vietnam War hero denied medal." *Sunday Star Times*, 02 March 2018.

Shane III, Leo. "SOCOM head: We can't do everything." *Military Times*, 04 May 2017. <http://www.militarytimes.com/articles/socom-increased-demands-concerns-sasc>.

Shane III, Leo. "Special ops troops say the next president needs to give them more people or less work." *Military Times*, 01 November 2016. <http://www.militarytimes.com/articles/cna-report-special-ops-next-president?>

Singh, A.K. "Special forces meant to do ops like surgical strikes. They're called 'special' for a reason." *The Print*, 29 April 2020. <https://theprint.in/opinion/special-forces-ops-surgical-strikes-special-reason/410858/>.

Smith, Nathan. "Opinion: The first rule of SAS is: you do not talk about SAS." *National Business Review*, 02 March 2015.

South, Todd. "How Army Special Operations Command is paving the way for the next decade." *DefenseNews*, 11 October 2017. <https://www.defensenews.com/news/your-army/2017/10/11/how-army-special-operations-command-is-paving-the-way-for-the-next-decade/>.

South, Todd. "Less door kicking, more partner building for special operations in 'great power competition'." *Military Times*, 10 April 2019. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2019/04/10/less-door-kicking-more-partner-building-for-special-operations-in-great-power-competition/>.

South, Todd. "Special operations forces must look and fight differently for future conflicts." *Military Times*, 02 October 2020. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/10/02/special-operations-forces-must-look-and-fight-differently-for-future-conflicts/>.

Stephenson, Jon, and Simon Wilson. "Eyes wider shut." *Metro*, June 2011.

Stephenson, Jon. "Eyes wide shut." *Metro*, May 2011.

Stephenson, Jon. "SAS out of the shadows." *Stuff*, 07 March 2010. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/sunday-star-times/features/3409849/SAS-out-of-the-shadows>.



Strang, Ben. "The Whakaari recovery operation – behind the scenes." *Radio New Zealand*, 02 March 2020. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/410772/the-whakaari-recovery-operation-behind-the-scenes>.

Toohy, Paul. "Defence denies Aussie SAS raid in Iraq ever happened." *News Corps Australia Network*, 12 May 2016. <http://www.news.com.au/national/defence-denies-aussie-sas-raid-in-iraq-ever-happened/news-story/>.

Trevett, Claire. "Prime Minister John Key's secret trip to Iraq." *New Zealand Herald*, 07 October 2015. <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/news/print.cfm?objectid=11525340>.

Turse, Nick. "U.S. Special Ops Forces deployed in 135 nations." *Huffington Post*, 24 September 2015. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nick-turse/us-special-ops-forces-135-nations\\_b\\_8189978.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nick-turse/us-special-ops-forces-135-nations_b_8189978.html).

Vance, Andrea. "Defence Force unit to fight Hit and Run claims." *Stuff*, 23 June 2018. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/104862339/defence-force-unit-to-fight-hit-and-run-claims>.

Weekes, John. "Defence Force in court, charged over death of Lance Corporal Nicholas Kahotea." *New Zealand Herald*, 17 December 2020. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/defence-force-in-court-charged-over-death-of-lance-corporal-nicholas-kahotea/OOS5ASDVVMDY3P7EMQHGX4ONY/>.

Wilson, Simon. "Editorial: An Anzac story." *Metro*, May 2011.

Yeoman, Scott. "Inside NZ's new SAS training facility." *New Zealand Herald*, 08 April 2016. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/inside-nzs-new-sas-training-facility/N2J4NQZF7W77YFNP6W2VX43GQU/>.

Young, Audrey. "SAS men wounded in Kabul raid." *New Zealand Herald*, 30 June 2011. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/sas-men-wounded-in-kabul-raid/IRZELC63DVEHQFJ5D3JVDCOETM/>.

Ziezulewicz, Geoff. "How the Navy plans to deal with drug use and war crimes allegations in the SEAL community." *NavyTimes*, 13 February 2019. <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2019/02/13/how-the-navy-plans-to-deal-with-drug-use-and-war-crimes-allegations-in-the-seal-community/>.

### **New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Ministry of Defence sources**

"1 NZSAS Regiment Support Squadron." *Army News*, November / December 2018.

"New Zealand Special Air Service Group." NZSAS Association Archives, ND.

"The Special Air Service Historical Notes." NZSAS Association Archives, ND.

Air Force | Te Tauaarangi o Aotearoa. Accessed 14 January 2021. <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/air-force/>.

Army | Ngati Tumatauenga. Accessed 14 January 2021. <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/army/>.

Bliss, Jim. "Maximising our warfighting capabilities." *Army News*, November / December 2018.

Kaitohutohu NZDF | NZDF Māori Cultural Adviser and Miriam Wharton. Emails. 25 January – 18 February 2021.

Keating, Timothy. "CDF Address to Staff Course – Graduation." Speech notes. 06 December 2017.

Keating, Timothy. "CDF's Five." *Army News*, May 2014.

McKinstry, Rian. "New Zealand's geopolitics and its security challenge." Strategy research project, United States Army War College, 2018.

Moffitt, Wiremu. "A message from WO JFNZ." *Army News*, September 2019.

Moffitt, Wiremu. "SMA.Net." *Army News*, May 2020.

Navy | Te Taua Moana o Aotearoa. Accessed 14 January 2021.  
<https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/navy/>.

New Zealand Army. "Army25: Chief of Army's Brief." New Zealand Army, 2019.

New Zealand Army. "Way of the New Zealand Warrior." New Zealand Army, 2020.

New Zealand Defence Force | Te Ope Kātua o Aotearoa. Accessed 14 January 2021.  
<https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf>.

New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Ministry of Defence. "2020 Briefing to Incoming Minister of Defence / Ngā Whakamārama ki te Minita te Kāhui Kaupapa Waonga." 15 December 2020. <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/publication/Defence-BIM.pdf>.

New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Ministry of Defence. "Introducing Defence: A Briefing for the Incoming Minister." December 2017.  
<http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/corporate-documents/briefing-for-incoming-minister/briefing-for-incoming-minister.htm>.

New Zealand Defence Force. "1910/5/4 Transformation of New Zealand's Special Operations Forces." Minute. 04 February 2007.

New Zealand Defence Force. "2016/17 Portfolio Performance Plan: Special Operations Command (SOC)." 2016.

New Zealand Defence Force. "3140/DSO/1 Development of DSO Logo." Minute. 10 November 2010.

New Zealand Defence Force. "69/1/22 Part 3 NZSAS Squadron Training. NZSAS basis for planning." 20 March 1978.

New Zealand Defence Force. "69/1/22 Part 3 NZSAS Squadron Training. The maintenance of operational standards 1978-1979." April 1978.



New Zealand Defence Force. "A statement from Chief of Army MAJGEN John Boswell." Accessed 12 February 2021. <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/news/a-statement-from-chief-of-army-majgen-john-boswell/>.

New Zealand Defence Force. "Annual Report 2019 for the year ended 30 June 2019." Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2019.

New Zealand Defence Force. "Annual Report 2020 for the year ended 30 June 2020." Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2020.

New Zealand Defence Force. "Defence Force Order 35: New Zealand Defence Force Response to Civilian Harm." Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2020.

New Zealand Defence Force. "Foresight Report: Oceania." 1st ed. Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2017.

New Zealand Defence Force. "Future Land Operating Concept 2035: Integrated Land Missions." 2nd ed. Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2018.

New Zealand Defence Force. "Future Operating Concept Out to 2050." 1st ed. Wellington: New Zealand Defence Force, 2018.

New Zealand Defence Force. "New Zealand Defence Force Response to Whakaari / White Island Eruption Dec. 2019." Accessed 15 February 2021. <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/publication/New-Zealand-Defence-Force-Response-to-Whakaari-White-Island-Eruption-Dec-2019.pdf>.

New Zealand Defence Force. "New Zealand's Special Operations Forces." Accessed 10 March 2018. <http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/about-us/nzsof/>.

New Zealand Defence Force. "New Zealand's Special Operations Forces Command and Control diagram." Accessed 10 March 2018. <http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/about-us/nzsof/nzsof-command-and-control.htm> [website no longer accessible].

New Zealand Defence Force. "NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations." 2nd ed. Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2012.

New Zealand Defence Force. "NZDDP-3.12 New Zealand Special Operations." 3rd ed. Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2018.

New Zealand Defence Force. "NZDDP-D New Zealand Defence Doctrine." 4th ed. Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2017.

New Zealand Defence Force. "NZDF 1045/SOC/1." Demi-Official Letter. 03 June 2016.

New Zealand Defence Force. "NZDF 3140/SOC/1 New Zealand Special Operations Forces Strategic Plan dated 15 Aug 17." Minute. 15 August 2017.

New Zealand Defence Force. "NZDF enacts rules around civilian harm reports." 11 February 2021. <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/news/nzdf-enacts-rules-around-civilian-harm-reports/>.

New Zealand Defence Force. "NZDF Strategic Plan 2019-2025: Operationalising Strategy25." 11 March 2020. <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/Publications/NZDF-Strategic-Plan-2019-2025.pdf>.

New Zealand Defence Force. "NZSAS." Defence Careers. Accessed 11 January 2021. <https://www.defencecareers.mil.nz/army/careers/browse-roles/nzsas/>.

New Zealand Defence Force. "Regimental Guide." 4th ed. November 2012.

New Zealand Defence Force. "Report of the inquiry into Operation Burnham released: A statement from Air Marshal Kevin Short." Accessed 15 January 2021. <https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/news/report-of-the-inquiry-into-operation-burnham-released/>.

New Zealand Defence Force. "Special operations research topics 2019." March 2019.

