

17 April 2023

By email: [fyi-request-22119-d183802c@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-22119-d183802c@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Mr Doyle,

**Official Information Act Request: Measures in place to ensure conformance with 4.1 of ISO/IEC 17025:2017**

On 16 March 2023 you requested for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (Act) from the Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR) as follows:

*Dear Institute of Environmental Science and Research Limited, What measures are in place to ensure conformance with the requirement for impartiality in §4.1 of ISO/IEC 17025:2017 when providing forensic scientific services accredited to that standard?*

**Our response to your request**

Forensic staff at ESR are expected to follow the ANAB Guiding Principles of Professional Responsibility for Forensic Service Providers and Forensic Personnel. These principles are reviewed annually by all Police Programme laboratory personnel. If any issues are identified that do not align with these principles, appropriate actions shall be taken. The principles can be found here <https://anab.qualtraxcloud.com/ShowDocument.aspx?ID=6732>.

**Professionalism and impartiality**

ESR seeks to preserve a professional and impartial approach to all work undertaken. The Forensics Business Group management have arrangements to ensure staff are free from any undue internal and external commercial, financial and other pressures and influences that may adversely affect the quality of the work.

These arrangements include:

- Critical incident debriefing for scene attending staff or staff who need it.
- Flexible work practices - flexible/reduced hours, special leave etc.
- Chain of command for media enquiries and use of social media.
- Regular review of workforce resourcing - replacement of staff where required and additional resources as needed.
- Guidance on personal security for Forensic staff.
- Staff are not permitted to accept gifts that could compromise their impartiality.

**Selective use of results**

Findings arising from any piece of ESR's forensic work must not be presented selectively in any forum (public, scientific, legal, or commercial) so that the conclusions derived will be biased or distorted.

To this end, extracts from a report, or a summary of a report, may be presented by a customer only if:

- The original author agrees that the extracts or summary do not distort the findings or conclusions to be drawn; or
- The original report is made available to the interested parties.

#### **Personal connection with a forensic case**

Occasionally samples may be submitted, or a case may be investigated, that relate to a person with a family or other personal connection with the analyst assigned to examine the samples or case. In such a situation, the analyst is to discuss the matter with his/her Forensic Manager. Unless the connection is judged not to be significant, the samples or case shall be assigned to another analyst, the case may be given 'high profile' status. In some circumstances, in consultation with the client, consideration may be given to the analysis being undertaken at an alternative laboratory. Staff shall not become involved in any activities that would diminish confidence in judgement or operational integrity.

#### **Risks to impartiality**

On-going identification of risks to impartiality is carried out, usually as part of the management review process. This includes risks that may arise from activities carried out or from any professional or personal relationships.

#### **Your right to seek a review**

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or Freephone 0800 802 602.

Thank you for your request.

Yours sincerely



**John Bone**  
**General Manager Forensic**