

11 June 2023

Dear Hon David Parker

I hope this letter finds you safe and well. I have been informed that a large project to which I will be heavily involved in is currently with your Ministry and has been for some time now waiting for sign off as part of the Covid fast track consent.

I am a returned Veteran of numerous operational deployments to Afghanistan and East Timor whilst serving with the NZDF.

During my time on operations with the NZDF I have been involved in a number of deployments where there was loss of life due to hostile engagements with the enemy, within that a lot of those whose lives were lost were from that patrol I was in, even down to the vehicle that was destroyed by an IED 2012 was the vehicle I commanded prior to the incident.

Upon coming home from my last deployment with Crib 20 in 2012 I made it my priority to help those who served in best ways I can that could help them get back on their feet after being injured both physically or mentally.

This has been done through Veterans coming together to help pass on their skills, experiences, and knowledge after leaving the military.

After meeting with the Project Director of the Southern Parallel Sports Campus (SPSC) I clearly saw that this opportunity is exactly what is needed for Wounded Veterans within NZ and I have offered to play a key role in helping achieve this.

We (NZ) may not have the physical injury numbers of Veterans compared to other Coalition countries but when you look at our numbers of Veterans who deployed; (21,000 NZ deployed since Vietnam) these numbers are still high, this includes mental injuries.

Unfortunately, we are still losing NZ Veterans to mental health issues, just last month I had to farewell a Veteran mate who took his life, originally born in Roxbrough also like yourself.

I have an important role within SPSC that I know will benefit those who not just participate in it but also those who help instruct, guide, and facilitate along the time the Veterans are on the Course.

My intent is to help in many ways that will help NZ through using small business but just as importantly help with the environment by adopting some walking tracks that the Veterans would maintain the upkeep of them and carry out the pest eradication plan for those areas. A Win, win for the Environment by targeting pests.

There is currently nothing in place in NZ to the size of the SPSC that helps wounded Veterans.

I have several Ex-Military personnel who will be employed in several key positions within SPSC waiting for the word that the sign off has been reached but unfortunately, they can only hold on for so long until they have to find work again to help with living costs.

These Ex-Military are key people to the SPSC but understandably like me, they can only wait for so long.

Is there a chance that this consent can be looked at sooner than later for sign off so that we can give these Ex-Military their dream job, give our wounded Veterans hope that there is a campus that gives them the opportunity to better themselves through the education and skills learnt on the course.

I as a Veteran know how important this Campus would be and how much credit NZ would gain from those countries that we serve alongside with knowing that International Coalition wounded Veterans are getting that kick start into a new life right here in New Zealand whilst enjoying all New Zealand has to offer. They will return home and encourage many more to come to programs or just visit NZ.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to being told that the SPSC Project has the green light to proceed.

Seeing that you enjoy tramping I would invite you also to join me on one of the tramping walks that we would adopt in the Northern Southland area to see how beneficial this would be.

Kind Regards

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