New Zealand Defence Force. "Women in the NZDF." November 2019.

New Zealand Defence Force. *F4NZ: Force for New Zealand Magazine*, December 2018.

New Zealand Ministry of Defence | Manatū Kaupapa Waonga. Accessed 15 February 2021. <https://www.defence.govt.nz>.

New Zealand Ministry of Defence. "Defence White Paper 2016." Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2016.

New Zealand Ministry of Defence. "Implementing Recommendation 1 of the Operation Burnham Inquiry Report: Appointment of the Expert Review Group and Terms of Reference." 17 December 2020. <https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/publication/operation-burnham-inquiry-expert-review-group-appointment>.

New Zealand Ministry of Defence. "Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018." Wellington: Ministry of Defence, 2018.

New Zealand Ministry of Defence. "Terms of Reference – Government Inquiry into Operation Burnham: Expert Review Group to Review of NZDF's Organisational Structure and Record-Keeping and Retrieval Processes." 07 October 2020. <https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/publication/operation-burnham-inquiry-terms-of-reference-review-of-organisational-structure-and-record-keeping-and-retrieval-processes>.

Parsons, Christopher. "A force for good." Strategy research project, U.S. Army War College, 2015.

Special Operations Component Commander. "PASSWG-Oceania: SOCC Mihi and Opening Remarks." Remarks. 11 July 2016.

Williams, Evan. "A message from Deputy Chief of Army: Reputation and relationships – it works both ways." *Army News*, October 2019.

## New Zealand legislation

*Defence Act 1990*. Public Act: 1990 No. 28. Date of assent: 01 April 1990.  
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1990/0028/latest/DLM204973.html>.

*Education and Training Act 2020*. Public Act: 2020 No. 38. Date of assent: 31 July 2020.  
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2020/0038/latest/LMS170676.html>.

*Public Service Act 2020*. Public Act: 2020 No. 40. Date of assent: 06 August 2020.  
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2020/0040/latest/LMS106159.html>.

## Publications

"Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry Report: Part 1 – The Inquiry and Part 3 – Operational, organisation and cultural issues." The Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry. November 2020.  
<https://afghanistaninquiry.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-11/IGADF-Afghanistan-Inquiry-Public-Release-Version.pdf>.

"Opening statement to the Intelligence and Security Committee." Government Communications Security Bureau | Te Tira Tiaki. 20 February 2019.  
<https://www.gcsb.govt.nz/news/opening-statement-to-the-intelligence-and-security-committee/>.

"Report of the Government Inquiry into Operation Burnham and related matters." Inquiry into Operation Burnham. July 2020.  
<https://operationburnham.inquiry.govt.nz/assets/IOB-Files/Report-of-the-Government-Inquiry-into-Operation-Burnham-print-version.pdf>.

"Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy" (Government of Canada, 2017),  
<https://dgpaapp.forces.gc.ca/en/canada-defence-policy/docs/canada-defence-policy-report.pdf>, 40.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. ed. London: Verso, 2016.

Anglim, Simon. "British special forces in the 2020s: Still a national asset." *Military Strategy Magazine* 7, iss. 1 (2020): 43-51.

Aradau, Claudia, Jef Huysmans, Andrew Neal and Nadine Voelkner, eds. *Critical Security Methods: New Frameworks for Analysis*. London: Routledge, 2015.

Ardern, Jacinda. "Opening keynote: A vision for global New Zealand." Accessed 19 June 2020.  
<https://nziaa.org.nz/Portals/285/documents/lists/259/Opening%20Keynote%20speech%20Prime%20Minister%20Jacinda%20Ardern.pdf>.

Asher, Michael. *The Regiment: The Real Story of the SAS*. London: Penguin Books, 2008.

Augier, Mie, and Andrew W. Marshall. "The fog of strategy: Some organizational perspectives on strategy and the strategic management challenges in the changing competitive environment." *Comparative Strategy* 36, no. 4 (2017): 275-292.

- Australian Defence Force. "Special Operations Strategic Plan: Ready, Integrated Global Effects." Special Operations Command Australia, 2017.
- Australian Department of Defence. "2020 Force Structure Plan." Australian Government, Commonwealth of Australia, 2020.
- Azizian, Rouben, and Terry Johanson. "Finding the democratic balance: Australian and New Zealand national security coordination." In *Routledge Handbook of Democracy and Security*, edited by Leonard Weinberg, Elizabeth Francis and Eliot Assoudeh. London: Routledge, 2021.
- Bahmanyar, Mir. *Shadow Warriors: A History of the US Army Rangers*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2005.
- Baker, Ted, and Reed E. Nelson. "Creating something from nothing: Resource construction through entrepreneurial bricolage." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (2005): 329-366.
- Baker, W.D. *'Dare to Win': The Story of the New Zealand Special Air Service*. Nashville: The Battery Press Inc., 1987.
- Ball, Rhys, and Wil Hoverd. "Overseeing New Zealand's modern military operations." *New Zealand International Review* 42, no. 6 (2017): 18-21.
- Ball, Rhys. "The platforms: An examination of New Zealand Special Air Service campaigns from Borneo 'Confrontation' to the Vietnam War, 1965-1971." PhD diss., Massey University, 2009. <https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/1242>.
- Ball, Rhys. "The strategic utility of New Zealand special forces." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22, no. 1 (2011): 119-141.
- Ballard, John R., David W. Lamm and John K. Wood. *From Kabul to Baghdad and Back: The U.S. at War in Afghanistan and Iraq*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2012.
- Barraket, Jo, Robyn Keast and Craig Furneaux. *Social Procurement and New Public Governance*. London: Routledge, 2016.
- Battersby, John, Rhys Ball and Nick Nelson. "New Zealand's counter-terrorism strategy: A critical assessment." *National Security Journal* (2020). <https://nationalecurityjournal.nz/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2020/06/NSJ-2020-Battersby-Ball-Nelson.pdf>.
- Beals, Fiona, Joanna Kidman and Hine Funaki. "Insider and outsider research: Negotiating self at the edge of the emic-etic divide." *Qualitative Inquiry* 26, no. 6 (2020): 593-601.
- Beckwith, Charlie A., and Donald Knox. *Delta Force: The U.S. Counter-Terrorist Unit and the Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission*. London: Arms and Armour Press, 1984.
- Bennett, Vernon Noel. "Military force structures in small states: Providing for relevant and credible military capability." PhD diss., Victoria University of Wellington, 2018. <http://hdl.handle.net/10063/7033>.

- Bergman, Asa, and Monica Lindgren. "Navigating between an emic and an etic approach in ethnographic research: Crucial aspects and strategies when communicating critical results to participants." *Ethnography and Education* (2018): 477-489.
- Berne, Eric. *Games People Play: The Psychology of Human Relationships*. New York: Penguin Books, 1964.
- Black, Jeremy, ed. *Elite Fighting Forces: From the Praetorian Guard to the Green Berets*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2011.
- Blehm, Eric. *The Only Thing Worth Dying For: How Eleven Green Berets Forged a New Afghanistan*. New York: Harper, 2010.
- Boot, Max. *Invisible Armies: An Epic History of Guerrilla Warfare from Ancient Times to the Present*. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2013.
- Bowden, Mark. *The Finish: The Killing of Osama bin Laden*. London: Grove Press UK, 2012.
- Boxenbaum, Eva, and Linda Rouleau. "New knowledge products as bricolage: Metaphors and scripts in organizational theory." *The Academy of Management Review* 36, no. 2 (2011): 272-296.
- Brady, Anne-Marie, ed. *Small States and the Changing Global Order: New Zealand Faces the Future*. Cham: Springer, 2019.
- Brailey, Malcolm. "The transformation of special operations forces in contemporary conflict: Strategy, missions, organisation and tactics." Working paper No. 127, Land Warfare Studies Centre, Duntroon, 2005.
- Brantly, Aaron F. "Cyber actions by state actors: Motivation and utility." *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 27, no. 3 (2014): 465-484.
- Braun, Virginia, and Victoria Clarke. "Using thematic analysis in psychology." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77-101.
- Brosnan, Alan, and Duke Henry, with Bob Taubert. *Soldiering On: The Stories of Two Former Kiwi SAS Men and their Continuing World-Wide Careers of Adventure*. Southaven: Alan Brosnan and TEES, 2002.
- Brownlee, Gerry. "Defence: Striking the right balance." *New Zealand International Review* 40, no. 3 (2015): 2-3.
- Butler, Rachel. "Organisational scapegoats and hierarchical constraints: A critical discourse analysis of inter-agency collaboration within New Zealand's public sector." Masters thesis, Massey University, 2015. <https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/10038>.
- Buzan, Barry, and Lene Hansen. *The Evolution of International Security Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Buzan, Barry. *People, States & Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*. 25th anniversary ed. Colchester: ECPR Press, 2016.

