



Headquarters
New Zealand Defence Force
Defence House
Private Bag 39997
Wellington Mail Centre
Lower Hutt 5045
New Zealand

OIA-2025-5567

29th October 2025

Stanley Bannerman
fyi-request-32536-ab6a86ff@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Stanley Bannerman

I refer to your email of 9 October 2025 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), the following:

1. *Has the NZDF (or any of its branches, regiments, corps, etc) discussed or made any plans to update insignia, badges, or designs in connection with the new reign?*
2. *If so, could you please outline what stage that process is at, and whether there is an expected timeline for introducing any new designs?*

Following the accession of His Majesty King Charles III, the former Chief of Staff HQNZDF issued the enclosed instruction. Where indicated: names, contact numbers, and personal information are withheld in accordance with section 9(2)(a) of the OIA to protect privacy; and, a signature is withheld in accordance with section 9(2)(k) of the OIA to avoid the malicious or inappropriate use of staff information, such as phishing, scams or unsolicited advertising.

Matters relating to New Zealand Army insignia, badges, or designs in connection with the new reign have been considered but no specific decisions have been made apart from the new King's Colours for 2/1 Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment in 2024. The Royal New Zealand Air Force has also considered matters relating to insignia, badges, or designs in connection with the new reign but no specific decisions have been made. The Royal New Zealand Navy continues to adhere to the enclosed protocols.

You have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to ask an Ombudsman to review this response to your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that responses to official information requests are proactively released where possible. This response to your request will be published shortly on the NZDF website.

Yours sincerely

GA Motley
Brigadier
Chief of Staff HQNZDF

Enclosure:

1. COS Administrative Instruction 22/2024

HEADQUARTERS NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE
Office of the Chief of Defence Force
Chief of Staff

16 Sep 24

See distribution

COS ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION 22/2024

CHANGE OF SOVEREIGN – NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE PROTOCOLS

References

- A. The King's approval for Queen's Colours to be known as King's Colours (Annex A)
- B. Release of official portraits for New Zealand dated 15 July 24 www.gg.govt.nz

Authority

- 1. Administrative Instruction 22/2024 is issued under the delegated authority of the Chief of Defence Force.

Applicability

- 2. This Administrative Instruction is a general order to members of the Armed Forces, and a lawful and reasonable instruction to the Civil Staff, and civilians, contractors and consultants employed for Defence Force purposes.
- 3. This Administrative Instruction applies to all members of the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF).

Purpose

- 4. The purpose of this Administrative Instruction is to provide updated guidance and direction on NZDF protocol-related changes related to the accession of His Majesty The King. It draws on guidance from the Cabinet Office and focusses on issues specific to the New Zealand Defence Force.

Introduction

- 5. New Zealand is a constitutional monarchy with The King as Sovereign.
- 6. His Majesty King Charles III acceded to the British throne on 8 September 2022 on the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.
- 7. As head of state, His Majesty is also the head of the New Zealand Armed Forces and its Services: the Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN), the New Zealand Army and the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF). Because of this, all members of the Defence Force are required to swear or affirm their allegiance to His Majesty and to his heirs and successors. The King's authority is also expressed in numerous symbolic forms. These range from the design of the colours, flags, badges and uniforms of the armed forces to the 'Royal' prefix given to the RNZN and RNZAF and to many of the corps and regiments of the Army. It is also reflected in the prefix 'His Majesty's New Zealand Ship' for New Zealand naval vessels.

8. The following provides guidance on NZDF related titles, protocols and symbology that are associated with the change in monarch.

Titles and Styles

9. Following the death of Queen Elizabeth II, the title 'Her Majesty's' automatically changed to 'His Majesty's'. Physical assets, signage or similar do not need to be changed unless it is necessary to do so.
10. The New Zealand Gazette notice of the Proclamation of Accession has The King's full New Zealand title and style "King Charles the Third, by the Grace of God King of New Zealand and of His Other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith".
11. When preparing documentation to The King it is correct to refer to him as "His Majesty The King" and thereafter "His Majesty". For The Queen, "Her Majesty The Queen" is correct. Title and styles can be amended depending on the document. However, advice from Heritage, Commemoration and Protocol (HCP) should be sought before doing so.

