



Reference: IR-01-22-9306

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Jack Hulls

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Tēnā koe Jack

Request for information

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request dated 31 March 2022, in which you asked for information regarding the National Gang List (NGL).

Responses to your questions are set out below.

What is the purpose of the database?

The NGL is comprised of information held by the Gang Intelligence Centre (GIC) agencies¹ about patched or prospect New Zealand Adult Gang (NZAG) members and does not record gang associates or those who may be affiliated. The NGL was created for intelligence purposes, not for the purpose of counting gang membership numbers or to act as a reporting tool.

The information is collected for the purpose of maintaining oversight of the gang environment, to enhance our understanding of the scale of social harm caused by gangs, and to support the identification of prevention and intervention opportunities.

What gets a person added to the database?

Individuals are added to the NGL following a validation process carried out by Police districts and national intelligence staff. The following factors are taken into consideration when validating gang membership (patched or prospect) status:

- Intelligence from operations and search warrants
- An 'Intelligence noting' identifying an individual wearing a patch
- Visible evidence of members wearing a patch
- Certain prominent or significant gang 'patch' tattoos.

¹ New Zealand Police, Department of Corrections, Internal Affairs, Oranga Tamariki, Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, New Zealand Customs Service, Accident Compensation Corporation, Ministry of Social Development, Inland Revenue, and Kāinga Ora.

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How/why would a person get removed from the database?

It should be noted that the indicators that would lead to someone being added to the list, such as being observed wearing a gang patch, are much more visible and reliable than the indicators that might lead to them being removed from the list, such as good intelligence suggesting they have been de-patched. The names of people who simply drift away from gang involvement are much less likely to be removed from the list due to the challenges of corroborating their exit. This means that there can be a ratcheting effect in terms of numbers on the list.

Would the database list people who have left New Zealand?

Would the database list people who are dead?

Individuals are removed from the National Gang List when we become aware of, or are informed of, their permanent departure from New Zealand or the fact that they are deceased. Notifications are received through the New Zealand Police National Intelligence Application (NIA) and Department of Internal Affairs.

A fluctuation in numbers on the NGL may be attributable to a variety of factors, including changes in recording processes and methodology, improved intelligence collection and collation capability, as well as new individuals being identified as joining NZAGs. Police continues to improve the quality and detail of data relating to gang membership at a district and national level in order to inform the delivery of policing services and support the identification of prevention and intervention opportunities.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely



Ash Johnston
Acting Director of National Intelligence
New Zealand Police