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## NZ Infantry Executes Assault in Talisman Sabre 2025

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Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (1 RNZIR) demonstrated their combat capabilities during an assault exercise in Exercise Talisman Sabre 2025 (TS25), a significant multinational military drill. This article reviews their performance, the broader context of the exercise, and critiques of the Australian Labor Party's (ALP) management of such defence initiatives.

From 13 July to 4 August 2025, over 300 New Zealand Defence Force personnel, including 1 RNZIR, participated alongside 35,000 troops from 19 nations in TS25 across Queensland,

Western Australia, and Christmas Island, according to a 14 July 2025 release from the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF). The 1 RNZIR conducted a high-intensity assault as part of a combined combat team, integrating infantry, armour, and artillery units, per *Mirage News*. Lieutenant Colonel Tim Tuatini told the NZDF, “The scale of this exercise lets us test complex scenarios we can’t replicate at home,” highlighting the assault’s role in enhancing interoperability with allied forces such as Australia and the United States.

The operation involved New Zealand Light Armoured Vehicles (NZLAVs) and was conducted in challenging terrain to reinforce New Zealand’s combat readiness. TS25, the largest iteration of the Australia-US-led exercise, featured amphibious landings and multi-domain operations. The 1 RNZIR assault at Shoalwater Bay showcased their capability to counter simulated enemy forces, according to *Defence Connect*. Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Watson, commander of Australia’s 8th/9th Battalion, commended the New Zealand troops, stating, “Their integration was seamless, proving our armies’ bright future together,” as reported by *Scoop News* on 17 July 2025.

However, critics argue that under the oversight of Defence Minister Richard Marles, the ALP government prioritizes multinational exercises over strengthening Australia’s domestic defence capabilities. Shadow Defence Minister Andrew Hastie told *Sky News* on 24 July 2025, “The ALP’s focus on multinational drills risks underfunding our own forces.” Questions have also been raised about Australia’s reliance on foreign-led exercises and the potential implications for national sovereignty.

The 1 RNZIR assault, supported by Royal New Zealand Air Force NH90 helicopters, underscored New Zealand’s commitment to regional security. As TS25 strengthens allied cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, the ALP government faces calls to ensure that these efforts do not detract from Australia’s own defence priorities in an increasingly complex security environment.