



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

16 January 2019

John Luke
fyi-request-9182-a080b9b5@requests.fyi.org.nz

Reference: OIA-2018/19-0303

Dear John

Official Information Act request: APH Meeting to consider 2019 NY Honours

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 3 December 2018. Your request was as follows:

"I would like to know how many nomination has been received and considered during the recent APH meeting (2019 New Year list and 2018 Queen birthday list). How many people has been selected for the honour.

Also, I would like to know the same figures (how many considered and how many been selected) for the past 5 years."

Number of nominations received and considered by APH

Around 1000 nominations are considered each year for inclusion on the regular New Year and Queen Birthday lists.

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.

Successive Ombudsmen have considered that information relating to the Royal Honours system may be withheld under the Official Information Act because there is a strong public interest in the protection of the confidentiality of the Royal honours process. For example, information on the number of nominees who have declined honours has been the subject of an investigation by a former Chief Ombudsman, who noted that although there was a public interest in the disclosure of information about the Royal Honours system, the overall public interest is not served by disclosing information that undermines that very system.

Accordingly, I am withholding the exact number of nominations considered for each list over the past five years under the following sections of the Act:

- s 9(2)(ba)(ii) to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence and to make it available would be likely to otherwise damage the public interest;
- s 9(2)(f)(iv) to maintain the constitutional conventions that protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.

In making my decision on the particular information in this case, I have taken the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act into account.

Number of nominations selected for Honours

The New Year 2019 Honours List was announced on 31 December 2018 and is available on the DPMC website - <https://dpmc.govt.nz/publications/new-year-honours-list-2019>. There were 196 recipients on that list.

Records of recipients on previous lists are also on our website – www.dpmc.govt.nz – where all New Zealand Honours Lists since June 1995 are available, including the Queen’s Birthday Honours List 2018.

I am therefore declining your request for the number of recipients who have been selected for honours over the last five years under s 18(d) of the Act, on the grounds that the information is publicly available.

For more information on the New Zealand Royal Honours system, please consult our website - <https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/new-zealand-royal-honours>

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

Yours sincerely



for
Michael Webster
Clerk of the Executive Council