

4 November 2014

Ben Moore
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Dear Ben Moore

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION – NEW ZEALAND ADULT GANGS

I refer to your request of 8 August 2014:

“...my request covers the data provided to the minister to arrive at these figures. If this data was raw data, I request that which was provided; if only headline figures were provided, I request the information given, and additionally the raw data used to produce these... I request statistics that Police hold on gang memberships. For instance the total number of individuals flagged for ‘Gangs’ in the National Intelligence Application. I request this information be broken down to include, where collected, Gang ‘Members’, ‘Prospects’, ‘Associates’ and any other subcategories used for a similar purpose ...Finally to assist in interpreting these data, I request the Police Instructions which detail the process for identifying and recording gang memberships”.

I have considered your request in accordance with the Official Information Act 1982.

1. *the data provided to the minister to arrive at these figures. If this data was raw data, I request that which was provided*

The number of New Zealand adult gang members provided to the Minister of Police was contained in a Cabinet paper on New Zealand Adult Gangs and Transnational Crime Groups. Your request is refused under section 18(d) of the Official Information Act 1982 as the Cabinet paper will soon be publicly available on the New Zealand Police website at www.police.govt.nz.

The number of patched New Zealand adult gang members (approximately 4000) referred to in the Minister of Police’s announcement on the Whole of Government action plan on tackling gangs is correct. Unfortunately, when including information on serious violence and drug offences for the first quarter of 2014 in the original information provided by Police, it wasn’t made clear that this also took into account charges laid against those individuals who:

- were charged together with a New Zealand adult gang member/s for the same identified offence
- had an identified familial tie with a New Zealand adult gang member/s
- had an identified connection to a New Zealand adult gang member/s.

Police did not provide raw data to the Minister of Police.

The information in the Cabinet paper was used in the Minister of Police's announcement of the Whole of Government action plan on tackling gangs. This announcement is available on the Beehive government website at www.beehive.govt.nz.

2. *if only headline figures were provided, I request the information given, and additionally the raw data used to produce these*

The Minister of Police used the number of New Zealand adult gang members that was contained in the Cabinet paper on New Zealand Adult Gangs and Transnational Crime Groups in the announcement of the Whole of Government action plan on tackling gangs. This announcement is available on the Beehive government website at www.beehive.govt.nz.

Your request for "the raw data used to produce these" [headline figures] is refused under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act 1982 to "protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons" as this would involve identifying the individual gang member and their details.

3. *I request statistics that Police hold on gang memberships. For instance the total number of individuals flagged for 'Gangs' in the National Intelligence Application. I request this information be broken down to include, where collected, Gang 'Members', 'Prospects', 'Associates' and any other subcategories used for a similar purpose*

The statistics that Police hold on gang membership is as follows:

- In July 2014 there were 3,969 identified patched gang members and prospects belonging to 32 New Zealand adult gangs.
- Of these 3,969 individuals, 3,411 were identified as patched gang members and 558 as prospects.

This data comes from Police national and district intelligence units.

A New Zealand adult gang is defined as an organisation, association or group with the following characteristics: a common name, one or more common identifiers, and whose members or prospects, either individually or collectively promote, encourage or engage in criminal activity that is driven by a desire to profit and/or create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, which is enabled by virtue of membership in the gang.

A New Zealand adult gang member of a New Zealand adult gang is defined as:

- a patched member – an individual who has completed a probationary period and earned the right to full membership, or
- a prospect - an individual who has not yet achieved full membership but is actively working toward this goal.

The Police National Intelligence Application does not hold collated statistical information on gang membership. Your request for "the total number of individuals flagged for 'Gangs' in the National Intelligence Application" is refused under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act 1982 as "the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research".

4. *Finally to assist in interpreting these data, I request the Police Instructions which detail the process for identifying and recording gang memberships*

Your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Official Information Act 1982 as Police does not hold national instructions for the identification and recording of gang membership.

If you are not satisfied with my response to your request you have the right to complain to the Office of the Ombudsman and seek an investigation and review of my decision.

Yours sincerely



Michael Clement
Deputy Commissioner: National Operations