

26 February 2019

john luke
[fyi.org.nz/request/9539-agency-boards-nominations](https://www.fyi.org.nz/request/9539-agency-boards-nominations)

Dear john luke

I refer to your official information request of 8 February 2019 seeking the following:

"I understand from the following link that the Ministry accept expressions of interest from the public. I would like to know since 1st of Jan 2018, how many expressions the Ministry has received and any of the expressions you have received actually resulted in appointment?"

Also, I have tried to send an email to the contact email provided, "rob.greenfield@mch.govt.nz", however, got an error return message, can you please let me know when you have updated the following link and if Rob still the contact person?"

<https://mch.govt.nz/what-we-do/agency-boards-nominations>"

Expressions of interest from the public resulting in appointments

The first part of your request seeks information on how many expressions of interest from the public have resulted in appointments since 1 January 2018. We have decided to decline your request under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act 1982, as the information requested is not held by the Ministry and there is no reason to believe the information is held by any other agency or that it is more closely related to the functions of any other agency.

While we have declined this part of your request, we wish to assist you by providing some further information and clarification about how nominations are received and processed by the Ministry. It is worth clarifying that the term you used "expressions of interest from the public" does not relate to the way the Ministry manages the process by which suitably qualified individuals can find their way on to the Ministry's nominations database. There are no limitations on who or where nominations or expressions of interest may be received from.

The Ministry maintains a register or database of individuals who have been under consideration for appointment within the portfolios of the Ministry's responsible Ministers. The pathway for individuals to be added to the Ministry's nomination database includes the following:

- Nomination by any of the public service nominating agencies (this includes the Ministry for Women, Te Puni Kōkiri, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, the Office

of Ethnic Communities etc). There is no way to identify if any of the nominees provided to us, found their way on to the nominating agencies databases by nominating themselves or whether third parties nominated them.

- Nomination by the responsible portfolio Minister. Part of the standard appointments process involves seeking input from the appointing Minister and providing opportunities for them to identify suitable appointment candidates from within their network. Once again there is no way to identify if these individuals nominated by responsible Ministers put themselves forward or not.
- Nominations are often invited by the responsible portfolio Minister from within the caucus (caucuses) of the governing party (or parties) of the day. Similarly, there is no way to discern those that nominate themselves.
- Individuals may have put themselves forward at some time in the past for consideration for appointments to roles within the portfolio. Their contact details and skill sets get recorded in our database but we do not codify in any way whether individuals on our database put themselves forward or not.

As noted above we do wish to assist your understanding in this regard. We can advise you that since 1 January 2018, exactly 200 nominees have been added to our database. Of these new additions to our nominee database, five have been appointed to governance roles with sector boards. Of course, the 200 nominees does not include those individuals:

- whose names were already on the database who may have decided to nominate themselves for board roles since the date you stipulated.
- who nominated themselves at some time prior to 1 January 2018 and have been appointed since that date.
- already on the database who may have decided to contact the Ministry in order to update their details and who were subsequently appointed.

If you wish to know more about government appointments processes there are a number of appointments guides produced by various government entities, including:

- The State Services Commission, their "Board and Induction Guidelines" can be found on their website at <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/board-appointment-guidelines>.
- The Cabinet Office also has guidance on aspects of appointments processes at <https://dpmc.govt.nz/publications/appointments-process>.

Contact email address for expressions of interest

In regard to the part of your request where you described problems using a Ministry email address, we believe the problem you experienced may be explained by an easily made transcription error.

The email address you provided in your request "*rob.greenfield @ mch.govt.nz*" contains spaces before and after the "@" character. Unfortunately inclusion of spaces in an email address will invalidate it, which in turn would explain why you received an error message.

At this point we wish to express our gratitude to you for highlighting the fact that the email address in question is actually on the "Agency Boards & Nominations" page on

the Ministry website. We've been working recently to build-in systems-based ways of working to the way the Ministry supports our Ministers' appointments decision-making.

One aspect of this systems-based way of working is to try to channel all nominations to a single email address (noms@mch.govt.nz). The inbox associated with this address is accessible to all Ministry staff working on appointments, and this shared access means that when nominations are received they can be acknowledged, lodged and made readily searchable in our database more speedily and with greater flexibility.

You will note that further down on the "*Agency Boards & Nominations*" web page this email address (noms@mch.govt.nz) is the address potential nominees are advised to register their interest to. As a result of your enquiry we will now work with our web team to update the relevant web page and remove this inconsistency.

We look forward to receiving your nomination and expression of interest in the near future.

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 or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact the Ministry at Ministerial.Enquiries@mch.govt.nz providing your contact details.

Yours sincerely



Louise Lennard
Manager, Sector Performance