

## Challenges of Defence Projects by Kevin McMahon

Kevin McMahon is almost certainly the most experienced Defence procurement professional in New Zealand.

**Kevin's presentation will cover the challenges and lessons learned in delivering complex Defence projects over several decades.**

Kevin began his career in the NZ Electricity Department, the Treasury and the State Services Commission. In 1979 he joined the Ministry of Defence (MOD) as Deputy Director of Supply responsible for procurement of specialist military equipment and services. In 1982 he formed the Defence Contracts Organisation in which he filled the position of Defence Contracts Officer.

After the reorganisation of Defence in 1983 Kevin was appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence, responsible for contracting, movement of personnel and freight, the National Codification Authority, supply system development, disposal of assets, research and development relating to clothing/personal effects as well as the administrative and personnel functions for the Division.

In 1987 he was appointed Special Adviser (NZ) to the joint Australia/NZ ANZAC Ship Project, based in Canberra, to facilitate bilateral liaison with Australian Defence, Government and Industry officials.

He acted as NZ's principal Contract Negotiator and Deputy Leader of the AU/NZ Negotiating Team.

In 1990, Kevin returned to the MOD Acquisition Division in Wellington as Project Manager for the replacement Jet Trainers for the RNZAF. He has subsequently held several appointments in the

Division, including Project Manager: Air & Joint Projects, Director of Air Capability and Project Director. His projects have included the C-130 Life Extension, P-3 Mission Systems Upgrade, Training/Light Utility Helicopter (A109), Medium Utility Helicopter (NH90), Seven Vessel/three class Naval Project and the B757 Aircraft Acquisition and Conversion.

Kevin was Assistant Secretary of Defence (Acquisition) and Deputy of the Division 1998 – 2016. His roles included review and development of Acquisition Policy, maintaining the Division's ISO 9000 Certification, Chairing the Peer Review Committee reviewing all projects at predetermined stages, including plans, RFT's, tender evaluation plans, tender evaluation results and recommendations, draft contract development and negotiating contracts.

He remained a Project Director for several important projects, including some of those listed above.

In March 2016, Kevin transferred to the position of Acquisition Specialist following the implementation of the Defence Capability Change Programme. He continues in this role as a Contractor advising MOD on procurement matters and conducting Peer Review of documentation and decisions.

Kevin is also a Gateway Reviewer under contract to the Treasury Gateway Unit as a part of the Government's Better Business Case requirements.

Kevin attended the Australian Joint Services Staff College in 1985.

