

4 August 2020

Laura Drew

REF: IR-01-20-17878

Dear Laura,

I refer to your request of 28 June for the following information:

"What led to Police making the decision to use the 'thin blue line' imagery on social media after this event. Please release the following information:

1. All documents, including meeting minutes and internal communications, regarding the use of this imagery and any other imagery that was considered.
2. All documents, including meeting minutes and internal communications, regarding public feedback and plans to discontinue use of the imagery.
3. All documents, including meeting minutes and internal communications, relating to the use of this imagery overseas and any associations with fascist or white supremacist movements".

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.

**1. All documents, including meeting minutes and internal communications, regarding the use of this imagery and any other imagery that was considered.**

The information you have requested does not exist. Section 18(e) of the Official Information Act 1982 provides that requests for information may be refused in such circumstances.

The use of the thin blue line was discussed verbally, as part of getting timely updates on social media on the day. The use of the police chevron-embedded huia feather was also discussed, however generally this is used in the week leading up to and on Police Remembrance Day (29 September), and in the days before and day of a Police funeral. This is why we did not use it immediately.

The huia birds tail plumage is something rare and special. To wear it is considered by Māori to be a great honour. The incorporation of the Police chevron into the huia tail feather, with the small cut at the top, signifying loss, communicates the honour and loss of someone special to Police.

**Police National Headquarters**

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**2. All documents, including meeting minutes and internal communications, regarding public feedback and plans to discontinue use of the imagery.**

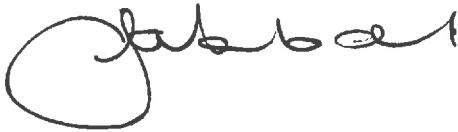
The information you have requested does not exist. Section 18(e) of the Official Information Act 1982 provides that requests for information may be refused in such circumstances.

**3. All documents, including meeting minutes and internal communications, relating to the use of this imagery overseas and any associations with fascist or white supremacist movements**

The information you have requested does not exist. Section 18(e) of the Official Information Act 1982 provides that requests for information may be refused in such circumstances.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Archibald', with a large circular flourish on the left side.

Jane Archibald  
**Deputy Chief Executive Media & Communications**  
Police National Headquarters