- Canadian Special Operations Forces Command. "CANSOFCOM's Strategic Plan: Consolidating the Objective." Department of National Defence.
- Canadian Special Operations Forces Command. "Future Operating Concept Handbook." April 2019.
- Canadian Special Operations Forces Command. "Future Operating Environment Handbook." Department of National Defence, 2017.
- Canyon, Deon V., Paul Lieber, Michael Mollohan and Eric Shibuya. "Pacific opportunities: U.S. special operations forces engage Pacific island nations through security working group." *Indo-Pacific Defense Forum* 43, iss. 2 (2018): 44-51.
- Carter, Ashton. "Remarks at SOCOM change of command." 30 March 2016. <http://www.defense.gov/News/Speeches/Speech-View/Article/708849/remarks-at-socom-change-of-command>.
- Christensen, Gitte Hojstrup. "Interdisciplinary perspectives on special operations forces." Conference Proceedings no. 4 (a), Royal Danish Defence College, Copenhagen, 2017.
- Christman, Walter L. "Enhancing the global SOF enterprise: A consortium concept." Occasional paper, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2017.
- Clarke, Richard D. "Advance Policy Questions for Lieutenant General Richard D. Clarke, USA, Nominee for Commander, United States Special Operations Command." 04 December 2018. [https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/clarke\\_apqs\\_12-04-18](https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/clarke_apqs_12-04-18).
- Cleaver, Frances. *Development Through Bricolage: Rethinking Institutions for Natural Resource Management*. London: Routledge, 2012.
- Cleveland, Charles T., James B. Linder, and Ronald Dempsey. "Special operations doctrine: Is it needed?" *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016): 4-19.
- Coburn, Mike. *Soldier Five: The Real Story of the Bravo Two Zero Mission*. Auckland: Mission Vista Ltd., 2004.
- Cohen, D., and B. Crabtree. "Intensity sampling." Qualitative Research Guidelines Project. July 2006. <http://www.qualres.org/HomeInte-3810.html>.
- Cohen, Eliot A. *Commandos and Politicians: Elite Military Units in Modern Democracies*. Cambridge: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1978.
- Cole, Barbara. *The Elite: The Story of the Rhodesian Special Air Service*. Pinetown: 30 South Publishers (Pty) Ltd., 2019.
- Collins, Alan, ed. *Contemporary Security Studies*. 5th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Connolly, Bram. *The Commando Way: A Special Forces Commander's Lessons for Life, Leadership and Success*. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2020.

- Connor, Ken. *Ghost Force: The Secret History of the SAS*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998.
- Cosgrove, Peter. *My Story*. Sydney: HarperCollins Publishers, 2006.
- Couch, Dick. *The Finishing School: Earning the Navy SEAL Trident*. New York: Crown Publishers, 2004.
- Counter-Terrorism Coordination Committee. "Countering terrorism and violent extremism national security overview." ODESC: Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination. Accessed 15 February 2021.  
<https://dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2020-02/2019-20%20CT%20Strategy-all-final.pdf>.
- Covey, Stephen M.R., with Rebecca R. Merrill. *The Speed of Trust: The One Thing that Changes Everything*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006.
- Craig, Edward, ed. *The Shorter Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. London: Routledge, 2005.
- Crawford, John, and Glyn Harper. *Operation East Timor: The New Zealand Defence Force in East Timor 1999-2001*. Auckland: Reed Books, 2001.
- Cromptvoets, Samantha. "Australia's special forces and the 'fog of culture'." ASPI Australian Strategic Policy Institute. 18 November 2020.  
<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/australias-special-forces-and-the-fog-of-culture/>.
- Crosby, Ron. *NZSAS: The First Fifty Years*. North Shore: Viking, 2009.
- Crowley, Grant J. "New Zealand's response to the aircraft hijack incident during the 1987 coup d'état in Fiji: A study of civil-military relations in crisis." Masters thesis, Massey University, 2002. <http://hdl.handle.net/10179/7154>.
- Dalgaard-Nielsen, Anja, and Kirstine Falster Holm. "Supersoldiers or rulebreakers? Unpacking the mind-set of special operations forces." *Armed Forces & Society* 45, no. 4 (2019): 591-611.
- Danielsen, Tone. "A small state's special operators, up close." *War on the Rocks*. 25 October 2018. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/10/a-small-states-special-operators-up-close/>.
- Danielsen, Tone. "Making warriors in the global era: An anthropological study of institutional apprenticeship: Selection, training, education, and everyday life in the Norwegian Naval Special Operations Commando." PhD diss., University of Oslo, 2015.
- Danielsen, Tone. *Making Warriors in a Global Era: An Ethnographic Study of the Norwegian Naval Special Operations Commando*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2018.
- de la Billiere, Peter. *Looking for Trouble: SAS to Gulf Command; The Autobiography*. London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994.
- Denzin, Norman K., and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 5th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Inc., 2018.



Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. "National Security System Handbook." August 2016. <https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2017-03/dpmc-nss-handbook-aug-2016.pdf>.

Dolnik, Adam, ed. *Conducting Terrorism Field Research: A Guide*. London: Routledge, 2013.

Donati, Jessica. *Eagle Down: The Last Special Forces Fighting the Forever War*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2021.

Duck, Steve. *Human Relationships*. 4th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2007.

Durkheim, Emile. *The Division of Labor in Society*. Translated by W.D. Halls. New York: The Free Press, 1997.

Ellis, David C., Charles N. Black, and Mary Ann Nobles. "Thinking dangerously: Imagining United States Special Operations Command in the post-CT world." *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016): 110-129.

Eriksson, Gunilla, and Ulrica Pettersson, eds. *Special Operations from a Small State Perspective: Future Security Challenges*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.

Ewing-Jarvie, Simon, ed. *Commanding Kiwis: Leadership and Management Issues in New Zealand's Armed Forces*. Wellington: Awesome Kiwi New Zealand Limited, 1998.

Fayolle, Alain, and Harry Matlay, eds. *Handbook of Research on Social Entrepreneurship*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2010.

Ferguson, Niall. *The Square and the Tower: Networks, Hierarchies and the Struggle for Global Power*. UK: Allen Lane, 2017.

Fiala, Matthias. "Déjà vu: The shared history of SOF – Switzerland as a case study." *CTX* 9, no. 2 (2019): 39-48.

Fierke, K.M. *Critical Approaches to International Security*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015.

Findlay, Adam. "Special forces, counter terrorism and partnership." *Australian Army Journal* 14, no. 3 (2018): 69-76.

Finlan, Alastair. "A dangerous pathway? Toward a theory of special forces." *Comparative Strategy* 38, no. 4 (2019): 255-275.

Finlan, Alastair. *Special Forces, Strategy and the War on Terror: Warfare by Other Means*. London: Routledge, 2008.

Fiske, Alan Page. "The four elementary forms of sociality: Framework for a unified theory of social relations." *Psychological Review* 99, no. 4 (1992): 689-723.

Fiske, Alan Page. *Structures of Social Life: The Four Elementary Forms of Human Relations*. New York: The Free Press, 1991.

Flick, Uwe. *Introducing Research Methodology*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2015.



- Fowler, William. *SAS Behind Enemy Lines: Covert Operations 1941 to the Present Day*. London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997.
- Freedman, Lawrence. *Strategy: A History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Friend, Alice Hunt, and Kaitlyn Johnson. "The sixth service: What the reorganization of special operations forces can teach us about Space Force." War on the Rocks. 17 September 2018. <http://warontherocks.com/2018/09/the-sixth-service-what-the-reorganization-of-special-operations-forces-can-teach-us-about-space-force/>.
- Gentry, John A. "Intelligence services and special operations forces: Why relationships differ." *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 30, no. 4 (2017): 647-686.
- Geraghty, Tony. *The is the SAS: A Pictorial History of the Special Air Service Regiment*. London: Arms and Armour Press, 1982.
- Geraghty, Tony. *Who Dares Wins: The Story of the Special Air Service, 1950-1980*. London: Arms and Armour Press, 1980.
- Giessner, Steffen, and Niels van Quaquebeke. "Using a relational models perspective to understand normatively appropriate conduct in ethical leadership." *Journal of Business Ethics* 95, supp. 1 (2010): 43-55.
- Government of Canada. "Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy." 2017. <https://dgpaapp.forces.gc.ca/en/canada-defence-policy/docs/canada-defence-policy-report.pdf>.
- Graham, Michael. *Secret SAS Missions in Africa: C Squadron's Counter-Terrorist Operations 1968-1980*. Yorkshire: Pen & Sword, 2018.
- Gray, Colin S. "Handfuls of heroes on desperate ventures: When do special operations succeed?" *Parameters*, Spring 1999. <http://strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/Articles/99spring/gray.htm>.
- Gray, Colin S. "Tactical operations for strategic effect: The challenge of currency conversion." JSOU special report, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2015.
- Gray, Colin S. *Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005.
- Gray, Colin S. *Explorations in Strategy*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996.
- Gray, Colin S. *The Strategy Bridge: Theory for Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Green, Daniel R. *In the Warlords' Shadow: Special Operations Forces, the Afghans, and Their Fight Against the Taliban*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2017.
- Greener, B.K. "New Zealand's military and policing efforts in the Pacific." *Australian Defence Journal* 117 (2008): 73-84.

