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By Associated Press

Roadside bomb kills 3 New Zealand soldiers in central Afghanistan

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WELLINGTON, New Zealand — Three New Zealand soldiers have been killed by a roadside bomb in central Afghanistan.

The three soldiers were traveling in a vehicle Sunday in Bamiyan province, a once comparatively stable part of the country that has seen a recent increase in violence. Two New Zealand soldiers were killed in the same area during a firefight with insurgents earlier this month.

New Zealand has stationed a small group of 145 soldiers in Afghanistan since 2003, a contingent it plans to withdraw by the end of next year. Ten New Zealand soldiers have now died during the conflict.

Prime Minister John Key said Monday the deaths “underscore the gravity” of the situation the soldiers face there each day, adding that he would release further details of the incident later in the day.