Heraldic Royal Crown

12. The Heraldic Royal Crown, which forms part of The King's cypher and is also used on cap badges and Colours, has been changed from the St Edward's Crown, used by Queen Elizabeth II, to the Tudor Crown. However, the Cabinet Office has advised that New Zealand will continue with The St Edwards Crown - including on the New Zealand Coat of Arms, the Seal of New Zealand, the insignia of The New Zealand Order of Merit and Queen's Service Order. In addition, rank insignia and cap badges worn by uniformed personnel will continue with The St Edward's Crown.



13. For Colours which are specific to King Charles III, the Tudor Crown will be used. When King's Colours held by the New Zealand Defence Force are replaced they are to include the Tudor Crown which symbolises that they are a personal gift from King Charles III. Colours will not be replaced outside their normal cycle.

Colours Held by the New Zealand Defence Force

14. His Majesty The King has given his approval (Reference A) to the retitling of Queen's Colours held by the New Zealand Defence Force (listed in Annex A) to King's Colours with immediate effect.

Royal Calendar – National Gun Salutes

15. National 21-gun salutes are fired annually on the following occasions:
 - a. 06 May The Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla
 - b. 03 June Official New Zealand observance of The King's birthday

- c. 17 July The birthday of Queen Camilla
- d. 8 September Accession of King Charles III
- e. 14 November The birthday of King Charles III (actual birthday)

Royal Portraits

- 16. New official portraits have been released of His Majesty King Charles III and Her Majesty Queen Camilla, wearing their New Zealand Royal Honours as described in Annex B. The portraits have been personally selected by Their Majesties and are not to be cropped.
- 17. The portraits may be downloaded free of charge for non-commercial use provided that when they're used in publications, each publication is accompanied by the credit "Photograph by Millie Pilkington 2024". Each Service-arm is responsible for ordering the portraits they require ensuring that the supplier can meet the specifications in Annex B. Portraits for official use may be obtained at public expense. Further guidance is in Annex B.

The Sovereign's Personal Flag for New Zealand

- 18. The Cabinet Office will advise when the design of the Sovereign's Personal Flag for New Zealand is approved. It is only flown when The Sovereign is in New Zealand.

HM King Charles III's Cypher

- 19. The Sovereign's Cypher should only be used for specific aiguillettes, rank boards and ceremonial slings and sashes.



King Charles III Royal Cypher

Effigy of The Sovereign

- 20. New Zealand has a large number of Royal honours insignia that use the effigy of the Sovereign. The Cabinet Office has advised that The King has approved use of the 2013 Ian Rank-Broadley effigy of The King (image in Annex C) on all relevant New Zealand honours insignia for the duration of his reign. NZDF's use of the effigy on insignia is covered by the commercial licencing agreement entered into by the Government providing the consent of the Cabinet Office is sought first.

Royal Appointments

- 21. Queen Elizabeth II held a number of Colonelcies-in-Chief appointments in various New Zealand Army Corps. These appointments lapsed with the death of Her Majesty. Army General Staff is currently preparing a submission requesting the Prime Minister

recommend to The King that he either takes these Colonelcies-in-Chief for himself or appoints members of The Royal Family to them.

22. His Majesty The King holds the following ranks within the New Zealand Defence Force:
- a. Admiral of The Fleet;
 - b. Field Marshal of the Army; and
 - c. Marshal of the RNZAF.

NZDF Support Roles and Tasks

23. **Chiefs of Service and Portfolio Heads.** Chiefs of Service and Portfolio Heads are to:
- a. promulgate the changes throughout their Service/Portfolio;
 - b. note that for documentation, changes only need to be made to documents published from the date of this Directive and there is no requirement to amend historic documents or guidance that has already been published; and
 - c. ceremonial commands and all other references in verbal or written communication are to refer to the Colours as The King's Colour (s)..
24. **Director Heritage, Ceremonial and Protocol.** The Director Heritage, Ceremonial and Protocol is to:
- a. be prepared to provide advice on all aspects of NZDF protocols in relation to the sovereign; and
 - b. amend DFO 113 Defence Force Orders for Protocol, Ceremonial and Related Matters and DFI 2.1 Ceremonial and Protocol.
25. **Director Defence Public Affairs.** The Director Defence Public Affairs is the HQNZDF point of contact for all media and public enquiries about NZDF protocols in relation to the change in sovereign.

