

12 APR 2017

Nigel Jones
fyi-request-5551-2ae0d984@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Jones

Official Information Act 1982 request

I acknowledge your Official Information Act 1982 request of 15 March 2017, requesting information on Jury District Maps.

Your request was for the following:

1. Descriptions and Maps of each District and High Court Jury District
2. Information on how the boundary is currently defined (mesh blocks, geographical features or electoral boundaries)
3. And, if available to hand, the date the boundaries were last updated

The legislation that governs jury service is the Juries Act 1981 (the Act) and Jury Rules 1990. The Act has been amended several times since commencement to incorporate changes that improve the jury summoning process and the attendance rates of persons who have been summoned. In relation to your request, the Juries Amendment Act 2008 (the JAA) is the most significant amendment to the Act.

The jury districts are prescribed in section 5 of the Act. Section 5(3)(a) of the Act specifies the jury district comprises every place that is within 45 km from each courthouse by the most practicable route. The JAA increased the distance from 30 km to 45 km and this amendment came into force on 4 October 2010.

There are 24 courthouses that hold jury trials throughout New Zealand. Each courthouse falls into one of the following jurisdictional categories:

- sole High Court registry; Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington
- sole District Court registry; Auckland, Christchurch, Kaikohe, Manukau, Papakura and Wellington
- combined High and District Court registry; Blenheim, Dunedin, Gisborne, Greymouth, Hamilton, Invercargill, Napier, Nelson, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Rotorua, Tauranga, Timaru, Wanganui and Whangarei.

I have attached maps for the 24 jury courthouses and their districts. These maps were produced in preparation for the JAA coming into force by using mesh block data. As such, they are only an indicative description of each jury district. As described above, it is the Act itself that defines each jury district.

Statistics New Zealand divides the country into geographic mesh blocks which are assigned a General electorate, Māori electorate, Local Authority, District Health Board, High and District Court.

In line with the Act, each month the Electoral Commission provides the Ministry of Justice a random selection of New Zealanders who live in geographic mesh blocks within a 45 km radius of each jury courthouse. This selection of names comes from both the General and Māori Electoral Rolls. Every month this updated list is uploaded into the Ministry's Jury Management System (JMS). When a jury trial is required, the Ministry uses JMS to randomly select the jurors to be summoned.

If a person has not kept their address details up to date with the Electoral Commission and, for example have moved residence, they may still potentially get summoned to serve at a courthouse that is over 45 km from their new address. In such instances, the person summoned can apply to the Court Registrar, with evidence of their new address, to be excused from serving on that occasion. The steps for excusing a summoned juror are described in section 15 of the Act.

If you require any clarification of the information contained in this response please contact Antony Paltridge, Team Leader, Media and External Relations, at media@justice.govt.nz or call (04) 918 8980.

Yours sincerely



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