



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Reference: OIA-2017/18-0677

26 June 2018

Suzanne Newton
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Dear Suzanne Newton

Official Information Act request: Rt Hon Sir William English, KNZM

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, which was transferred from the Prime Minister's office to me on 18 June 2018. Your request was as follows:

*"Given that William (Bill English) ex Member of Parliament has been Knighted in the Queens Birthday Honours, I would like the following information.
Who nominated him for such an honour
and what grounds were given for him to deserve such a high honour?"*

I would also like to know who was involved in nominating him and who supported the application

*It is normal for such a high honour to be given if a person is ELECTED a Prime Minister (of which he wasn't), has an exemplary record including traits of honesty etc. The Todd Barclay debacle is an example that Bill English does not fit this criteria. The criteria also allows for a contribution to the community etc.
Mr English has never contributed anything unless there was a benefit to himself, his family or his business associates and has only given to his National Party for which he was amply paid.*

Therefore I would like to know exactly why the current Government saw fit to make this appalling recommendation which makes a mockery of the entire Honours process."

I can confirm that The Right Honourable Sir William English was made a Knight Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (KNZM) for services to the State as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2018.

The citation, which sets out the basis on which the award was made, is publicly available on the website of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet at:
<https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/honours/lists/qb2018-knzm#englishsi>

In response to the remainder of your request, I advise that this office holds further information that relates to the decision to appoint Sir William English as a KNZM. I am however withholding this information in full under the following sections of the Act:

- s 9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons;
- s 9(2)(ba)(i) to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied;
- s 9(2)(f)(i) to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of communications by or with the Sovereign or her representative;
- s 9(2)(f)(iv) to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials; and
- s 9(2)(g)(i) to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers or officials in the course of their duty.

Protecting the confidentiality of material about Honours nominations and appointments is essential to maintaining the integrity of the New Zealand Royal Honours system. In particular, the protection of such information ensures that those engaging with the Honours system can rely on the confidentiality of the process.

I have considered whether the withholding of the information is outweighed by other considerations which render it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available. In my view it is not. However, I set out below a summary of the nomination and consideration process, for your information.

Honours nominations are received by the Honours Unit throughout the year. Each nomination is considered for an honours list – either the New Year or Queen’s Birthday list. A person must be nominated by someone else i.e. there is no self-nomination.

Each nomination contains the details of the nominator and the person nominated and sets out the reasons for the nomination. The nomination should show how the nominee has made a difference in their community or field of work, demonstrated innovation or entrepreneurship, improved the lives of others, or exemplified selfless voluntary service. The nomination form asks that at least two letters of support be obtained and sent in with the form.

The information received in the nomination is entered into a database, and receipt of the nomination acknowledged. A draft citation is prepared based on the information in the nomination. These citations and a list of all nominations are provided to the Cabinet Appointments & Honours Committee, which is chaired by the Prime Minister, when it meets to consider the nominations. The Committee considers and discusses each nomination individually. The membership of that Committee is available on the DPMC website at <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/cabinet-committees/aph-cabinet-appointments-and-honours-committee>

A number of factors are taken into account by the Committee in considering nominations – length of service, level of achievement, whether the contribution is of local, regional, national or international significance. For example, an award of Knight or Dame Companion may be made for a pre-eminent contribution in any field achieving at a national or international level, which is recognised by the person's peers and demonstrates a sustained commitment.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

Yours sincerely



Michael Webster
Clerk of the Executive Council