Administration and Coordination Arrangements

26. **Finance.** All costs associated with the change in sovereign are to be met from within Budget baselines and in line with current budget constraints.
27. **Points of Contact.** Points of contact are:
- a. NZDF DDV&C: s.9(2)(a) [REDACTED]
 - b. NZDF DDPA: s.9(2)(a) [REDACTED]

Cancellation

28. This Administrative Instruction is cancelled on supersession or no later than 30 Sep 25.

s.9(2)(k)
[REDACTED]

AJ WOODS
Air Commodore
Chief of Staff, HQNZDF

Annexes:

- A. The King's Approval for Queen's Colours to be known as King's Colours.
- B. Official Portraits
- C. Effigy of The King

Distribution:

CDF
VCDF
CN
CA
CAF
COMJ
CJDS
CPO
CFO
CDSM
CDI
AC CAP
AC SCE
COMLOG
WODF
Service WOs
DDPA
DDLS
DHCP
XO HQNZDF
DCOORD



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AAAF' with a flourish below it.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

The Prime Minister has the honour to advise Your Majesty to agree that the following Colours held by the New Zealand Defence Force be known as The King's Colours until such time as they are replaced:

- a) The Queen's Colour of the Royal New Zealand Navy;
- b) The Queen's Colour of the Officer Cadet School of New Zealand;
- c) The Queen's Colour of the 1st Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment;
- d) The Queen's Colour of the 2nd 1st Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment;
- e) The Queen's Colour of the 2nd Canterbury, Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast Battalion;
- f) The Queen's Colour of the 3rd Auckland and Northland Battalion;
- g) The Queen's Colour of the 4th Otago and Southland Battalion;
- h) The Queen's Colour of the 5th Wellington, West Coast and Taranaki Battalion;
- i) The Queen's Colour of the 6th Hauraki Battalion;
- j) The Queen's Colour of the 7th Wellington (City of Wellington's Own) and Hawke's Bay Battalion; and
- k) The Queen's Colour of the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'G.M.' with a flourish below it.

Prime Minister

Wellington

2 November 2023

**NEW OFFICIAL PORTRAITS OF HIS MAJESTY KING CHARLES III
AND HER MAJESTY QUEEN CAMILLA**

New Official Portraits

1. New official portraits have been released of His Majesty King Charles III and Her Majesty Queen Camilla, wearing their New Zealand Royal Honours. The portraits were taken in the White Drawing Room at Buckingham Palace in June.
2. His Majesty the King is wearing the Badge of the Sovereign of the Order of New Zealand (ONZ) suspended around his neck. The Order of New Zealand, instituted in 1987, is New Zealand's most senior Royal Honour. On the left side of His Majesty's jacket, the King wears the Star of a Knight Grand Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (GNZM). The New Zealand Order of Merit, a distinctive New Zealand Order of Chivalry of which the King is Sovereign, was instituted in 1996. Above the Star, His Majesty wears a set of insignia which includes the Badge of a Companion of the Queen's Service Order (QSO); the New Zealand 1990 Commemoration Medal; and the New Zealand Armed Forces Award. As Prince of Wales, His Majesty was appointed as an Extra Companion of the Queen's Service Order in 1983.
3. Her Majesty the Queen wears the Badge of an Additional Member of the Order of New Zealand. Her Majesty's appointment to the Order was announced on the King's Birthday and Coronation Honours List 2023.
4. The portraits were taken by photographer Millie Pilkington, whose previous work includes wedding photography for the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.
5. The high resolution photographs are available <https://gg.govt.nz/image-galleries/official-portraits> and can be downloaded in accordance with the terms of use.

Terms of use

6. The photographs may be downloaded free of charge provided that each publication is accompanied by the credit "Photograph by Millie Pilkington 2024" for non-commercial use by:
 - a. New Zealand government agencies;
 - b. the public; and
 - c. the media for editorial use in the Commonwealth Realms.

Guidance

7. The following paragraphs are for guidance only – for example variations in the type of frame being used is acceptable. However, the images are not to be cropped. The interim portraits of Their Majesties which are currently on display in some Defence areas were framed to enable the portrait to be easily removed and replaced by the new official portrait. It is recommended that units displaying the interim portrait simply replace it with the new portrait. This will also maximize efficiency and minimize cost and environmental impact.

8. For consistency and efficiency, the NZDF will use the portraits which are of both The King and The Queen together. The portrait is to be printed and framed in accordance with the specifications detailed below. Units and messes who wish to display A3 sized portraits may do so if it is considered that a larger format portrait is better suited to the area where it is to be displayed. Specifications for framing an A3 portrait are detailed below.
9. It is appropriate to hang the portrait in reception areas of Headquarters buildings, function rooms including messes and similar locations where the portrait may be on display to staff and visitors to the building.

