



## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Reference: OIA-2017/18-0589

31 May 2018

John Luke  
fyi-request-7771-87cb4d2f@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear John Luke

### **Official Information Act request: Honours process**

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 5 May 2018. Your request was as follows:

... I would like to understand generally during what period of the time, nominees will be asked to accept the honour prior to the list to become public on the occasion of the New Year (30/31 December), the New Zealand observance of The Queen's Birthday (first Monday in June).

Also, I would like to know generally when the shortlist will be decided by the Cabinet's Honours Committee. If possible, can you please let me know the date/time that the shortlist has been decided for the past 5 years."

Honours nominations are received by the Honours Unit throughout the year. Each nomination is considered for an honours list – either the New Year or Queen's Birthday list.

The information received in the nomination is entered into a database, and receipt of the nomination acknowledged. A draft citation is prepared based on the information in the nomination. These citations and a list of all nominations are provided to the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee, which is chaired by the Prime Minister, when it meets to consider the nominations.

The Committee meets for a round of meetings to consider an honours list; this is scheduled over a period of a few weeks, and is dependent on the Prime Minister's availability. Typically these meetings occur in March and August for the Queen's Birthday and New Year Honours Lists respectively. Those meetings usually take place over the course of a month.

As noted on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website proposed honours recipients, with the exception of New Zealand Defence Force personnel, are asked by the Official Secretary to the Governor-General whether the proposal to include their name in an honours list is acceptable before The Queen formally approves an honour.

The "sounding" of recipients occurs at a point following the conclusion of the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee consideration and prior to The Queen's formal approval of an Honours list. The timing of sounding may differ from one list to another, and person to person, but it will usually take place a couple of months before publication of the list.

In relation to your second question, a shortlist for an honours list is confirmed at the last in the series of meetings of the Committee. However, I note that decisions are made during each meeting in relation to individual nominations, as described above.

The date of the last meeting of the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee for each list – Queen's Birthday (QB) and New Year (NY) - for the last five years is set out below:

Year	QB/NY	Date
2018	QB	12.3.18
2017	NY	21.8.17
	QB	20.3.17
2016	NY	29.8.16
	QB	16.3.16
2015	NY	31.8.15
	QB	16.3.15
2014	NY	4.8.14
	QB	17.3.14

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

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

Yours sincerely



Michael Webster  
**Clerk of the Executive Council**