

16 August 2017

Anthony Jordan  
fyi-request-6073-05a02f68@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Jordan

I refer to your Official Information Act request of 27 June 2017, for information on Police Highway Patrol vehicles.

You requested:

1. *What part of the process to decide colours was used to determine that the change to colours would ensure all practicable steps for safety of staff that are on the road as their primary employment*

Police has used both marked and unmarked vehicles in a variety of colours for many years. Police vehicles are chosen from a catalogue of available factory colours that Police select for both marked and unmarked enforcement. All vehicles selected for enforcement purposes by Police conform to and are maintained to New Zealand Safety standards and are the best available vehicles for that purpose. All vehicles used for enforcement purposes are fitted with red and blue flashing lights, and many with reflectorised livery. These increase the visibility during enforcement and urgent duty driving occasions and therefore add to the safety of occupants and other road users. It is on this basis that Police is confident that the vehicles used by staff are safe.

2. *Please provide evidence that would indicate the colours used by New Zealand Police are more suitable for the safety of vehicle and its Occupants in Primary Bitumen use.*

Police does not possess information that relates to evidence that would indicate the colours used by New Zealand Police are more suitable for the safety of vehicle and its Occupants in Primary Bitumen use. Therefore, this part of your request is refused pursuant to section 18(g) in that the information is not held.

However, as mentioned all vehicles selected for enforcement purposes by Police conform to and are maintained to New Zealand Safety standards and are the best available vehicles for that purpose.

It is worth noting that research<sup>1</sup> suggests that the most effective approach to influence the behaviour of road users and their perception of detection is through the use of highly visible enforcement on the road. Drivers are less likely to commit a traffic offence when they perceive the chance of detection is high. The distinctive colours of the vehicles are an exception to the standard vehicle colour used. As a result, we expect motorists to be more attentive to their enforcement presence on the road.

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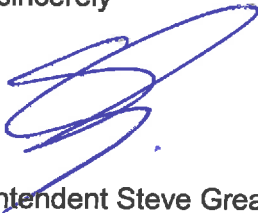
<sup>1</sup> <http://www.monash.edu.au/miri/research/reports/muarc053.pdf>

It is important to note that the colour change is about increasing general deterrence, which in turn saves lives and keeps our families safe. Police would be quite happy to never issue another infringement again, if it meant that all road users were complying with legislation and driving to the conditions.

As mentioned, changing the colour of Highway Patrol vehicles also acts as a talking point for the media and the public. This increase in public road safety awareness encourages members of the public to drive safely, decreasing the risk to Police and all road users. It is worth noting other jurisdictions (for example Queensland Police) also operate coloured, marked vehicles.

You have the right to complain to the Ombudsman and seek an investigation and review of my response if you are not satisfied with the way I have responded to your request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S Greally', written in a cursive style.

Superintendent Steve Greally  
National Manager Road Policing