



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

18 December 2023

John Luke
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Ref: OIA-2023/24-0338

Tēnā koe John Luke

Official Information Act request: Rules relating to the acceptance and wearing of Commonwealth, foreign and international honours by NZ citizens

Thank you for your Official Information Act (the Act) request received on 4 December 2023. You requested:

“I noted,

<https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/our-programmes/new-zealand-royal-honours/new-zealand-royal-honours-system/rules-relating-to-acceptance-and-wearing>

Before conferring a Commonwealth or foreign honour on a New Zealand citizen, the government of the country concerned should submit a proposal seeking approval through diplomatic channels to the Protocol Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which will pass the request to the Director of the Honours Unit, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

May I ask during the period of 1st Jan 2021 to now, how many proposal DPMC has received and are you able to disclose the name of the honor or award that related to?

How many has been approved and how many has been declined.”

In relation to your request for the number of proposals received from foreign governments and how many of those proposals were approved and declined, I have decided to withhold this information under section 6(a) of the Act:

6 Conclusive reasons for withholding official information

Good reason for withholding official information exists, for the purpose of section 5, if the making available of that information would be likely—

- (a) to prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand;

Release of the requested information would be likely to prejudice the international relations of New Zealand in the following ways:

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- The information received in the proposals is provided to the New Zealand Government by foreign governments on the understanding it is held in confidence. There is an established practice that consideration of honours is kept confidential up to the point of award.
- The New Zealand Government must assess the honours proposals from foreign governments when deciding whether to approve or decline. This assessment, and the result of it, are in confidence.
- Publication of any decision by New Zealand to decline an application for approval has the potential to harm New Zealand's relationship with that country. Publishing would allow governments to see how their proposals (current and future) fared in comparison to other countries. Any anomalies, if present, would cause additional offence.

While this information is being withheld, I am able to release a list of the Commonwealth, foreign and international honours approved to New Zealand citizens during the requested dates. Please find this list below.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

We do not intend to publish this response on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website.

Nāku noa, nā



Rachel Hayward
Clerk of the Executive Council

List of Commonwealth, foreign and international honours approved for New Zealand citizens from 1 January 2021 to 4 December 2023.

Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Australian Operational Service Medal (Greater Middle East Operation) - Australian Antarctic Medal - Australian National Emergency Medal with clasp "BUSHFIRES 19-20" - Australian Sports Medal - Bravery Medal - Commendation for Bravery - Honorary Medal of the Order of Australia - Medal of the Order of Australia - Member of the Order of Australia - Officer of the Order of Australia - Honorary Member of the Order of Australia
Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grand Decoration in Gold with Star for Services to the Republic of Austria
Brunei Darussalam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pingat Indah Kerja Baik - Meritorious Service Medal
Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knight of the Order of Dannebrog
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany - Member of the Order of Merit
Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hungarian Order of Merit - Middle Cross - Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of Hungary (civilian division)
India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award
Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays - Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette - Order of the Sacred, Silver Rays
NATO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NATO Meritorious Service Medal
Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knight in the Order of Orange-Nassau (Ridder in de Orde van Oranje-Nassau)
Poland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Siberian Exiles Cross

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medal for Long Marital Life - Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland - Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland
Solomon Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Officer of the Order of the British Empire - Member of the Order of the British Empire - British Empire Medal
South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Order of Companions of OR Tambo in Silver (Posthumous)
Timor-Leste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medal of Merit
Tonga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tongan Police Meritorious Service Medal
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Officer of the Order of the British Empire - Member of the Order of the British Empire - British Empire Medal
United States of America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - United States Legion of Merit (Degree of Officer) - United States Meritorious Service Medal - United States Army Commendation Medal - United States Defense Meritorious Service Medal - United States Joint Service Commendation Medal