



9 April 2021

William Smith

Email: fyi-request-14987-f140af95@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear William,

RE: OIA RESPONSE IR-01-21-9868

Thank you for your email dated 23 March 2021 requesting information on Freemasons being employed by or having influence on the police force.

Your request has been considered in accordance with the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). Please see my response to each of your questions below:

1. *Has the NZ police implemented a similar ban?*

New Zealand Police does not have a ban in place that bans Freemasons within its organisation.

2. *If not, what steps are in place to ensure that freemasons cannot exert favouritism or provide protection to other members? How do you ensure that no police officer who is a mason can be involved in a criminal investigation of a person who is also a mason?*

Police has a range of pre-employment checks utilised as part of the recruitment process. One of these checks is a Police vetting service that involves a review of all information held by Police about a person. This check is not limited to solely criminal convictions, but will include checks for diversions, adverse criminal intelligence notes and other records that Police hold on the applicant and their family members. This is used as an evaluation tool in the recruitment process.

In accordance with Police's Fraud and Corruption Policy and Principles, New Zealand Police has zero tolerance for fraud and corruption. Police does not and will not accept fraud or corruption at any level, or in any form, occurring in the organisation. All employees must report suspected fraud or corrupt activity.

All cases of suspected fraud or corruption will be vigorously investigated and is liable to result in any confirmed offending being put before the Courts (where the maximum penalties on conviction range from substantial fines through to 14 years' imprisonment).

Any employee proven to have committed fraud or engaged in corruption will also be in breach of Police's Code of Conduct - likely resulting in disciplinary action, with dismissal being one of the available sanctions.

In addition, in line with the Public Service Commission's Conflicts of Interest model standards, New Zealand Police has a conflict of interest policy that identifies any conflict between a public duty and private and/or personal interests. Specifically, it includes reference to a conflict of interest as being a member of a club, team, society or association. Conflicts of interest are also addressed within our code of conduct.

Police's core values and code of conduct are guiding documents that set out common standards of behaviour for all New Zealand Police employees.

3. *Does the police maintain a register or other record in any form of which police officers are masons? If so, I request that you supply it in full.*

As New Zealand Police does not maintain a register of Police officers that are Masons, under section 18(e) of the OIA, the request of a register has been refused as this document does not exist.

4. *If you do not hold such a register then nevertheless I believe the police do hold the information requested, because each police officer is aware of their own status. I request that all police officers in my region (The Far North) be asked three Yes/No questions under oath:*
- a) *"Are you a member, or have you ever been a member of the freemasons?"*
 - b) *"Is any member of your close family or other person who has influence on you a member of the freemasons?"*
 - c) *"have you otherwise been supported or influenced by the freemasons? (e.g. a scholarship/grant)"*

There is no obligation for New Zealand Police to create new information to respond to this part of your request. Accordingly, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information requested is not held by Police, and I have no grounds to believe it is held by another agency.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely,



Kaye Ryan

Executive Director: People Operations