

24 July 2020

Mr Cope

REF: IR-01-20-16994

Dear Mr Cope

I refer to your request of 19 June for the following information:

"I would like to know more about the image used in these post on social media websites Twitter and Facebook and the accompanying changes to the profile picture of those accounts on June 19, 2020, as posted at the following URLs:

<https://twitter.com/nzpolice/status/1273821638069387266>

<https://www.facebook.com/NZPolice/photos/rpp.183410325126292/2009557442511562/>

<https://www.facebook.com/NZPolice/photos/a.667746716692648/2009459359188037>

1. Is the "thin blue line" considered acceptable current Police branding?
2. Whereas this imagery is currently associated with fascists overseas, is this still considered "politically neutral"? I refer to the "Social media policy" as of February 14, 2020.
3. Who authorised the use of the "thin blue line" imagery for this post? Rank and role is sufficient.
4. Please provide a list of flags and insignia currently approved for wear by Police staff on duty. I was unable to find such material on your website. I am a New Zealand Citizen

My response is as follows:

The use of the thin blue line is an internationally recognised symbol of law enforcement and black is the colour of mourning. It is not a form of police branding, rather it was a visual design that was used to communicate the honour and loss of someone special to Police.

The use of the thin blue line was discussed and signed off within the Media and Communications team on the day, as part of getting timely updates on social media. This did not require sign-off from a sworn officer.

While the use of the NZ Police crest and the Coat of Arms is addressed in the Flags, Emblems and Names Protection Act 1981 (the Act) - there are no flags that are approved for wear by sworn Police staff while on duty.

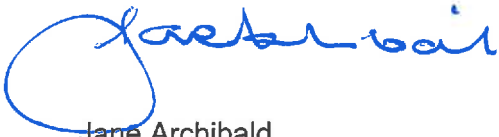
Police National Headquarters

180 Molesworth Street. PO Box 3017, Wellington 6140, New Zealand
Telephone: 04 474 9499. Fax: 04 498 7400. www.police.govt.nz

The insignia of rank worn by New Zealand police officers can be found here
<https://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/history/insignia>

You have the right, under section 28 (3) of the Official Information Act 1982, to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision if you are not satisfied with the way I have responded to your request.

Yours sincerely



Jane Archibald
Deputy Chief Executive Media & Communications
Police National Headquarters