

1 April 2026

Nigel Gray

fyi-request-33886-bc2885b6@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Nigel

Request for information

I refer to your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request received on 27 February 2026 in which you asked:

I am requesting the following information regarding Police guidance, policies, or internal instructions relating to “sovereign citizens”, “non-compliant behaviour”, “ideologically-motivated behaviour”, or any similar behavioural-risk classifications used during roadside interactions:

New Zealand Police does not use a standalone behavioural risk classification system specifically labelled as “non-compliant behaviour” or “ideologically-motivated behaviour” for roadside interactions.

However, Police does hold operational guidance relevant to roadside interactions with individuals who assert sovereign citizen beliefs. This guidance is contained in the *Sovereign Citizens* chapter of the Police Manual, which provides officers with procedures, safety considerations, and scenario-based guidance (including traffic stops), and directs the application of TENR and the Graduated Response Model where such beliefs may lead to non-compliance or escalation. A copy is publicly available on Police’s website: <https://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/publication/sovereign-citizens-police-manual-chapter>

1. Document creation and circulation

The date each relevant policy, guideline, training note, or operational instruction was drafted.

Drafting of the *Sovereign Citizens* chapter was an iterative process which took place between March 2024 and February 2025.

The date each was approved.

The *Sovereign Citizens* chapter was approved on 24 February 2025.

The date each was first circulated to staff.

The *Sovereign Citizens* chapter was first made available to all staff on 24 February 2025. A supporting internal notification to all staff was published on 4 March 2025.

Police National Headquarters

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Any subsequent re-circulation, updates, or amendments since 1 January 2023.

The *Sovereign Citizens* chapter was last updated on 5 June 2025 as part of routine internal review while progressing to external publication. The amendments made were minor in nature and the updated chapter was made available to staff immediately on making those updates.

2. Context for updates or circulation

All internal correspondence, emails, memos, or briefing notes that discuss the need to create, update, or re-circulate this guidance.

The request for a *Sovereign Citizens* chapter originated verbally from a Police member in the Central District who sought operational guidance on how staff should approach discussions with those who assert sovereign citizen beliefs.

Development of the *Sovereign Citizens* chapter was a collaborative project across a number of business groups over several months. Police does not hold discrete briefing notes or formal memoranda created specifically for the purpose of approving or directing the creation of the chapter. I have however included the paper that was presented to Police's Security and Privacy Reference Group which sought feedback on an early draft. I have also included the notice to staff which was circulated on Police's internal noticeboard on 4 March 2025 following the chapter's publication.

Aside from these artefacts, Police also hold a significant volume of internal emails which are routine and administrative in nature as the chapter was developed and considered. Police would require substantial time to locate, review, and prepare these emails for release. These are therefore refused under section 18(f) of the OIA as they cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

Any references within that correspondence to roadside drug testing, oral-fluid testing, biological sampling, or public concern about these processes.

The *Sovereign Citizens* chapter does not address roadside drug testing and was not developed in response to, or alongside, the rollout of oral fluid testing. Where multiple chapters are relevant to a given circumstance, those relevant chapters should be read in conjunction with one another. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(e) of the OIA as the document(s) assumed to contain the information does not exist.

Any references to public posts, public commentary, or social-media discussions relating to roadside drug testing or Police handling of rights-assertive behaviour.

No requests have been made to update or re-circulate the *Sovereign Citizens* chapter due to public posts, commentary or social media discussions on roadside drug testing. This part of your request is therefore similarly refused under section 18(e) of the OIA.

3. Application to roadside drug testing

Any risk assessments, operational analyses, or internal discussions that link behavioural-risk classifications to the rollout of oral-fluid testing.

No risk assessments, operational analyses, or internal discussions linking behaviour risk classifications to roadside drug testing have been produced. It follows that this part of your request is also refused under section 18(e) of the OIA.

Any instructions given to frontline staff on how to interpret questioning, rights-assertive behaviour, or safety concerns during oral-fluid testing.

Police has not issued instructions specific to roadside drug testing that direct staff on how to interpret rights-assertive questioning or ideological claims. General operational frameworks such as TENR and the Graduated Response Model apply to all interactions, including roadside drug testing. Accordingly, section 18(e) of the OIA again applies.

4. Monitoring of public concern

Any internal reports, summaries, or monitoring notes that refer to public concern, public commentary, or social-media discussion about the safety, legality, or operational conduct of roadside drug testing since 1 January 2023.

Police is aware of some concerns regarding the perceived safety and legality of roadside drug testing. This awareness comes from requests for information and no reporting, summarising, or monitoring notes have been made regarding these concerns. Section 18(e) of the OIA once again applies, as there are no relevant documents to supply you.

Whilst it has been possible to address some of your areas of interest, and I trust you find this reply informative, if you are not satisfied with how I have responded to your request, section 28(3) of the OIA confirms your right to seek a review by the Ombudsman. Information on how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely



Superintendent Steve Greally

Director: Road Policing

New Zealand Police