

Reference: IR-01-22-17598

1 August 2022

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Tēnā koe Andrew

### ***Request for information***

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 16 June 2022 regarding the National Gang List (NGL).

The National Gang List (NGL) is comprised of information held by the Gang Intelligence Centre (GIC) agencies 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.

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' tattoo.

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.

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

### **Police National Headquarters**

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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.

Responses to your questions are set out below.

*1) Any internal policy or guidelines regarding what the process by which an individual would be 'added to the list' as a gang member or associate, the corroboration required to take this action, and any differences in how this process would be followed, based on the reporting agency or other circumstances- for example, one expects that there would be a different process for handling a report by a police officer who arrests a gang member as they commit an assault in the course of a gang-related fight, to an email from an ACC case manager or IRD auditor suggesting that a person may be involved in a gang.*

Releasing this type of detailed information could lead to unintended consequences such as changing the behaviour of gang members, impacting on our ability to understand the gang environment. Therefore, this information is withheld under section 6(c) of the OIA, where making the information available would be likely to prejudice the maintenance of the law, including the prevention, investigation, and detection of offences.

*2) Summary statistics (count by agency by year, or count by agency if this is not available) on which agencies have caused individuals to be initially 'added to the list', but ONLY IF this is:  
2a) Already produced as part of the GIC work product or 2b) Readily producible from a report run against the GIC*

This information is not held by the GIC and is not easily producible. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(g) of the OIA.

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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Yours sincerely



**Julia Smith**  
Manager - Intelligence Fusion Teams  
New Zealand Police

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