- Greener, B.K. "The New Zealand Defence Force role in New Zealand foreign policy." In *Small States and Changing Global Order: New Zealand Faces the Future*, edited by Anne-Marie Brady, 39-54. Cham: Springer, 2019.
- Greener, B.K., and Ashalya Noa. "Navigating security in the Pacific." *Pacific Dynamics: Journal of Interdisciplinary Research* 4, no. 1 (2020): 31-40.
- Greener, B.K., ed. *Army Fundamentals: From Making Soldiers to the Limits of the Military Instrument*. Auckland: Massey University Press, 2017.
- Greener-Barcham, B.K. "Before September: A history of counter-terrorism in New Zealand." *Australian Journal of Political Science* 37, iss. 3 (2002): 509-524.
- Hager, Nicky, and Jon Stephenson. *Hit & Run: The New Zealand SAS in Afghanistan and the Meaning of Honour*. Nelson: Pottton & Burton, 2017.
- Hager, Nicky. *Other People's Wars: New Zealand in Afghanistan, Iraq and the War on Terror*. Nelson: Craig Pottton Publishing, 2011.
- Hager, Nicky. *Secret Power: New Zealand's Role in the International Spy Network*. Nelson: Craig Pottton, 1996.
- Hampton, Andrew. "Speech: Cyber security in a Covid-19 world." 03 August 2020. <https://www.gcsb.govt.nz/news/cyber-security-in-a-covid-19-world/>.
- Haney, Eric L. *Inside Delta Force: The Story of America's Elite Counterterrorist Unit*. New York: Delacorte Press, 2006.
- Harding, Nina. "'You bring it, we'll bring it out': Becoming a soldier in the New Zealand Army." PhD diss., Massey University, 2016. <http://hdl.handle.net/10179/9896>.
- Harman, Richard. "Duel of the Davids: The standoff of 19 May." *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 22 (1998): 17-19.
- Harper, Glyn, and Joel Hayward, eds. *Born to Lead? Portraits of New Zealand Commanders*. Auckland: Exisle Publishing, 2003.
- Harper, Glyn, and John Tonkin-Covell. *The Battles of Monte Cassino: The Campaign and its Controversies*. Auckland: Allen & Unwin, 2013.
- Harper, Glyn. *Dark Journey: Three Key New Zealand Battles of the Western Front*. Auckland: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007.
- Harper, Glyn. *Kippenberger: An Inspired New Zealand Commander*. Auckland: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997.
- Harper, Glyn. *The Battle for North Africa: El Alamein and the Turning Point for World War II*. Auckland: Massey University Press, 2017.
- Haslam, Nick, ed. *Relational Models Theory: A Contemporary Overview*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Hastings, Michael. "The runaway general." *Rolling Stone*, 22 June 2010. <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/the-runaway-general-20100622>.

Hastings, Michael. *The Operators: The Wild and Terrifying Inside Story of America's War in Afghanistan*. London: Phoenix, 2012.

Hayden, Michael V. *The Assault on Intelligence: American National Security in an Age of Lies*. New York: Penguin Press, 2018.

Hayes III, James E. "Beyond the gray zone: Special operations in multidomain battle." *Joint Force Quarterly* 91 (2018): 60-66.

Haynes, Walter. "Elusive victories: How counterterrorism campaigns can link back up with strategy." *War on the Rocks*. 13 October 2016.

<http://warontherocks.com/2016/10/elusive-victories-how-counterterrorism-campaigns-can-link-back-up-with-strategy/>.

Hensley, Gerald. *Final Approaches: A Memoir*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2006.

Hoadley, Stephen. "From defence to security: New Zealand's hard power, soft power, and smart power: Stephen Hoadley reviews New Zealand's approach to security in the 21st century." *New Zealand International Review* 32, no. 5 (2007): 18.

Hoadley, Stephen. "New Zealand's strategic context: One or many scenarios?" *New Zealand International Review* 42, no. 6 (2017): 14-17.

Hopf, Ted. "The promise of constructivism in international relations theory." *International Security* 23, no. 1 (1998): 171-200.

Horn, Bernd, and Tony Balasevicius, eds. *Castling Light on the Shadows: Canadian Perspectives on Special Operations Forces*. Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007.

Horn, Bernd, J. Paul de B. Taillon and David Last. *Force of Choice: Perspectives on Special Operations*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004.

Horn, Bernd. "The Canadian Special Air Service Company." Monograph 22, CANSOFCOM Education & Research Centre, Ottawa, 2017.

Horn, Bernd. *Shadow Warriors: The Canadian Special Operations Forces Command*. Toronto: Dundurn, 2016.

Horner, David, with Neil Thomas. *In Action with the SAS*. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2009.

Horner, David. *SAS Phantoms of War: A History of the Australian Special Air Service*. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2002.

Hoverd, William, Nick Nelson and Carl Bradley, eds. *New Zealand National Security: Challenges, Trends and Issues*. Auckland: Massey University Press, 2017.

Hoverd, William. "The changing New Zealand national security environment: New threats, new structures, and new research." *National Security Journal* 1, iss. 1 (2019). <https://sites.massey.ac.nz/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2020/02/NSJ-2019-October-Hoverd.pdf>.

Ings, Welby. *Disobedient Teaching: Surviving and Creating Change in Education*. Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2017.

Johannisson, Bengt. "Towards a practice theory of entrepreneuring." *Small Business Economics* 36, no. 2 (2011): 135-150.

Johanson, Terence Christopher. "The emperor's new clothes: New Zealand's whole of government approach to national security." Masters thesis, Massey University, 2014. <https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/7058>.

Johnson, Matthew. "The growing relevance of special operations forces in U.S. military strategy." *Comparative Strategy* 25, no. 4 (2006): 273-296.

Joint Special Operations University. "Special Operations Forces Reference Manual." 4th ed. MacDill Air Force Base, FL: The JSOU Press, 2014.

Joint Special Operations University. "Special operations research topics 2018 (revised edition for academic year 2019)." MacDill Air Force Base, FL: The JSOU Press, 2018.

Joint Special Operations University. "Special operations research topics 2020: Revised edition for academic year 2021." The Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL. 2020. [https://jsou.libguides.com/ld.php?content\\_id=55347911](https://jsou.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=55347911).

Jopling, Frank, and Brendon O'Carroll, eds. *Bearded Brigands*. Wellington: Ngaio Press, 2002.

Jordan, David, James D. Kiras, David J. Lonsdale, Ian Speller, Christopher Tuck and C. Dale Walton. *Understanding Modern Warfare*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Keast, Robyn, Myrna Mandell and Robert Agranoff, eds. *Network Theory in the Public Sector: Building New Theoretical Frameworks*. New York: Routledge, 2014.

Keating, Tim. "The relentless pursuit of excellence." In *Leaders Like You: New Zealand Leaders Share Stories of Courage, Failure and Commitment*, edited by Nick Sceats and Andrea Thompson, 64-69. Wellington: Catapult Publishing, 2017.

Kennedy, Bart. "The practice of special operations: An analysis of SOF ethics." Masters thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2019.

Key, John. "New Zealand's place in the world." 03 May 2016. <http://www.nziaa.org.nz/past-events.aspx>.

Kihl, Tom-Erik, and Jonas Carling. "The global special operations forces network from a partner-nation perspective." Capstone project, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, 2014.

King, Anthony. "The Special Air Service and the concentration of military power." *Armed Forces & Society* 35, no. 4 (2009): 646-666.

Kiras, James D. "'Unintended acceleration': The problematique of civil-military relations of special operations forces." (2015): 1-32.

- Kiras, James D. "A theory of special operations: "These ideas are dangerous"." *Special Operations Journal* 1, iss. 2 (2015): 75-88.
- Kiras, James D. "Future tasks: Threats and missions for SOF." *Special Operations Journal* 5 (2019): 6-24.
- Kiras, James D. *Special Operations and Strategy: From World War II to the War on Terrorism*. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Kiras, James D., Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen and Nicolaj Juul Nielsen. "Introduction: Recruiting and organizing to meet future SOF challenges." *Small Wars Journal* iss. 5 (2019): 1-5.
- Krebs, Nina Boyd. *Edgewalkers: Defusing Cultural Boundaries on the New Global Frontier*. Far Hills: New Horizon Press, 1999.
- Langford, Ian. "Australian special operations: Principles and considerations." Army research papers No. 4, The Australian Army, Commonwealth of Australia, 2014.
- Lason, Marcin. *Defence and National Security Policy of New Zealand in the 21st Century: Between Pragmatism and Minimalism*. ND.
- Last, David, and Bernd Horn, eds. *Choice of Force: Special Operations for Canada*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005.
- Laws, Michael. "The real enemy." *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 26 (1999): 25.
- Leebaert, Derek. *To Dare and To Conquer: Special Operations and the Destiny of Nations, from Achilles to Al Qaeda*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2006.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude. *The Savage Mind*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966.
- Lieber, P.S., and W.S. Hoverd. "Reinventing social science in the military: Lessons learned from the United States and New Zealand." *PRISM* 7, no. 1 (2017): 141-149.
- Lieber, Paul S. "Rethinking special operations leadership: Process, persuasion, pre-existing, and personality." Occasional paper, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2016.
- Little, Paul. *Willie Apiata VC: The Reluctant Hero*. North Shore: Viking, 2008.
- Louvel, Severine. "Understanding change in higher education as bricolage: How academics engage in curriculum change." *Higher Education* 66, no. 6 (2013): 669-691.
- Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince: On the Art of Power*. London: Duncan Baird Publishers, 2007.
- Macintyre, Ben. "They changed the way war is run." *BBC History Magazine*, December 2016.
- Macintyre, Ben. *SAS: Rogue Heroes*. UK: Penguin Books, 2017.
- MacKenzie, Alastair. *Pilgrim Days: From Vietnam to the SAS*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2019.

