

9 August 2021

William Rea
via email: fyi-request-16261-101abe62@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear William,

Request for Information – Our Reference: IR-01-21-23682

Thank you for your request for information dated 1 August 2021 requesting information about Police interactions with suicidal persons. Specifically, you requested:

- 1. Information on the number of police call outs that have involved officers having to talk down suicidal people; and*
- 2. The total percentage of all call outs where this has occurred.*

In correspondence with Senior Sergeant Scott Dunn of the Emergency Communication Centre Intelligence Unit on 2 August 2021 you specified that *“the period for the information I request is between 1 December 2000 – 1 August 2022, if possible I would also like the figures to be set out 3 monthly for that period”*.

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

The systems used by Police code an event or incident to the most appropriate type based upon the circumstances provided by the caller. This code can be changed at any time during attendance or investigation based upon a change in circumstances. This can result in an incident being dispatched as one code type but resulted, or closed, as another.

The generic Police code ‘1X’ can relate to a range of incidents where persons have either threatened to commit suicide, are having suicidal thoughts, have attempted to commit suicide and also covers instances where a third party calls to report concerns for a friend or relative who has disclosed a suicidal ideology to them. As a result, the range of situations and circumstances varies markedly across this incident code.

While the specifics of each incident are recorded in the dispatch system, the only mechanism available to identify specific examples of someone being dissuaded from committing suicide by Police, would be to conduct a manual review of every incident coded 1X.

Police National Headquarters

180 Molesworth Street, Thorndon, Wellington SX11149
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To give an indication as to the work required, for the period of 1 July 2020 through 30 June 2021, there were more than 19,500 incidents that were originally coded, or closed with, the 1X incident code.

I am therefore refusing your request pursuant to section 18(f) of the OIA as the information you have requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

Additionally, our data regarding dispatch records and specific events is only searchable from July 2009 onwards.

If you are not satisfied with my response, you have the right under section 28(3) of the OIA to make a complaint to the Ombudsman and seek an investigation and review of the refusal.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M B Coulter'.

Inspector Michael Coulter
Acting National Operations Manager
Emergency Communication Centres