

14 January 2015

David Robinson  
fyi-request-2349-7ba598b5@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Robinson

I refer to your request of 14 December 2014 in which you asked for information relating to the use of restraint devices by the New Zealand Police. These are referred to in this response as “mechanical restraints”. I have listed the response under each of your questions.

1. Any training material for the use of restraint devices e.g. hand cuffs, plastic cuffs, leg shackles and any other restraint devices.

This information is withheld under section 6(c) of the Official Information Act 1982 as it is likely to prejudice the maintenance of the law.

2. Any operational procedures for the use of restraint devices e.g. hand cuffs, plastic cuffs, leg shackles and any other restraint devices.

This information is withheld under section 6(c) of the Official Information Act 1982 as it is likely to prejudice the maintenance of the law.

3. Any health and information related to the use of restraint devices e.g. hand cuffs, plastic cuffs, leg shackles and any other restraint devices.

- Risk factors to Police employees include:
- Reduced reactionary gap to apply handcuffs
- Transfer of body fluids
- Physical assault
- Difficulties monitoring subject
- Response options limited when hands are occupied using cuffs

Potential injuries to subjects include:

- Risk of damage to the person and the officer when applying the restraint
- Cuts and contusions to both the person and the officer
- Circulation restrictions to the person following the application of the restraint

Police employees must manage the risks by ensuring restraints are applied in accordance with training and if possible, there is a support officer(s) present and that each officer understands their role in applying the mechanical restraint. It is expected that the Police employees will assess and frequently re-assess the risk during and after the restraint has been applied.

4. Any guidelines or procedures for supervision of people who are being restrained.

Police employees supervising someone in a mechanical restraint must give particular attention to:

- Airway clearance
- Respiration rate
- Skin colour, circulation
- Range of movement/discomfort
- Pressure areas
- Hydration
- Changes in the person's state which could indicate a need to review their status
- Swelling of the body area adjacent to the mechanical restraint
- Statements by the person in respect of their condition

Police employees manage the risks by ensuring restraints are applied in accordance with training and if possible, there is a support officer(s) present and that each officer understands their role in applying the mechanical restraint. It is expected that the Police employees will assess and frequently re-assess the risk during and after the restraint has been applied.

5. Any purchasing requirements or features for restraint devices e.g. hand cuffs, plastic cuffs, leg shackles, and any other restraint devices

The information requested is withheld under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act 1982 where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is subject of the information.

6. Any lists of approved manufacture and models for restraint devices e.g. hand cuffs, plastic cuffs, leg shackles, and any other restraint devices.

The information requested is withheld under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act 1982 where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is subject of the information.

7. Any lists of approved suppliers, stores, wholesalers, importers etc for restraint devices e.g. hand cuffs, plastic cuffs, leg shackles, and any other restraint devices

The information requested is withheld under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act 1982 where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to

prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is subject of the information.

You have the right, under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act 1982, to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision if you are not satisfied with the way I have responded to your request.

Yours sincerely



Barry Taylor  
Superintendent  
National Manager Response and Operations