- MacKenzie, Alastair. *Special Force: The Untold Story of 22nd Special Air Service Regiment (SAS)*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2011.
- Maher, Andrew. "Regional special operations force capability building: An asymmetric Australian maritime strategy." *Australian Army Journal* 12, no. 1 (2015): 51-74.
- Mapp, Wayne. "In defence of our interests." *New Zealand International Review* 35, no. 1 (2010): 8-11.
- Mark, Ron. "Minister of Defence: Speech for the Shangri-La Dialogue; Singapore." Beehive.govt.nz. 09 June 2018. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/minister-defence-speech-shangri-la-dialouge-singapore>.
- Mark, Ron. "We are all in this together." *New Zealand International Review* 45, no. 5 (2020): 14-17.
- Marquis, Susan L. *Unconventional Warfare: Rebuilding U.S. Special Operations Forces*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997.
- Marsh, Christopher, James D. Kiras and Patricia J. Blocksome. *Special Operations: Out of the Shadows*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2020.
- Martin, Judith. "Edge of endurance: How the SAS picks its people." *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 23 (1998): 10-16.
- Masters, Chris. *No Front Line: Australia's Special Forces at War in Afghanistan*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2017.
- Mattis, Jim, and Bing West. *Call Sign Chaos: Learning to Lead*. New York: Random House, 2019.
- Maxwell, David S. "The only thing worse than misusing SOF is policy makers misusing SOF operational methods as a strategy." *Small Wars Journal*, 17 June 2015. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/print/24395>.
- McChrystal, Stanley, with Tantum Collins, David Silverman and Chris Fussell. *Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World*. New York: Portfolio | Penguin, 2015.
- McChrystal, Stanley. *My Share of the Task: A Memoir*. New York: Portfolio | Penguin, 2013.
- McCraw, David. "New Zealand's defence policy: The triumph of ideology?" *New Zealand International Review* 31, no. 1 (2006): 23-27.
- McElhatton, Emmet. "Australia and New Zealand: Like-minded defence partners?" *New Zealand International Review* 31, no. 4 (2006): 18-21.
- McFate, Sean. *Goliath: Why the West Doesn't Win Wars. And What We Need to Do About It*. UK: Michael Joseph, 2019.
- McGarrity, Nicola. "Fourth estate or government lapdog? The role of the Australian media in the counter-terrorism context." *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 25, no. 2 (2011): 273-283.

- McLean, Denis. "Security at a price." *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 29 (2000): 8-11.
- McMillan, Stuart. "ANZAC defence: Finding a way ahead." *New Zealand International Review* 30, no. 4 (2005): 2-6.
- McNab, Andy. *Seven Troop*. London: Transworld Digital, 2008.
- McPhedran, Ian. *Soldiers Without Borders: Beyond the SAS*. Sydney: HarperCollins, 2010.
- McPhedran, Ian. *The Amazing SAS: The Inside Story of Australia's Special Forces*. Sydney: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005.
- McRaven, William H. "Posture Statement of Admiral William H. McRaven, USN, Commander, United States Special Operations Command Before the 113th Congress, House Armed Services Committee, March 6, 2013." 06 March 2013.  
<https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AS/AS00/20130306/100394/HHRG-113-AS00-Wstate-McRavenUSNA-20130306.pdf>.
- McRaven, William H. *Sea Stories: My Life in Special Operations*. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2019.
- McRaven, William H. *SPEC OPS: Case Studies in Special Operations Warfare: Theory and Practice*. Novato: Presidio, 1995.
- McShane, Steven, and Tony Travaglione. *Organisational Behaviour on the Pacific Rim*. North Ryde: McGraw-Hill Australia, 2003.
- Meiser, Jeffrey W. "Ends + ways + means = (bad) strategy." *Parameters* 46, no. 4 (2016-2017): 81-91.
- Middleton, Karen. *An Unwinnable War: Australia in Afghanistan*. Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2011.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. "Annual Report 2019-20." Wellington: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2020.
- Mitchell, Mark E., and Doug Livermore. "Righting the course for America's special operators." War on the Rocks. 23 November 2020.  
<https://warontherocks.com/2020/11/righting-the-course-for-americas-special-operators/>.
- Moffitt, Anthony. *Eleven Bats: A Story of Combat, Cricket and the SAS*. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2020.
- Moore, Emma, and Stewart Parker. "Adapting the image and culture of special operations forces." War on the Rocks. 22 July 2020.  
<https://warontherocks.com/2020/07/adapting-the-image-and-culture-of-special-operations-forces-for-the-missions-of-the-future/>.
- Morillo, Stephen, with Michael F. Pavkovic. *What is Military History?* 3rd ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017.



- Morrison, Scott. "Redefining the indirect approach, defining special operations forces (SOF) power, and the global networking of SOF." *Journal of Strategic Security* 7, no. 2 (2014): 48-54.
- Moyar, Mark. *Oppose Any Foe: The Rise of America's Special Operations Forces*. New York: Basic Books, 2017.
- Murphy, Ryan J.A. "Finding the emic in systemic design: Towards systemic ethnography." Proceedings of RSD7, Relating Systems Thinking and Design 7. 23-26 October 2018. <http://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/2750/>.
- Naylor, Sean. *Relentless Strike: The Secret History of Joint Special Operations Command*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015.
- Nicholson, Brendan. "Australian Army rebuilding special forces culture ahead of Afghanistan war crimes report." ASPI The Strategist. 03 October 2020. <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/australian-army-rebuilding-special-forces-culture-ahead-of-afghanistan-war-crimes-report/>.
- Nicholson, Brendan. "How the Lindt café siege exposed army atrocities." ASPI Australian Strategic Policy Institute. 16 November 2020. <https://www.aspi.org.au/opinion/how-lindt-cafe-siege-exposed-army-atrocities>.
- Nye Jr., Joseph S. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2004.
- O'Brien, Terence. "Should war define New Zealand's self-view?" *New Zealand International Review* 41, no. 1 (2016): 6-10.
- O'Carroll, Brendon. *Barce Raid: The Long Range Desert Group's Greatest Escapade*. Wellington: Ngaio Press, 2005.
- O'Carroll, Brendon. *Kiwi Scorpions: The Story of the New Zealanders in the Long Range Desert Group*. Devon: Token Publishers, 2000.
- O'Carroll, Brendon. *The Long Range Desert Group in the Aegean*. Barnsley: Pen and Sword Military, 2020.
- O'Leary, Zina. *The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2017.
- Oakley, David P. "Partners or competitors? The evolution of the Department of Defense / Central Intelligence Agency relationship since Desert Storm and its prospects for the future." JSOU report 14-2, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2014.
- Owen, Mark, with Kevin Maurer. *No Easy Day: The Autobiography of a Navy SEAL*. New York: Dutton, 2012.
- Peters, Winston. "Pacific partnerships." *New Zealand International Review* 44, no. 3 (2019): 4-7.



- Peters, Winston. "Shifting the dial: The next steps." *New Zealand International Review* 43, no. 6 (2018): 6-8.
- Pfluke, Corey. "A history of the Five Eyes alliance: Possibility for reform and additions." *Comparative Strategy* 38, no. 4 (2019): 302-315.
- Pike, Kenneth L. *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior*. 2nd ed., rev. ed. The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1967.
- Pillai, Chad. "Shifting fires: Optimizing special operations for today and tomorrow's fight." War on the Rocks. 19 October 2018.  
<https://warontherocks.com/2018/10/shifting-fires-optimizing-special-operations-for-today-and-tomorrows-fight/>.
- Powell, Alexander. "Advice from SOF on the use of SOF for the next administration." CNA Analysis & Solutions, Arlington, VA, 2016.
- Powley, Jack. Interview by Rhys Ball. 06 August 2008. Interview extract.
- Prasad, Pushkala. *Crafting Qualitative Research: Working in the Postpositivist Traditions*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2005.
- Prell, Christina. *Social Network Analysis: History, Theory & Methodology*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2012.
- Prendergast, Richard. "New Zealand's role in the Afghanistan campaign." Masters thesis, University of Cambridge, 2010.
- Pugsley, Christopher. *From Emergency to Confrontation: The New Zealand Armed Forces in Malaya and Borneo 1949-66*. South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Pugsley, Christopher. *The ANZAC Experience: New Zealand, Australia and Empire in the First World War*. Auckland: Oratia Books, 2016.
- Pukhov, Ruslan, and Christopher Marsh, eds. *Elite Warriors: Special Operations Forces from Around the World*. Minneapolis: East View Press, 2017.
- Punnett, Betty Jane, David Ford, Bella L. Galperin and Terri Lituchy. "The emic-etic-emic research cycle." *AIB Insights* 17, no. 1 (2017): 3-6.
- Ramírez, Rafael, and Ulf Mannervik. *Strategy for a Networked World*. London: Imperial College Press, 2016.
- Rapp, William E. "Civil-military relations: The role of military leaders in strategy making." *Parameters* 45, no. 3 (2015): 13-26.
- Rennie, Frank. *Regular Soldier: A Life in the New Zealand Army*. Auckland: Endeavour Press, 1986.
- Rennie, Frank. *Regular Soldier: A Life in the New Zealand Army*. Christchurch: Willsonscott Publishing International Ltd., 2012.

Ricks, Chuck, ed. "The role of the global SOF network in a resource constrained environment." JSOU report, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2013.

Ricks, Thomas E. "What Trump didn't get about Harward: A lot of what makes a special operator tick." *Foreign Policy*. 17 February 2017.

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/17/what-trump-didnt-get-about-harward-a-lot-of-what-makes-a-special-operator-tick/>.

Roberts, James Q. "Need authorities for the gray zone? Stop whining. Instead, help yourself to Title 100. Hell, take some Title 200 while you're at it." *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016): 20-32.

Robinson, Linda. "The future of U.S. Special Operations Forces." Council Special Report No. 66, Council on Foreign Relations, New York, 2013.

Robinson, Linda. *Masters of Chaos: The Secret History of the Special Forces*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2004.

Robinson, Linda. *One Hundred Victories: Special Ops and the Future of American Warfare*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2013.

Robinson, Linda. *One Hundred Victories: Special Ops and the Future of American Warfare*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2013.

Robinson, Linda. *The Future of US Special Operations Forces*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2013.

Rolfe, James. *Defending New Zealand: A Study of Structures, Processes and Relationships*. Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, 1993.

Rolfe, James. *The Armed Forces of New Zealand*. St Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1999.

Rolfe, Jim. "New Zealand's security: Alliances and other military relationships." Working paper 10/97, Centre for Strategic Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, 1997.

