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Bill

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Dear Bill

Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your correspondence of 16 October 2016 seeking the following information from the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS): *"would a potential member or present member of the NZSIS be precluded from participating in the formally active Occupy movement or intending or working at Unite Union, other workers' rights organisations and similar groups, whether a potential employee of your agency or a an employee?"*.

NZSIS employees, or candidates for roles at NZSIS, are not precluded from participating in groups such as those you mention, but it is a condition of employment with NZSIS that employees maintain a higher level national security clearance. NZSIS determines a candidate's suitability to hold a national security clearance through an assessment of a number of suitability indicators, including: loyalty, honesty, trustworthiness and an appreciation of protective security responsibilities and obligations. The security vetting process is an examination on a 'whole-of-person, whole-of-life' basis to make a determination of a candidate's suitability to hold a clearance.

There are no forbidden occupations, associations or employers, but allegiances to state and non-state actors, which are examined through an assessment of external loyalties, influences and associations, are considered as part of the security vetting process.

NZSIS aims to employ a diverse workforce with a range of experiences, but this must be balanced with the need to establish positively compelling evidence of the suitability of a person to hold a higher level security clearance with no residual security concerns. There must be no doubt about a national security clearance holder's allegiance to New Zealand and his or her willingness to protect protectively marked material relating to New Zealand's national security.

I would refer to the Protective Security Requirements (PSR) for further information. The PSR can be accessed at: www.protectivesecurity.govt.nz. For your information, the relevant extract from the PSR about external loyalties, influences and associations states:

Anyone working on behalf of the New Zealand government must have a commitment to the democratic process and a respect for the processes by which the elected government functions.

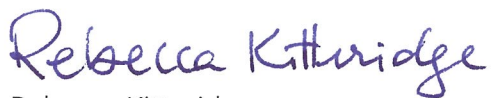
If candidates express political or personal views incompatible with New Zealand's constitutional, democratic system of government, doubts arise about whether they can remain loyal to the New Zealand government.

It is accepted that conflicts of view or even conscientious objections could arise in some cases. However, the issue is whether candidates recognise their individual responsibilities to their employing agency, the elected government and the public interest.

The delay in our response is due to the recent earthquakes that impacted our office located in Wellington. We hope this delay has not caused you any inconvenience.

I trust the information is of use.

Yours sincerely



Rebecca Kitteridge
Director of Security