

28 June 2021

Wes

Email: fyi-request-15593-81d10e94@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Wes

Request for information

IR-01-21-17025

Thank you for your request dated 28 May 2021 asking information in regards to the New Zealand Police understanding of the term "far right".

You requested:

- 1. I am requesting the definition used by NZ Police for the term "Far-right" in the context of political alignment. For example, "This individual has freely admitted holding views which could be considered far right by the NZ Police".*
- 2. I am requesting a list of criteria, as well as details on those criteria, that the NZ Police uses to determine whether or not, an individual could be considered to have "far-right political views". These criteria could be, but not limited to, specific "Political views", "Books", "YouTube channels" or "Websites", please provide a comprehensive list.*
- 3. I am requesting a list government agencies, 3rd party independent entities, independent organisations, not-for-profits or businesses that have provided the NZ Police, at any level, with training for the purpose of aiding staff on political views and what would indicate "far-right" political alignment.*
- 4. If training is being received or filtered down to frontline NZ Police Officers, are Officers asked to use a specific list in order to gauge "far-right" political alignment. If frontline NZ Police Officers are not provided with training, are they asked to determine whether a person has "far-right" political views based on their personal opinion?*

Your request has been considered in accordance with the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Q1: New Zealand Police (Police) does not have a definition of the term "far right" and Police staff would most likely rely on publicly available academic-based resources to inform their understanding of that term. Police focuses on "violent extremism" regardless of ideology or cause, because Police's aim is to detect, understand, and impact extremism that may directly or indirectly result in violence, including terrorism. It is important to note that it is not illegal in New Zealand for a person to hold any ideology or cause.

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Q2: Police does not have a set or specific list of criteria that staff use to determine "far right political views". The political alignment of a person is not a matter of Police concern. Police is concerned with detecting, understanding, and impacting violent extremism.

Police does use a set of indicators to detect and prioritise the threat of terrorism and violent extremism, contained in the Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC) Counter Terrorism Persons of Interest (CT-POI) Prioritisation Tool Guideline. However, this Guideline is withheld under section 6(b) of the OIA as the making available of this information is likely to prejudice the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by the Government of any other country.

Q3: Police has not received formal training from other agencies or entities to aid staff on political views and what would indicate "far right" political alignment.

Q4: As previously described, Police does not prefer the use of the term "far right". Police does produce internal information alerting staff to some factors and elements in order to detect possible terrorism and violent extremism. This internal information is withheld under section 6(c) of the OIA as the making available of this information is likely to prejudice the maintenance of the law including the prevention, investigation and detection of offences and the right to a fair trial.

All Police staff are expected to use professional judgement, informed by training and experience, to make objective decisions about whether or not something is of relevance or concern. Police staff who work in areas specifically focused on violent extremism are expected to use structured professional judgement based upon various information resources, experiences, and prior cases, to detect and understand violent extremism.

If you are not satisfied with my response to your request, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to seek an investigation and review of my decision.

Yours sincerely,



David Kennedy
Inspector
New Zealand Police