

2nd New Zealand Infantry Division (1) (Maleme Sector)

Headquarters, 2nd New Zealand Infantry Division (2)

4th New Zealand Infantry Brigade (3)

Headquarters, 4th New Zealand Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

18th New Zealand Infantry Battalion

19th New Zealand Infantry Battalion

20th New Zealand Infantry Battalion

Platoon, 27th New Zealand Machine Gun Battalion

5th New Zealand Infantry Brigade (4)

Headquarters, 5th New Zealand Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

21st New Zealand Infantry Battalion

22nd New Zealand Infantry Battalion

23rd New Zealand Infantry Battalion

28th New Zealand (Maori) Infantry Battalion

Two Platoons, 27th New Zealand Machine Gun Battalion

7th New Zealand Field Company, New Zealand Engineers

19th New Zealand Army Troops Company, New Zealand Engineers

1st Greek Regiment

10th New Zealand Infantry Brigade (5)

Headquarters, 10th New Zealand Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

New Zealand Divisional Cavalry Regiment

New Zealand Composite Infantry Battalion (6)

Platoon, 27th New Zealand Machine Gun Battalion

6th Greek Infantry Regiment

8th Greek Infantry Regiment

Divisional Troops

5th New Zealand Field Regiment, New Zealand Artillery (7)

Commander, Royal Engineers, New Zealand Division (8)

5th New Zealand Field Park Company, New Zealand Engineers (9)

2nd New Zealand Divisional Signals, New Zealand Corps of Signals (10)

Headquarters, New Zealand Army Service Corps (11)

New Zealand Division Detail Issue Depot

Headquarters, Assistant Director of Medical Services, New Zealand Division (12)

5th New Zealand Field Ambulance, New Zealand Army Medical Corps

6th New Zealand Field Ambulance, New Zealand Army Medical Corps

4th New Zealand Field Hygiene Section, New Zealand Army Medical Corps

7th British General Hospital, Royal Army Medical Corps

Deputy Assistant Director of Ordnance Services, Maleme Sector (13)

New Zealand Divisional Provost Company (14)

New Zealand Entertainment Unit (14)

New Zealand Divisional Postal Unit (14)

NOTES:

1. The division was evacuated from Greece to Crete by the end of April 1941. The division was given responsibility for the Maleme and Canea areas of Crete, with Major General FREYBERG being appointed the General Officer Commanding 'Creforce' (i.e., all Allied forces on Crete) with effect from 30 April 1941. Brigadier Edward PUTTICK assumed command of the division. The division had lost many men and much material in Greece, particularly signals equipment and artillery. On 20 May 1941, just after dawn, the German assault began with paratroops and glider borne troops landing in the Maleme and Galatas areas. By the evening of 20 May, the N.Z. Battalion defending the airfield was under major pressure, and due to confusion and poor communication, it withdrew from the important Hill 107 that overlooked the airfield. By the end of the first day, the Germans had failed to make any consolidation at Heraklion, Retimo or at Galatas, it was only at Maleme where they had any footing of note. 21 May was the key day in the battle for Maleme airfield. The Germans realised that the New Zealanders had pulled back, so focused their reserves on that location. The first seaborne reinforcement convoy was successfully broken up by the Royal Navy, with many caiques sunk. The New Zealanders attempted a counter-attack on Maleme airfield on 22 May, but again poor communication and delays meant that the two battalions undertaking the attack failed to reach their objective. On 23 May, the airfield was lost, and the New Zealanders withdrew to a defensive line at Platanias. Newly arrived German mountain troops moved to the south of the New Zealanders, forcing them to withdraw to Galatas. By now, the shortages of ammunition and supplies was becoming critical. The only significant harbour was at Suda on the north coast, and it was subject to frequent German and Italian attacks from the air. On the sixth day, 25 May 1941, the Germans forced the New Zealanders from Galatas following a two-pronged attack. A counter-attack pushed the Germans out of most of the village, but the New Zealanders lacked the resources to hold the village, so they pulled back. The decision to evacuate Crete was made on 26 May, with Major General WESTON replacing Brigadier PUTTICK in command of all British troops in the Canea and Suda areas. Confusion set in, and the next day, Allied troops began the retreat across the island to the southern coast at Sfakia. The evacuation commenced on 29 May, and it was ended on 31 May, with the Germans taking charge of the whole island on 1 June 1941. The remnants of the New Zealand Division were evacuated again, this time back to Egypt, where the division was reconstituted.
2. The recorded strength of the Headquarters, New Zealand Division, was 12 officers and 84 other ranks. It is believed that this included an employment platoon to protect the headquarters against enemy attack.
3. The recorded strength of the Headquarters, 4th N.Z. Infantry Brigade, including the Signal Section, was 10 officers and 114 other ranks. The 18th N.Z. Battalion had a strength of 27 officers and 650 other ranks, the 19th N.Z. Battalion had 25 officers and 540 other ranks, the 20th N.Z. Battalion had 27 officers and 610 other ranks, and finally, the platoon allocated from the Machine Gun Battalion had 1 officer, and 34 other ranks.