Portraits of Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh

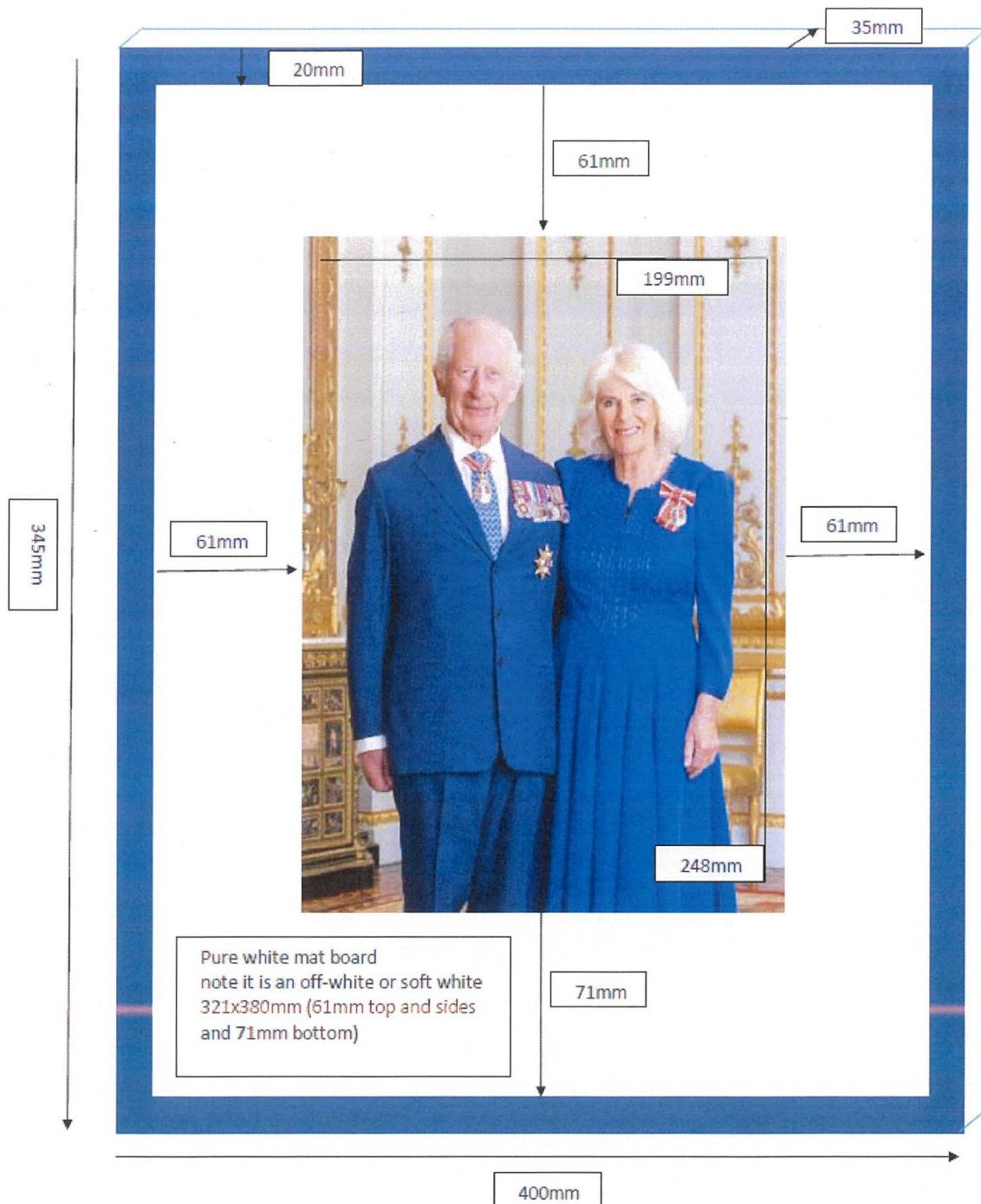
10. There's no obligation to remove official portraits of Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh if the area where they are displayed includes likenesses of previous Monarchs. This practice is more commonly followed by institutions such as Government House and Parliament where there are galleries of portraits of former Governor's-General and Prime Ministers.

8x10 sized portrait / photograph (199 x 248mm)

Photograph: www.gg.govt.nz/image-galleries/7806/media?page=1

Frame and glass: Overall measurements when framed: 345mm high x 400mm wide.