Rolfe, Jim. "Pragmatic optimisation: Australia – New Zealand relations in the 21st century." In *Small States and Changing Global Order: New Zealand Faces the Future*, edited by Anne-Marie Brady, 93-110. Cham: Springer, 2019.

Rolfe, Jim. "So near, yet so far apart." *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 1 (1993): 34-35.

Rolfe, Jim. "Towards 2000 – The Army shapes up." *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 1 (1993): 18-21.

Rothery, Chris. "New Zealand's national security framework: A recommendation for the development of a National Security Strategy." Masters thesis, University of Waikato, 2018.

- Rothery, Chris. "Time for a national security strategy." *National Security Journal* 1, iss. 1 (2019). <https://sites.massey.ac.nz/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2020/02/NSJ-2019-October-Rothery.pdf>.
- Rothstein, Hy S. *Afghanistan & the Troubled Future of Unconventional Warfare*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2006.
- Rubright, Richard W. "A unified theory for special operations." JSOU report 17-1, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2017.
- Ryan, Chris. *The History of the SAS: As Told by the Men on the Ground*. London: Coronet, 2019.
- Ryan, Mike. *Secret Operations of the SAS: From the Deserts of Africa to the Mountains of Afghanistan*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword Books, 2003.
- Salter, Mark B., and Can E. Mutlu. *Research Methods in Critical Security Studies: An Introduction*. London: Routledge, 2013.
- Schake, Kori, and Jim Mattis, eds. *Warriors & Citizens: American Views of Our Military*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2016.
- Schelling, Thomas C. *The Strategy of Conflict*. Cambridge: Harvard University, 1980.
- Schilling, Dan, and Lori Chapman Longfritz. *Alone at Dawn: Medal of Honor Recipient John Chapman and the Untold Story of the World's Deadliest Special Operations Force*. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2019.
- Scott, John, and Peter J. Carrington, eds. *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2011.
- Scott, John. *Social Network Analysis*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Inc., 2013.
- Scott, W. Richard, and Gerald F. Davis. *Organizations and Organizing: Rational, Natural, and Open System Perspectives*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, Inc., 2007.
- Searle, Tom. "Outside the box: A new general theory of special operations." JSOU report 17-4, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2017.
- Shamir, Eitan, and Eyal Ben-Ari. "The rise of special operations forces: Generalized specialization, boundary spanning and military autonomy." *Journal of Strategic Studies* (2016): 1-37.
- Simons, Anna. "'Scalpel' or 'easy button'? Neither – and some further considerations." In *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Special Operations Forces*, edited by Gitte Hojstrup Christensen. Conference proceedings, Royal Danish Defence College, 2017.
- Simons, Anna. "Diversity and SOF: Boon or bane?" *Special Operations Journal*, iss. 5 (2019): 42-52.
- Simons, Anna. *The Company They Keep: Life Inside the U.S. Special Forces*. New York: The Free Press, 1997.

- Simons, Anna, and David Tucker. "United States special operations forces and the war on terrorism." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 14, no. 1 (2003): 77-91.
- Slim, William. *Defeat Into Victory: Battling Japan in Burma and India, 1942-1945*. New York: Cooper Square Press, 2000.
- Smith, Michael. *Killer Elite: The Inside Story of America's Most Secret Special Operations Team*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2006.
- Soeters, Joseph, Patricia M. Shields and Sebastiaan Rietjens, eds. *Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in Military Studies*. London: Routledge, 2014.
- Spencer, Emily, ed. *Special Operations Forces: A National Capability*. Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2011.
- Spencer, Emily, ed. *Special Operations Forces: Building Global Partnerships*. Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2012.
- Spencer, Emily. *Thinking for Impact: A Practical Guide for Special Operations Forces*. Ottawa: Canadian Special Operations Forces Command, 2018.
- Spulak, Jr., Robert G. "A theory of special operations: The origin, qualities, and use of SOF." JSOU report 07-7, Joint Special Operations University Press, Hurlburt Field, FL, 2007.
- Spulak, Jr., Robert G., and Jessica Glicken Turnley. "Theoretical perspectives of terrorist enemies as networks." JSOU report 05-3, Joint Special Operations University Press, Hurlburt Field, FL, 2005.
- Steadman, Hugh. "Questioning our natural alliance." *New Zealand International Review* 39, no. 3 (2014): 25-28.
- Steff, Reuben. "Strategic liberalism and Kiwi maximalism." *New Zealand International Review* 41, no. 2 (2016): 14-17.
- Steinberg, Shirley R., and Gaile S. Cannella, eds. *Critical Qualitative Research Reader*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2012.
- Stirling, David. "Memorandum of Colonel David Stirling, DSO, OBE on the Origins of the Special Air Service Regiment." NZSAS Association Archives, ND.
- Stringer, Kevin D. "The Arctic domain: A narrow niche for Joint Special Operations Forces." *Joint Force Quarterly*, iss. 78 (2015): 24-31.
- Svendsen, Adam D.M. "Sharpening SOF tools, their strategic use and direction: Optimising the command of special operations amid wider contemporary defence transformation and military cuts." *Defence Studies* 14, no. 3 (2014): 284-309.
- Swan, Christopher David. "The Exclusive Economic Zone: An instrument of national security?" Masters thesis, Massey University, 2012.
- Tanner, Stephen. *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the War Against the Taliban*. Rev. ed. Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2009.

- Taylor, Barbara Brown. *Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others*. New York: HarperOne, 2019.
- Taylor, Richard. *Ngati Tumatauenga: Tribe of the War God*. Napier: Heritage New Zealand, 1996.
- Tett, Gillian. *The Silo Effect: Why Putting Everything in its Place Isn't Such a Bright Idea*. London: Little, Brown, 2015.
- The Australian Army. "Special Operations Command Information Booklet." Accessed 26 January 2021. <https://www.army.gov.au/our-work/special-forces/special-operations-command-booklet>.
- The Australian Special Air Service Association. "SITREP: The Australian Special Air Service Association (ASASA) – WA Branch." September 2017.
- Thomas III, Raymond A. "Statement of General Raymond A. Thomas, III, U.S. Army, Commander, United States Special Operations Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee, May 4, 2017." 04 May 2017. [https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Thomas\\_05-04-17.pdf](https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Thomas_05-04-17.pdf).
- Thomas, Raymond A. "Advance Policy Questions for Lieutenant General Raymond A. Thomas, USA: Nominee for Commander, United States Special Operations Command." 09 March 2016. [http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/thomas\\_03-09-16](http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/thomas_03-09-16).
- Thomas, Raymond A. "GEN Thomas CoC Remarks." Speech. 30 March 2016.
- Thompson, Wayne. "A grunt's dream soldier." *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 5 (1994): 7-10.
- Thompson, Wayne. "Dive dive dive." *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 11 (1995): 5-8.
- Tonnies, Ferdinand. *Community and Civil Society*. Translated by Jose Harris and Margaret Hollis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Tremblay, Éric, and Bill Bentley. "Canada's strategic culture: Grand strategy and the utility of force." *Canadian Military Journal* 15, no. 3 (2015): 5-17.
- Tse-Tung, Mao, and Che Guevara. *Guerrilla Warfare*. London: Cassell, 1962.
- Tucker, David, and Christopher J. Lamb. *United States Special Operations Forces*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.
- Tucker, David, and Christopher Lamb. *United States Special Operations Forces*. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 2020.
- Turner, Victor. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1995.
- Turnley, Jessica Glick, Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben-Ari, eds. *Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*. London: Routledge, 2018.

Turnley, Jessica Glicker. "Retaining a precarious value as special operations go mainstream." JSOU report 08-2, Joint Special Operations University Press, Hurlburt Field, FL, 2008.

Turnley, Jessica. "Special operations forces as change agents." Occasional paper, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2017.

Turse, Nick. *The Changing Face of Empire: Special Ops, Drones, Spies, Proxy Fighters, Secret Bases, and Cyberwarfare*. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2012.

Tzu, Sun. *The Art of War*. Translated by Peter Harris. London: Everyman's Library, 2018.

U.S. Army TRADOC. "Irregular forces." In "Irregular Forces." Fort Leavenworth: Training and Doctrine Command G2, 2010. Glossary-4.  
[https://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/security%20topics/Potential%20Adversaries/content/pdf/1.08%20IrregularForcesTRADOC\\_G2\\_Hdbk\\_1.08\\_20dec10.pdf](https://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/security%20topics/Potential%20Adversaries/content/pdf/1.08%20IrregularForcesTRADOC_G2_Hdbk_1.08_20dec10.pdf).

United Kingdom Government. "National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015: A Secure and Prosperous United Kingdom." London: Williams Lea Group, 2015.

United Kingdom House of Commons Defence Committee. "Indispensable Allies: US, NATO and UK Defence Relations." Eighth Report of Session 2017-19. HC 387. UK: House of Commons, 2018.

United Kingdom Ministry of Defence. "Global Strategic Trends: The Future Starts Today." 6th ed. UK: Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, Ministry of Defence, 2018.

United States Department of Defense. "National Security Strategy of the United States of America." 2017.

United States Department of Defense. "Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge." Accessed 23 January 2018. <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>.

United States Institute of Peace. "Providing for the Common Defense: The Assessment and Recommendations of the National Defense Strategy Commission." 13 November 2018. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2018/11/providing-common-defense>.

United States Special Operations Command, "Statement of General Raymond A. Thomas, III, U.S. Army, Commander, United States Special Operations Command before the Senate Armed Services Committee." 04 May 2017.  
<https://www.socom.mil/pages/posture-statement-sasc.aspx>.

United States Special Operations Command. "Articles." Accessed 11 March 2021.  
<https://www.socom.mil/public-affairs/command-information/articles>.