4. The 5th Brigade was the largest in terms of units of the three brigades in the division. The Headquarters (including the Signals Section) comprised 10 officers and 115 other ranks. The 21st N.Z. Battalion had 24 officers and 352 other ranks, the 22nd N.Z. Battalion had 24 officers and 620 other ranks, the 23rd N.Z. Battalion had 24 officers and 540 other ranks, and the 28th N.Z. (Maori) Battalion had 29 officers and 590 other ranks. The two platoons from the 27th Machine Gun Battalion had 4 officers and 107 other ranks. The two Engineers Companies were used as infantry, with the 7th N.Z. Company comprising 3 officers and 145 other ranks, and the 19th N.Z. Company had 6 officers and 210 other ranks. The 1st Greek Regiment had an approximate strength of 30 officers and about 1,000 men, but it was short of weapons and equipment.
5. This brigade was formed in Crete to replace the absent 6th Brigade, which had been taken straight back to Egypt. The Brigade Headquarters comprised 6 officers and 30 other ranks, including the Signals Section. The New Zealand Cavalry Regiment had a strength of 19 officers and 175 other ranks. The platoon from the 27th N.Z. Machine Gun Battalion had a strength of 1 officer and 32 other ranks. The 6th Greek Regiment had a nominal strength of 39 officers and 1,146 men. The 8th Greek Regiment was slightly smaller with 39 officers, and 974 other ranks. When the division was reconstituted, the 10th Brigade was disbanded, and the 6th Brigade again joined the divisional order of battle.
6. This battalion was formed by personnel from the 4th and 5th New Zealand Field Regiments and Army Service Corps units. It was equipped as an infantry formation. The strength of the unit was 18 officers and 159 other ranks from the 4th N.Z. Field Regiment, 5 officers and 100 other ranks from the 5th N.Z. Field Regiment, 3 officers and 140 other ranks from the N.Z. Divisional Supply Column, 7 officers and 301 other ranks from the N.Z. Divisional Petrol Column, and 4 officers and 270 other ranks from the N.Z. Reserve Motor Transport Company. This gave the battalion a nominal strength of over 1,000 personnel.
7. This regiment was the only New Zealand Artillery unit equipped with artillery during the battle for Crete. The strength of the regiment was seventeen officers, and two-hundred and thirty-nine other ranks. It appears it did not fight as a complete formation, but was split up into three batteries, one each being allocated to the three brigades. In addition, this regiment provided a detachment of infantry allocated to the Composite Battalion (see above).
8. The Commander Royal Engineers (New Zealand Engineers), had two officers and twenty-eight other ranks under command.
9. This Field Park Company had a strength of 4 officers and 116 other ranks. It was very short of equipment, as most was left behind in Crete.
10. 2 Officers and 42 other ranks made up the strength of the New Zealand Divisional Signals.
11. The personnel of the N.Z.A.S.C. numbered 4 officers and 30 other ranks.
12. The Assistant Director of Medical Services (A.D.M.S.) for the New Zealand Division was Colonel Harry Selwyn KENDRICK, who had been appointed on 1 October 1940. When Major General FREYBERG assumed command of Creforce, KENDRICK became the A.D.M.S. for Creforce with effect from 30 April 1941. The 5th N.Z. Field Ambulance had a staff of 8 officers and 146 other ranks, the 6th had 8 officers and 179 other ranks, and the 4th Field Hygiene Section had 1 officer and 30 other ranks. The 7th British General Hospital was located at Galatas; hence it came under N.Z. Command, and it had a strength of 21 officers and 162 other ranks. It had about 10 officers and 100 other ranks as patients. Lieutenant Colonel J. L. R. PLIMMER, the Commanding Officer of the 6th Field Ambulance, was shot and killed as he tried to negotiate the safe surrender of the 7th General Hospital and his Field Ambulance. The N.Z. Dental Corps had 2 officers and 7 other ranks serving in Crete alongside the N.Z.A.M.C. personnel.

13. The D.A.D.O.S. had a staff of 15 other ranks, but he was the only Ordnance officer with the division.
14. The N.Z. Provost Company comprised 72 other ranks, but no officers, and there were 2 officers and 29 other ranks in the Entertainment Unit, and 1 officer and 23 other ranks in the Postal Unit. Finally, there were 9 officers and 27 other ranks attached to Greek units.

SOURCES:

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