Material: Gesso coated (white) wooden frame at 35mm deep and 20mm width with UV blocking glass

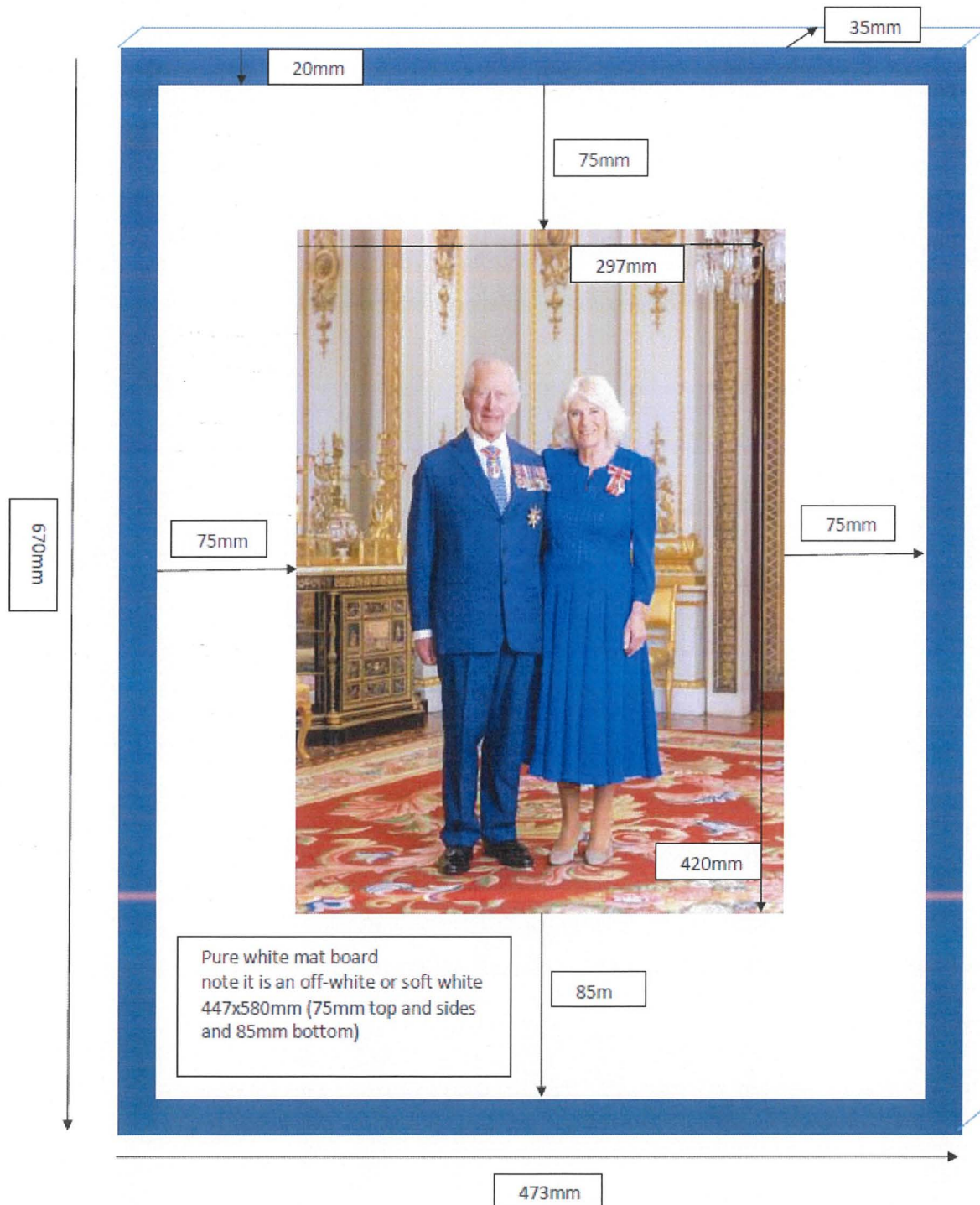


A3 sized portrait / photograph (297 x 420mm)

Photograph: www.gg.govt.nz/image-galleries/7806/media?page=3

Frame and glass: Overall measurements when framed: 670mm high x 473mm wide.

Material: Gesso coated (white) wooden frame at 35mm deep and 20mm width with UV blocking glass.



EFFIGY OF THE KING