United States Special Operations Command. "Comprehensive Review." 23 January 2020.  
<https://sof.news/pubs/USSOCOM-Comprehensive-Ethics-Review-Report-January-2020.pdf>.

- United States Special Operations Command. "Fact Book 2021." [https://www.socom.mil/FactBook/2021%20Fact%20Book\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.socom.mil/FactBook/2021%20Fact%20Book_FINAL.pdf).
- United States Special Operations Command. "Press Releases." Accessed 11 March 2021. <https://www.socom.mil/Pages/pressreleases.aspx>.
- United States Special Operations Command. "SOCOM 2020: Forging the Tip of the Spear." <https://www.scribd.com/doc/259630856/SOCOM-2020-Strategy-Forging-the-Tip-of-the-Spear>.
- United States Special Operations Command. "Special Operations Forces Operating Concept." Version 1.0. 01 February 2016.
- United States Special Operations Command. "Statement of General Raymond A. Thomas, III, U.S. Army, Commander, United States Special Operations Command before the House Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities." 15 February 2018. [https://www.socom.mil/Documents/Posture%20Statements/2018%20USSOCOM%20Posture%20Statement\\_HASC%20Final.pdf](https://www.socom.mil/Documents/Posture%20Statements/2018%20USSOCOM%20Posture%20Statement_HASC%20Final.pdf).
- United States Special Operations Command. "Tip of the Spear." December 2020. <https://www.socom.mil/latesttots>.
- United States Special Operations Command. "United States Special Operations Forces Vision." 13 November 2018.
- Varhola, Christopher. "Regional understanding and unity of effort: Applying the global SOF network in future operating environments." *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016): 48-64.
- Votel, Joseph L. "Advance Policy Questions for Lieutenant General Joseph L. Votel, USA: Nominee for Commander, United States Special Operations Command." 10 July 2014. [http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/votel\\_07-10-14](http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/votel_07-10-14).
- Votel, Joseph. "GEN Votel Remarks at SOCOM Change of Command." Speech. 30 March 2016.
- Watson, Abigail, and Megan Karlshoej-Pedersen. "A call for dialogue: The dangers of polarisation in the special forces debate." Oxford Research Group. 28 August 2020. <https://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/a-call-for-dialogue-the-dangers-of-polarisation-on-the-special-forces-debate>.
- Webber, Nevile. "Political axe threatens future of SAS." *Review: The Official R.S.A Journal*, 09 July 1967.
- Wendt, Alexander. "Collective identity formation and the international state." *The American Political Science Review* 88, no. 2 (1994): 384-396.
- Wesbrock, Jason, Glenn Harned and Preston Plous. "Special operations forces and conventional forces: Integration, interoperability, and interdependence." *PRISM: Special Operations in a Chaotic World* 6, no. 3 (2016): 84-95.



White, Andrew. "Major General Jorgen Holl: Commander, Special Operations Command, Denmark." *Special Operations Forum* 15.3, 2017.

Williams, Michael. *Shooting from the Shadows: New Zealand Special Air Service, the 'Wings' Williams Story*. Waikanae: John Douglas Publishing, 2019.

Willink, Jocko, and Leif Babin. *Extreme Ownership: How U.S. Navy SEALs Lead and Win*. Sydney: Pan Macmillan Australia, 2020.

Wilson, Craig. *Bravo Kiwi: New Zealand Soldiers, Afghanistan and the Battle of Baghak*. Auckland: Bateman Books, 2018.

Wong-Diaz, Francisco. "Smart power and U.S. national strategy." JSOU report 13-3, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2013.

Wong-Diaz, Francisco. "U.S. Special Operations Forces in a period of transition." Occasional paper, Center for Special Operations Studies and Research, Joint Special Operations University, 2017.

Woodman, Stewart. "Not always close mates?" *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 4 (1994): 13-16.

Woodward, Sandy, with Patrick Robinson. *One Hundred Days: The Memoirs of the Falklands Battle Group Commander*. London: Harper Press, 2012.

Yarger, Harry R. "21st century SOF: Toward an American theory of special operations." JSOU report 13-1, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2013.

Yarger, Harry R. "Building partner capacity." JSOU report 15-1, Joint Special Operations University Press, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2015.

## Websites

"COVID-19." National Cyber Security Centre. Accessed 22 January 2021. <https://www.ncsc.govt.nz/covid-19/>.

"Lance-Corporal Bill (Willie) Apiata." New Zealand History | Nga korero a ipurangi o Aotearoa. Accessed 15 February 2021. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/page/nz-victoria-cross-recipients#apiata>.

"NZDF supports British Army's counter-poaching operation." Medium. 30 April 2019. <https://medium.com/@nzdefenceforce/nzdf-supports-british-armys-counter-poaching-operation-23752481c2e2>.

"Rannerdale World War One Commemorative Centre Regimental Dinner." WW100 – New Zealand's First World War Centenary Programme. 02 March 2015. <https://ww100.govt.nz/rannerdale-world-war-one-commemorative-centre-regimental-dinner>.



"Special Air Service Regiment." The Australian Army. 14 December 2016. <https://www.army.gov.au/our-people/units/special-operations-command/special-air-service-regiment>.

"Special Forces (SAS Reserve)." Army. Accessed 11 March 2021. <https://apply.army.mod.uk/roles/infantry/sas-reserve>.

"The Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squadron." Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand. 20 June 2012. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/photography/34665/the-explosive-ordnance-disposal-squadron>.

"UK Special Forces (Reserve): 21 & 23 Special Air Service (SAS)." Army. Accessed 14 November 2019. <https://www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/corps-regiments-and-units/uk-special-forces-reserve/21-23-sas-r/>.

"UK Special Forces." GOV.UK. Accessed 14 November 2019. <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/directorate-of-special-forces>.

"Whakaari / White Island event response." Whakatane District Council. Accessed 08 February 2021. <https://www.whakatane.govt.nz/whakaari-white-island-event-response>.

"What was OSS?" Central Intelligence Agency. Accessed 22 June 2018. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/intelligence-history/oss/art03.htm>.

Alonso-Trabanco, Jose Miguel. "Rethinking New Zealand's grand strategy." Geopolitical Monitor. 15 October 2019. <https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/rethinking-new-zealands-grand-strategy/>.

Bhimani, Nazlin. "'Long periods of boredom punctuated by moments of sheer terror'; or, surviving the PhD." Centre for Doctoral Education, UCL. 08 August 2018. <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/cde/2018/08/08/long-periods-of-boredom-punctuated-by-moments-of-sheer-terror-or-surviving-the-phd/>.

Buchanan, Elizabeth. "Hybrid warfare: Australia's (not so) new normal." ASPI The Strategist. 09 May 2019. <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/hybrid-warfare-australias-not-so-new-normal/>.

Burton, Mark. "Opening of Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand." 02 July 2001. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/opening-headquarters-joint-forces-new-zealand>.

Canadian Special Operations Forces Command, Government of Canada. 14 November 2019. <https://www.canada.ca/en/special-operations-forces-command/corporate/organizational-structure.html>.

Cook, Stephen. "Brownlee MIA when it comes to NZSAS." Whale Oil. 15 September 2015. <http://www.whaleoil.co.nz/2015/09/brownlee-mia-when-it-comes-to-nzsas/>.

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet | Te Tari o te Pirimia me te Komiti Matua. Accessed 22 January 2021. <https://dpmc.govt.nz>.

Dudovskiy, John. "Convenience sampling." Business Research Methodology. <https://research-methodology.net/sampling-in-primary-data-collection/convenience-sampling/>.

Elliot, C. August. "The abuse scandal rocking Australia's special operations forces." Foreign Policy. 14 August 2018. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/14/the-abuse-scandal-rocking-australias-special-operations-forces/>.

Ewing-Jarvie, Simon. UNCLAS: A Blog on New Zealand's National Security and Other Favourite Topics. <https://unclas.com/>.

Goff, Phil. "Presentation of the US Presidential Unit Citation." Beehive.govt.nz. 24 May 2007. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/presentation-us-presidential-unit-citation>.

Golby, Jim. "Want better strategists? Teach social science." War on the Rocks. 19 June 2020. <https://warontherocks.com/2020/06/want-better-strategists-teach-social-science/>.

Goodson, Jeff. "Irregular warfare in a new era of great-power competition." Modern War Institute at West Point. 20 May 2020. <https://mwi.usma.edu/irregular-warfare-new-era-great-power-competition/>.

Hipkins, Chris. "Public Service undergoes biggest shake-up in 30 years." Beehive.govt.nz. 26 June 2019. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/public-service-undergoes-biggest-shake-30-years>.

Inquiry into Operation Burnham. Accessed 15 February 2021. <https://operationburnham.inquiry.govt.nz>.

Joint Special Operations University. Accessed 13 March 2021. <https://www.socom.mil/jsou/Pages/default.aspx>.

Keane, Basil. "Riri – traditional Māori warfare – Rākau Māori – Māori weapons and their uses." Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand. 20 June 2012. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/riri-traditional-maori-warfare/page-3>.

Kwast, Steve. "OPINION: 'There won't be many prizes for second place'." Politico. 10 August 2018. <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/08/10/space-race-kwast-768751>.

Langford, Ian. "Finding balance between the conventional and unconventional in future warfare." The Strategy Bridge. 04 December 2018. <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2018/12/4/finding-balance-between-the-conventional-and-unconventional-in-future-warfare>.

Mark, Ron. "New armoured vehicles for New Zealand Army." Beehive.govt.nz. 08 July 2020. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new-armoured-vehicles-new-zealand-army>.

