




EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

11 February 2025



Ref: OIA-2024/25-0553

Tēnā koe 

Official Information Act request: Individuals who have turned down New Years Honours

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received on 4 January 2025. You requested:

"I'm getting in touch to please request all communications between those who were offered a New Years' Honour but turned it down - under the Official Information Act."

Information being provided

Approximately 800 to 1,000 nominations are considered for appointments to New Zealand Royal Honours each year. As you will know, there are two regular Honours Lists, one at New Year and one at King's Birthday. Since 2010, the size of the regular Honours Lists has ranged from 151 to 194 recipients.

Every year, a small number of people who are offered a New Zealand Royal Honour decline the offer. They do so by completing a sounding form (example **attached**) or otherwise contacting the Honours Unit. These decisions are treated in strict confidence. People are not required to give a reason for declining an honour. The names of people who decline an honour are reported only to the Prime Minister.

Our honours database records that, since New Year 2010, there have been 31 New Year, Queen's and King's Birthday Lists published. Across these lists, there have been 198 declines of offers of an honour, or an average of six declines for each of these honours lists. This excludes the New Zealand Bravery Awards Lists.

Information being withheld

It is essential to maintaining the integrity of the New Zealand Royal Honours system that we protect the confidentiality of material about Honours nominations and appointments. This ensures that those engaging with the Honours system can rely on the confidentiality of the process.

Successive Ombudsmen have considered that there is a strong public interest in the protection of the confidentiality of the New Zealand Royal Honours system.

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CABINET OFFICE, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, WELLINGTON 6011, NEW ZEALAND

Telephone: +64 (4) 830 5010. Email: CabinetOffice@dpmc.govt.nz

www.dpmc.govt.nz

Accordingly, while this office holds the information that you have requested, I am withholding it (other than the information and statistics provided above) pursuant to the following sections of the Act:

- s 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons; and
- 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 public interest.

In making my decision, in accordance with section 9(1) of the Act I have considered whether the public interest in disclosure outweighs the need to withhold the information, and I have concluded that it does not.

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

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Nāku noa, nā



Rachel Hayward
Clerk of the Executive Council



[insert honours list] – Sounding Form

Please complete the questions on this form and return it by [insert date] to the Honours Unit.

The completed form must be returned by email to honours@dpmc.govt.nz

If you have any issues accessing email, please call David Williams or Griffen Ritchie in the Honours Unit at 04 830 5011

1 Please tick whether you **accept** or **decline** the proposed honour:

ACCEPT Please complete questions **2-10**, note point **11**, then **sign and date** and return the form to the Honours Unit.

DECLINE Please note your name on the form, **sign and date** and return the form to the Honours Unit.

2 On the line below please provide your **full legal name including middle names** (as it appears on your passport or birth, marriage or citizenship certificate). *This is the name under which your honour will be formally announced and will appear on your warrant or certificate.* Please also provide your **correct title/s** (e.g. Dr, Mr, Ms, Mx) and any **Crown Appointments or previous Royal Honours** (e.g. JP or MNZM) you may have:

Write **full name** here: _____
Examples: Dr Jane Mary Smith or Mr John Henry William Smith, JP

3 What is your **preferred first name**? (This will be used at your investiture):

4 Of which country are you a **citizen**? (e.g. New Zealand):

5 What is your date of birth: _____

6 What is your current residential address?:

7 What is your preferred postal/contact address (if different from above)?:

This form continues – please complete questions 8 – 10 and sign before returning this form.

If you have any queries please call the Honours Unit on 04 830 5011



8 Please provide your email address and contact telephone numbers:

Email: _____

Home: _____

Mobile: _____

9 Honours recipients are expected to be, and continue to be, role models. Is there anything in your background or your past or present conduct that may be seen to damage your credibility as a role model? Please consider matters such as criminal convictions (these do not need to include convictions that have been concealed under the Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004), regulatory offences, civil proceedings, employment matters and actions by a professional association. If in doubt, please let us know.

Please tick one of the boxes below.

NO

YES If you answered yes, please attach the details or call the Honours Unit: 04 830 5011.

10 Are you facing any pending criminal charges, or are you involved in other legal proceedings or investigations relating to your conduct (e.g. employment or professional)?

Please tick one of the boxes below.

NO

YES If you answered yes, please attach the details or call the Honours Unit: 04 830 5011.

Note: Answering “Yes” to questions 9 or 10 does not necessarily preclude you from receiving an honour, but the Honours Unit may contact you to discuss the information you have provided and this may lead to the offer of the proposed honour being deferred or withdrawn.

11 If you accept the proposed honour, you are expected to be available to the media, and to attend an investiture at Government House. Your full name, residential address or preferred contact address, email address and a background note outlining the reasons for the honour will be provided to the media under embargo shortly before the announcement of the honours list.

In signing this form I acknowledge the [privacy statement for the New Zealand Royal Honours System](#).

SIGNATURE*

DATE: _____

**Insert an electronic signature, or image of your signature, or type your full name on the line to sign.*