

7 November 2024

IR-01-24-10600

New Zealand Council for Civil Liberties

Tēnā koe

***Request for information – Preliminary Inquiry from the Ombudsman.***

On 22 April 2024, Police responded to an Official Information Act request from you through fyi (fyi-request-26223-bd101776@requests.fyi.org.nz) seeking the “Social Networking, Open Source Information and Online Practitioner” Police Manual chapter, and previous editions.

You requested a searchable copy. Police intended to send a searchable copy and had thought that one had been sent to you. It has now been identified that several of the pages within that document were not searchable. Accordingly, an updated version is attached now, which should address this issue.

I understand that you would like further information about the reasons for withholding parts of the chapter under s 6(c) and the grounds in support. It is not possible to give you much further information (for example, about the tenor or nature of specific contents) without identifying the subject matter being withheld and thus prejudicing the interests protected by section 6.

The 22 April 2024 response letter explained that some information had been withheld pursuant to section 6(c) of the OIA:

- as making available of the information is likely to prejudice the maintenance of the law, including the prevention, investigation, and detection of offences and right to a fair trial; and that
- the redactions made relate to tradecraft and processes around managing online practitioner roles and it is not in the public interest to release that detail.

By way of further clarification and explanation:

When releasing these chapters to you, Police has endeavoured to give as much information as possible. However, as you can appreciate, some specific information about how Police use online personas could be used by criminals to work out when such techniques are likely to be used or not, and how to evade detection.

It is important that Police, on behalf of the community, protect their tradecraft methods as much as possible to ensure that criminals do not use publicly released information to hinder police investigations. Providing criminals with

**Police National Headquarters**

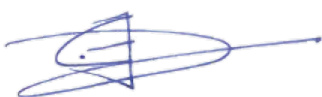
180 Molesworth Street, PO Box 3017, Wellington 6140, New Zealand.  
Telephone: 04 474 9499. 04 498 7400. [www.police.govt.nz](http://www.police.govt.nz)

information as to whether police use a particular methodology, technique, tool, or items of equipment would only harm the community and the public interest.

Some contact details for specific units and groups have also been redacted on the basis of section 6(c). This is so that those contact details cannot be misused or targeted which would detrimentally impact the ability of Police staff to use of them for law enforcement purposes.

Under section 28(3) of the OIA, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review this decision if you are not satisfied with Police's response to your request.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Greg Dalziel  
Detective Senior Sergeant  
High Tech Crime Group