Massey University | Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa. "Centre for Defence and Security Studies." Accessed 14 March 2021. [https://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/explore/departments/centre-defence-security-studies/centre-defence-security-studies\\_home.cfm](https://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/explore/departments/centre-defence-security-studies/centre-defence-security-studies_home.cfm).

Maxwell, David. "SOCOM's new challenge in North Korea and beyond." The Cipher Brief. 07 June 2018. <https://www.thecipherbrief.com/ussocoms-new-challenge-north-korea-beyond>.

Milburn, Andrew. "How to fix a broken special operations culture." War on the Rocks. 13 September 2019. <https://warontherocks.com/2019/09/how-to-fix-a-broken-special-operations-culture/>.

Ministry of Health | Manatū Hauora. Accessed 25 January 2021. <https://www.health.govt.nz/>.

Moyar, Mark. "Making the most of special operations forces." Center for Strategic & International Studies. 18 July 2017. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/making-most-special-operations-forces>.

New Zealand Customs Service | Te Mana Ārai o Aotearoa. Accessed 25 January 2021. <https://www.customs.govt.nz>.

New Zealand Intelligence Community | Te Rōpū Pārongo Tārehu o Aotearoa. Accessed 22 January 2021. <https://www.nzic.govt.nz>.

New Zealand Police. Accessed 22 January 2021. <https://www.police.govt.nz>.

Parker, Stewart. "US special operations forces are special – but they're not 'elite'." Business Insider. Accessed 21 April 2020. <https://www.businessinsider.com/us-special-operations-forces-are-special-but-not-elite-2020-4?r=AU&IR=T>.

Raji, Azita. "Trump's tariffs and the future of transatlantic ties." War on the Rocks. 05 June 2018. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/06/trumps-tariffs-and-the-future-of-transatlantic-ties/>.

Rolfe, Jim. "A national security strategy for New Zealand?" Incline. 11 November 2019. <http://www.incline.org.nz/home/a-national-security-strategy-for-new-zealand/>.

Schroden, Jonathan. "How special ops can step it up." War on the Rocks. 19 December 2018. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/12/how-special-ops-can-step-it-up/>.

Taft, John, Ken Tovo, John Forsythe, Adam Routh and Joe Mariani. "SOF culture is the mission: Culture is key to special operations' transition to great power competition." Deloitte. 15 July 2020. <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/public-sector/ethics-in-military-leadership.html?/#>.

Te Kawa Mataaho | Public Service Commission. 05 October 2020. <https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/>.

The Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry. Accessed 15 February 2021. <https://afghanstaninquiry.defence.gov.au>.

Trochim, William M.K. "Positivism & post-positivism." Research Methods Knowledge Base. Accessed 17 January 2017. <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/positvsm.php>.

United States Special Operations Command. Accessed 21 October 2019. <https://www.socom.mil/>.

Vickers, Michael. "Future challenges for special operations forces." The Cipher Brief. 08 May 2018. <https://www.thecipherbrief.com/article/international/future-challenges-special-operations-forces>.

Wharton, Jaron, Aaron Martin, Quintin Jones and Antonio Fernando Nunez Martini. "Looking beyond professional military education to evaluating officers." War on the Rocks. 08 August 2018. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/08/looking-beyond-professional-military-education-to-evaluating-officers/>.

*ND = No Date*

# **Appendix A: Interview Questions**

## **A.0 Preamble**

The research subject and questions have changed somewhat over the duration of the thesis. Originally the thesis was examining the NZSOF's relationships just with the 5SOF network. Early variations of the interview questions reflected that focus. However, those early questions and interview participant responses indicated a strong presence of NZDF and NZNSS information that supported the change in research direction to encompass the NZDF and NZNSS networks as well as the 5SOF network. The questions provided below are the latest version of the interview questions.

## **A.1 Questions**

The list of interview questions was divided into two sections – closed questions (to identify the interview participant, their organisational and national affiliations, and their experience level) and open questions (to allow the interview participant to respond in whatever way they chose). As semi-structured interviews, the questions were a guide to discussion, rather than being a prescriptive set of directed questions.

### **A.1.1 Closed questions**

- (1) What is your full name (first name and surname) and rank (if applicable)?<sup>1</sup>
- (2) What is your professional appointment, and the organisation you currently belong to?
- (3) How long have you worked for your current organisation (duration in years)?
- (4) Give a brief account of your professional history to date.

### **A.1.2 Open questions**

- (1) Describe the purpose of internal and external relationships for an organisation.
- (2) Describe your understanding of the relationships existing between the New Zealand Special Operations Forces and their principal security partners.
- (3) Describe any relational characteristics that are unique to the New Zealand Special Operations Forces when they engage with their principal security partners.
- (4) What should future relationships between the New Zealand Special Operations Forces and their principal security partners look like?
- (5) How does the existence of a Special Operations Command affect the way the New Zealand Special Operations Forces conduct their relationships?
- (6) What form of relationship, if any, should exist between political decision-makers and the New Zealand Special Operations Forces commanders?

---

<sup>1</sup> Interview participants could choose not to have their names recorded. In these instances, an appointment was substituted for referencing purposes.

- (7) How would you define national security?
- (8) Is there a good understanding within the national security sector about how the New Zealand Special Operations Forces contribute to national security?
- (9) What does the term 'strategic effect' mean to you?
- (10) Are there any other issues you would like to mention in relation to the New Zealand Special Operations Forces and their relationships?

## Glossary

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Adaptive emulation	Where a node adopts a structural or functional element, or fundamental principle, of another node and adapts it for application in its own context.
Alchemy	A creative, unifying solution (philosophical and practical) in network relationships.
Ambiguity	The unfixed quality of multiple characteristics manifest in a node's relational dynamics in networks.
Amorphous	A network that is not defined by fixed membership, but rather by an <i>ad hoc</i> , situational state.
Belonging	The state or act of a node being comfortable in a place of its choosing and where it is accepted by other nodes.
Bricolage	An approach by which diverse concepts can be brought together and applied in a new context to create new knowledge.
Collaboration	Working together towards a common goal.
Commonality	The state or act of a node sharing things in common with one or more other network nodes.
Community	A network structure that is defined by a sense of commonality, membership and relative equivalence between nodes. <sup>2</sup>
Conventional	A military norm or norms as determined by the majority of practitioners.
Disconnection	A form of deviation where a node departs from alignment with other network nodes and moves in a direction that takes it away from what it holds in common with those other nodes.

---

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Alan Page Fiske, *Structures of Social Life: The Four Elementary Forms of Human Relations* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 13-14.



Ego node	The node within a network that is the primary focus of network analysis.
Emic researcher	One who exists within the subject being examined and speaks from that place of deep knowledge and association. <sup>3</sup>
Etic researcher	One who exists outside of the subject being examined and speaks as an external observer from a certain distance. <sup>4</sup>
Evolution	An ability to change.
Force element	A military entity that directly contributes to the delivery of military outputs. <sup>5</sup>
Formalisation	A process of making something definitive, structured, and fixed.
Hierarchical	A network structure where nodes are placed above or below other nodes; it is a structure in which rank often conveys the power and prestige of each node relative to other nodes. <sup>6</sup>
Independence	The freedom to feel and act as one sees fit.
Integration	Acting in a united way with other network nodes.
Interdisciplinarity	When two or more academic disciplines are combined in research; it is a form of bricolage.
Liminality	A state in which a node exists when it is unfixed and moves within networks in an indeterminate manner; it never permanently settles on one state or another.

---

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth L. Pike, *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior*, 2nd ed., rev. ed. (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1967), 37.

<sup>4</sup> Pike, *Unified Theory*, 37.

<sup>5</sup> Adapted from New Zealand Defence Force, "NZDDP-D New Zealand Defence Doctrine," 4th ed. (Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, 2017), 82.

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from Alan Page Fiske, "The four elementary forms of sociality: Framework for a unified theory of social relations," *Psychological Review* 99, no. 4 (1992): 691.

National security	The condition which permits citizens of a state to go about their daily business confidently free from fear and able to make the most of opportunities to advance their way of life. It encompasses the preparedness, protection and preservation of people, and of property and information, both tangible and intangible. <sup>7</sup>
Network	An interconnected series of relationships between a relatively defined set of nodes.
Node	A single entity that interacts with other nodes in a network.
Opaque	A general inability by those who interact with a node to understand or perceive what that node might offer as a force element, or what its underlying motivations may be.
Paradox	A seemingly contradictory force in a node's relationships.
Paradoxical alchemy	A continuous process whereby a node consistently and creatively manages the paradox in its relationships.
Political sponsorship	The support (verbal, resources, influence to benefit, or other type) political decision-makers offer to a specific network node.
Pragmatism	The principle of accepting the realities of a situation and working within them.
Relational characteristic	A frequently recurring feature of a node's behaviour or feeling that defines and shapes its relationships in a network.
Relational dynamic	The force resulting from the interplay of a node's relational characteristics in its network relationships.
Relationship	The behaviour or feeling between two or more nodes in a network.
Siloisation	One or more nodes isolating themselves from, and working independently from, other nodes in a network.
Size	How big a node is.

---

<sup>7</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, "National Security System Handbook" (August 2016), <https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2017-03/dpmc-nss-handbook-aug-2016.pdf>, 7.

Tension	A cooperative or competitive friction in network relationships, arising from constantly changing relational dynamics in a network.
Unconventional	An intentional deviation from a military norm or norms as determined by the majority of practitioners.
Utility	A value proposition that establishes a node's usefulness relative to other nodes and to a network; often established in comparison with other nodes.

*NOTE: Terms are defined as they relate to this thesis, and not necessarily as they may be defined in a more general sense.*