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# Joint New Zealand-Australian training mission

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## Introduction

On 24 February 2015, New Zealand prime minister John Key [announced](#) that up to 143 New Zealand troops would be sent to Iraq to help train Iraqi forces. Most would be deployed to Taji, he said, and would be part of a joint training mission with Australian forces.

The head of the New Zealand Defence Force, Lt-Gen Tim Keating, [later said](#) that 106 personnel would be based at Taji, of whom 16 were to be specialist trainers. Keating confirmed that no Status of Forces Agreement was in place, and that troops would be armed with "a right to self-defence". He also said SAS personnel would not be deployed. He said that the Government Communications and Security Bureau and the Security Intelligence Service could provide information to assist troops 'behind the wire'.

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