

Appraisal Report

Public Office: New Zealand Defence Force
Scope: Photographic records relating to the death of WH Momo, held by NZDF HQ.
Disposal Type: one-off
File Ref: 2011/3378

Appraisal Circumstances:

In 2010, Air Staff HQ of the RNZAF was disposing of some files which had been held in the Air Movements Section in the Government hangar at Rongotai, Wellington. Air Staff registry personnel have been working through these records and came across this set of photographs. In late May 2011, New Zealand Defence Force Headquarters records management was alerted to the existence of these photographs relating to the death of aircraftsman W. H. Momo, who died in 1949. NZDF searched on Archway and found that the death of Momo was the subject of a commission of inquiry, which is held as a public archive. No RNZAF records about this incident could be found. The photographic records presented for appraisal are thought to have been passed on to the RNZAF by the New Zealand Police.

Further research by Archives NZ's appraisal section revealed that Momo was shot dead by either the NZ Police or the RNZAF after he holed himself up in a building at the Weedons Air force Base, near Christchurch. It was also found that on Archway, the Department of Justice had a copy of the Commission of Inquiry into the death of this aircraftsman, held under agency "J", Series 1, Box 1595, Record Number 21/1/13. The Christchurch High Court also had a copy of the above stored at the Christchurch Regional Office of Archives NZ. The *Christchurch Star-Sun* reported that Momo was shooting at RNZAF personnel and Police officers for an extended period before he was killed.

Description:

1949 – [ca 1949]. One binder of 31 photographs taken as evidence in the aftermath of Aircraftman WH Momo's armed standoff and subsequent death.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the records are to be retained as public archives because of the important events that they document, and their association with the Commission of Inquiry.

[Name Removed] Date: June 2 2011